

L2 Spanish and the Subjunctive:

An Analysis on Current Intermediate Level Spanish Curricula in Light of Past and Current Research on the Subjunctive

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Introduction

Today's beginner to intermediate Spanish curricula and Spanish textbooks exacerbate the use of the subjunctive. For example, in an analysis of 14 intermediate Spanish textbooks, and of the 154 total number of chapters that compile these textbooks, 66 chapters provide explicit instruction over some aspect of the subjunctive (See Appendix A). It is impressive to note that 42.8 percent of all chapters in these textbooks dedicate as much time to a grammatical structure that, according to Collentine (2010) is only found in 7.2% of oral and written Spanish. Research has provided clear insight into the complexity of the subjunctive and its acquisition. This research implies that the subjunctive is somewhat grasped by advanced students of Spanish but certainly not by intermediate level learners, i.e., second-year university learners, and this has implications into where the direction of Spanish instruction should be, yet is not. For example, learners face issues regarding their syntactic abilities, best addressed by the Syntactic Deficiency Hypothesis (Collentine 2003). Lexical issues regarding the subjunctive also have been addressed with Van Patten's Lexical Preference Principle, as reported by Cameron (2013). Mood selection is another issue that cannot be resolved even by a nine-month study abroad program (Isabelli, Nishida 2005). Evidence shows that output-based instruction does not yield significantly better

results than processing instruction; yet, the majority of instruction continually overemphasizes the production of the subjunctive by under-advanced learners.

The purpose of this thesis is to illustrate research findings suggesting the advanced nature of the subjunctive and thereby questioning the current grammar curricula as provided in second-year Spanish textbooks.

Lexical

In Cameron (2013), Van Patten provides a Lexical Preference Principle (LPP) which states that the co-occurrence of lexical items with verbs conjugated in the subjunctive hinder the learner's ability to acquire the verb form. He further states that someone learning the subjunctive will prefer to derive meaning from lexical items instead of morphological ones when both encode the same meaning (50). This is problematic for the acquisition of the subjunctive because a sentence is able to express non-assertion in two ways: lexical items in the main clause and a co-occurring subjunctive marker on the subordinate verb. The article discusses "Materials Designed to Alter Lexical Preference with the Spanish Subjunctive," (Cameron, 51). Three studies currently exist that are embedded in the structure of input processing that deal with the Lexical Preference Principle: Farley (2001,2004) and Fernández (2008). In these studies, participants were introduced to written or orally produced target verbs that were marked to elicit indicative or subjunctive and then followed by a subordinate clause. An example would be *Es obvio que + come mucho*. The participants were required to match subordinate clauses with the appropriate lexical expression of non-assertion. In Cameron (2013), Doughty (2004) claims "that these materials were metalinguistic in nature, meaning that participants did not have to keep meaning in focus in order to complete the task." Cameron lists an example of Doughty's

point by using the non-verb *satar*. “If L2 learners are told that the invented word ‘satar’ is a verb, they might be able to select the “correct” lexical expression of non-assertion if provided with the subordinate clause ‘sate en casa mucho,’” (Cameron, 51). He stresses that this would lead learners to believe that constructions such as “No creo que sate en casa mucho” are grammatically correct when they truly have no meaning (Cameron, 51).

In this same study, Cameron conducted a self-paced reading methodology to measure reading times between L1 Spanish speakers and intermediate through advanced L2 Spanish speakers. To do so, he wrote grammatical and ungrammatical sentences and paired them with drawings. Methodologies such as this assume that it takes longer for native speakers to read an ungrammatical sentence because they may try to analyze the sentence several times before they finally conclude that it’s ungrammatical. What Cameron found, however, was that only L1 Spanish speakers could pick up the disconnects between the lexical expressions of (non)assertion in the main clause followed by mood markers in the subordinate verb. The L2 speakers, however, had longer reading times only when the meaning of the sentence overall didn’t match the image that went with it. Due to his results, Cameron (2013) “argues for the tenability of the LPP during real-time, meaningful comprehension of the Spanish subjunctive,” (51). In other words, the Lexical Preference Principle was upheld in this study.

Cameron discusses a few ways of combating lexical preference with the Spanish subjunctive. First, one could keep focus on form and meaning by showing images like Cameron (2011), where the picture is followed by a subordinate clause that elicits either indicative or subjunctive, and then main clauses that the reader can choose from. One might also give learners multiple subordinate clauses to choose from and only one main clause. Cameron concludes that the LPP is a big reason for why the subjunctive is so difficult for L2 Spanish speakers. The key

here is lexical preference. It affects how learners read sentences and affects learners' real-time comprehension of the subjunctive, (Cameron, 51).

Syntax

In 2003 Collentine conducts a review of nearly thirty years worth of research regarding subjunctive acquisition. The following studies mentioned were gleaned from Collentine's literature review. Gili Gaya (1972) examines age of acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive by native Spanish-speakers, 3-5 year old children and 5-10 year old children, in Puerto Rico. The results suggest that while the younger group utilizes a lexical-cue strategy (they use the subjunctive based on lexical items that are around), the older group utilized a semantic strategy that allowed them to use the subjunctive with more complicated clauses like adverbial clauses with future time references. The researcher concludes that L1 Spanish speakers do not master subjunctive mood selection before adolescence. This development is attributed to sociolinguistic factors that cause linguistic conformant. An example of this would be scholastic institutions requiring them to adapt their speech. In addition, Blake (1983, 1985) demonstrates that children show dependence upon lexical structures when choosing the subjunctive mood. Furthermore, a study, by Pérez-Leroux (1998) finds that specific subjunctive features only develop when a child can distinguish between their beliefs and reality. These specific features include but are not limited to adjectival clauses.

Collentine (2003) also reports on a study where seventy students completing one year of university-level studies were analyzed based on their subjunctive abilities. The students scored an average of 92% accuracy in a writing task requiring the use of subjunctive. However, the same students only averaged 12.3% on an oral task. Collentine states that the learners did not

produce the adequate contexts or pragmatic and syntactic conditions that would require the subjunctive. Collentine's literature review also highlights Stokes' (1988) and Stokes & Krashen's (1990) research that suggests that living in a Spanish-speaking country correlates significantly with one's subjunctive abilities, whereas classroom instruction does not. Collentine (2003) states that in the initial stages of subjunctive acquisition learners do not easily detect forms of the subjunctive. Collentine suggests that the detection of the subjunctive might deal with phonology, that is, most subjunctive forms are not very different from indicative forms (e.g. *hable* and *hablo*). He further suggests that at their level, it is most likely unnecessary for intermediate learners to construct the complex semantic structures of the subjunctive .

Collentine (2003) references one of his previous studies, Collentine (1995), where he posits a syntactic-deficiency hypothesis (SPH), which sustains that intermediate level learners are not able to process complex syntax and semantic/pragmatic relationships between two clauses in their short-term memory. He suggests that they make poor use of morphology and lack subjunctive abilities even with ample time to produce utterances.

Mood Selection

Research that examines linguistic features that evoke mood (i.e., subjunctive) is another areas of subjunctive research. In Gudmestad (2006) only the advance learners were capable of selecting the subjunctive mood with both regular and irregular verbs. Her (2006) study attempts to answer the following questions: "1) How frequently do English speaking adult intermediate level and advanced level learners of Spanish select the subjunctive in a written preference task? 2) Do particular linguistic features predict intermediate and advanced level learners' selection of the subjunctive? When considered together, which factors predict subjunctive selection? 3) If

linguistic features predict the selection of the subjunctive, are the same features selected across proficiency levels?”

Two university L2 Spanish classes were the subjects of the study. All students' L1 was English. Intermediate level (N=17) students were enrolled in the final course (fourth semester) of the undergraduate requirement. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 22 years of age. The second group (N=20) was composed of advanced level students who were studying introductory applied linguistics in a fourth year course. Their ages ranged from 20 to 35 years of age.

All of the students completed three activities: a background questionnaire, a language proficiency test, and a written preference task. The questionnaire addressed their previous exposure to Spanish and other languages, as well as foreign travel and personal information. The proficiency test was composed of eleven questions, each pertaining to Spanish grammatical concepts. Finally, the written preference task was in the form of a story about college students planning a summer vacation. Thirty-five of the sentences were presented in English. Two Spanish sentences followed after each segment of English sentences. The subjects had to choose which Spanish sentence they preferred. Twenty possible subjunctive contexts were possible in the story. To eliminate discrepancies about subjunctive preference of native Spanish speakers, six native speakers of various Spanish-speaking countries were selected to complete the task. The subjects were from Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Spain, Uruguay, and Venezuela. All of the subjects chose the subjunctive and indicative in the same contexts throughout the task. Therefore, there were no discrepancies between the native speakers. The advanced subjects completed the same three activities, however, the intermediate subjects were given two different versions. The first version required that the group write down what they were thinking when

they completed each item in the written preference task. The second version required that the group complete the written preference task and then complete a cloze passage activity where they wrote verbs in preterit and imperfect forms.

The language proficiency test showed that while intermediate level subjects scored an average of 6.24 correct items out of eleven, the advanced group scored an average of 10.5. The results of the written preference task provided results that followed the proficiency test's predictions. The intermediate group selected the subjunctive 59.4% of the time in all possible subjunctive contexts, where the advanced group selected it 77.8% of the time. After analyzing the data, Gustamed (2006) shows that intermediate level Spanish learners' selection of subjunctive relates to the presence of irregular verbs, whereas advanced Spanish learners' subjunctive selection relates to the presence of not only irregular verbs, but also with expressions of futurity, desire, and absences of expressions of emotion as well. In addition, while irregular subjunctive verbs and expressions of desire helped predict selection of the subjunctive for advanced learners, no linguistic factor worked with irregular subjunctive verbs to predict subjunctive selection for intermediate learners.

Acquisition and Development

The question of acquisition and development, while certainly related to previous sections, forms its own because in-class instruction is contrasted with a more natural form of acquisition of the subjunctive (i.e., study abroad). Isabelli and Nishida (2005), investigate whether the subjunctive is developed in non-native sophomore, junior, and senior undergraduate speakers of Spanish over a nine-month period in a study abroad (SA) setting. They compare oral production

of the subjunctive with learners at the same learning stage based on two settings: stay-home (SH) learners and SA learners of Spanish. To conduct the study, they created an Experimental Group and a Control group. The first consisted of 29 American advanced learners (third year) of Spanish on a one-year stay abroad in Barcelona, Spain. The second group was composed of two SH groups. The first one was made up of 16 American intermediate learners in their fifth semester of Spanish, and the second was made up of 16 American intermediate learners in their sixth semester of Spanish. The SA subjects were L1 English speakers, and were sophomores, juniors, and senior undergraduates from the University of Illinois and University of California. The SH subjects were of the same academic categories and also from two American universities. They consisted of Spanish majors and minors.

The SA group was assessed by oral interviews at zero, four, and nine months. The interviews were influenced/based on the Simulated Oral Proficiency Interview (SOPI). The control groups' data were collected at the end of their 5th and 6th semesters, respectively. The interviews for all groups, of course, did not elicit the use of subjunctive, but there was an increased probability that it would be used.

The first question was addressed by first comparing grammatical competency in three types of clauses during the three measuring points for the SA group. The second analysis measured how many participants produced subjunctive-related structures at the measuring points, and then how many used the subjunctive at least once with the structures. Overall, there was a significant improvement in oral production of the subjunctive between month zero and four, and moderate improvement between four and nine. Adverbial clauses, especially temporal clauses, improved the most. Isabelli and Nishida (2005) report that the increase in the use of temporal clauses “indicates that the participants are relying more and more...on syntactically and

semantically more complex circumstantial expressions.” There is a rise in subjunctive use even with *hasta que* and *cuando*, which do not necessarily require the subjunctive, but rather, may also include the indicative. This “meaning-form” association, as they call it, relates to Van Patten’s LPP, in that lexical items seem to dictate the preference of subjunctive (or lack thereof) (See Cameron 2013).

Data collected regarding the SH groups indicated that while their production rate was only 19-20%, the SA group’s production rate was much higher, at 55-59%. Isabelli and Nishida (2005) state that the data shows SA subjects resorting to expressions that are syntactically and semantically more complex for adverbial adjunct phrases.

Interestingly enough, Isabelli and Nishida (2005) cite Collentine (1995, 2003) and his hypothesis regarding complex syntax, which they call the Complex Syntax Hypothesis (CSH). This is different from the SDH; it is defined by Collentine’s 1995 and 2003 investigation as to “...whether there is a positive, linear relationship between the syntactic and morphological abilities of foreign language learners of Spanish...” (Isabelli and Nishida, 87). In their 2005 study, Isabelli and Nishida present data that demonstrates that although learners became more proficient in managing complex syntax, they did not necessarily acquire the subjunctive. “The acquisition process of the subjunctive seems to be much more complex,” (Isabelli and Nishida, 87).

In their discussion, Isabelli and Nishida (2005) conclude that while the study couldn’t provide any specific conclusions, it is clear to see that the SA group outperformed the SH groups with regards to oral production of the subjunctive. However, they also state that the time abroad did not allow them to fully grasp the subjunctive, as the usage rate between month four and nine differed by only 9% (38-49%). According to their research, “...studying abroad might not

guarantee learners to know *how* to select the correct mood in subordinate clauses...” (Isabelli and Nishida, 89).

Most of the current research regarding subjunctive acquisition deals with mood selection abilities. This is “to better understand how different modules/systems...communicate between each other when the learner has some sort of linguistic deficit,” (Collentine 2010: 42). There is debate as to whether there is even partial access to Universal Grammar (UG) after puberty. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that as we get older, UG can even be accessed. Mechanisms responsible for subjunctive production, namely syntactic and discourse-pragmatic modules, do not function in the same way in L2 acquisition as with L1 acquisition. In Collentine (2010), Sorace (2000) argues that this posits vulnerability for adults. In addition, in Collentine (2010), Montrul (2008) dictates that even heritage speakers of Spanish who never completely acquire the subjunctive face problems with subjunctive attrition. Collentine concludes that it should be no surprise that if even heritage speakers of Spanish are vulnerable to linguistic competence regarding this verb form, “one should not be surprised that it is especially difficult for the subjunctive to gain a foothold in the L2,” (Collentine 2010). Learners may understand that sentences like *Quiero que te vayas* (I want you to go) imply a lack of assertion and require the subjunctive mood (in this case, *vayas*), but they lack “the processes that license the influence of main clause modality over subordinate clause mood selection, which a strong syntactic to discourse-pragmatic module interface would take care of,” (Collentine 2010). Given the weak/vulnerable interface hypothesis, it is not unreasonable for L2 students to make errors like *Quiero para él salir* (where it should be *Quiero que él salga*).

Processing Instruction/ Output-Oriented Instruction

Another research area related to the development of the subjunctive focuses on types of classroom instruction and forms the last section of this paper. As early as 1988, Collentine (1998) attempts to address the following questions: “1) Is Processing Instruction (PI) more effective than output-oriented instruction (OI) at promoting the development of learners’ abilities to interpret the subjunctive? 2) Is Processing Instruction more effective than output-oriented instruction at promoting the development of learners’ abilities to produce the subjunctive where necessary?” According to Collentine (1998), “Processing instruction entails ‘structured input’ tasks involving listening and reading. These tasks encourage students to make form-meaning associations...by raising a structure’s communicative value, or its relative contribution to a sentence’s overall message,” (578). Output comes in the form of production (ie., speaking tasks).

To conduct the study, students enrolled in three sections of second semester Spanish at an American university were broken into three groups: a PI group (N=54), and OI group (N=18), and a control group (N=18). All subjects’ L1 was English. They were compared on the following linguistic factors: performance on a proficiency test, vocabulary test, and an oral interview.

The processing-instruction group was taught the subjunctive through input, while the other group was taught through output. The PI group focused on noticing grammatical structures’ formal and semantic properties. The OI group focused on the subjunctive where it’s value would be obvious (ie. in subordinate clauses). The OI group’s materials were collected from *Puntos de Partida*, a first-year book by Knorre, Dorwick, Glass, and Villarreal (1993) and the workbook that followed (Arana and Arana 1993). They were organized into three sections: review of subjunctive forms and adjectival/ adverbial clauses; indicative vs. subjunctive in

adjectival clauses; practice activities. The PI group was given materials mainly created by the researcher, however, the first-year textbook *¿Sabías qué?* by VanPatten, Lee, and Ballman (1996) and its workbook (VanPatten, Glass, and Binkowski 1996) were also used. Their materials were broken into four sections: review of subjunctive in adjectival and adverbial clauses; subjunctive vs. indicative in adjectival clauses; activities; subjunctive vs. indicative in adjectival clauses in interrogative sentences. The control group merely studied how to distinguish between *por* and *para*, as well as *gustar*-like verbs.

As aforementioned, the research questions were to be addressed by means of a pretest/posttest procedure. The subjects took the pretest three days before instruction and took the posttest a day after the treatment was complete. The tests were composed of twenty questions requiring interpretation and production. A pre-treatment test was also given to the three groups two days before taking the pretest. The pre-treatment test was composed of twenty items. Subjects had to produce ten sentences using the subjunctive and ten using the indicative.

The results of the study provided great insight for future researchers. First, both groups outscored the control group in production and interpretation tasks, and secondly, the two experimental groups' mean scores were statistically equal for production and interpretation tasks. Although neither research question had an affirmative answer, it is clear that processing instruction still yields significant advantages for students.

After its publication, Collentine (1998) came under criticism by Andrew Farley of Notre Dame. In Collentine (2002), Farley (2001) raised "concerns about the validity and generalizability of Collentine's 1998 study examining the efficacy of processing instruction...with the Spanish subjunctive," (879). Collentine defends his 1998 study, and states that Farley's 2001 study are flawed due to the subjects' not having to parse complex syntax with regards to form-

meaning connections. Farley (2002) counters and further points out flaws in Colletine's 1998 study, including the fact that Colletine seems to not strictly follow VanPatten's psycholinguistic strategies for input processing. Ultimately, Farley states that he and Colletine are not at odds, and are simply addressing the same issue through two different means. With regards to the ecological validity of PI, Farley (2002) states, "If one approach works, it is as valid as any other – and the research indicates that PI does bring about greater improvement than tradition instruction," (892).

In Kirk (2013), two studies were conducted to answer the following questions, "1) Does output practice in combination with PI lead to enhanced learning, compared to PI alone, as measured by interpretation and production tasks? 2) Does the sequencing and balance of output practice vis à vis PI affect the results of learning, as measured by interpretation and production tasks? 3) Are the effects of instruction lasting?" (156).

The first study's participants were broken into three groups of advanced to intermediate level Spanish IV students from a highly respected Minnesota public school (N=14, N=16, N=13). Their ages ranged from fifteen to seventeen years old. Their L1 was English, and their instructor was Chilean (Kirk, 156).

The targeted structures in the study were *para/ antes de/ sin + infinitive*, and *para que / antes de que / sin que + subjunctive*. A pretest and two posttests were conducted, each containing three sections on interpretation and two on production. A week before beginning instruction, the subjects took a pretest. During the instruction phase of the experiment, the three groups encountered instruction in different ways. The first group spent three consecutive days with input activities based on processing instruction. The second group conducted two days of processing instruction and one day of output instruction. The third group's instruction was the

same as the second, but was conducted in a different order (PI + O + PI). The results of the first study were analyzed by t-tests and ANOVAS. It was determined that all three groups significantly improved from the pretest to posttests. It was also determined that the first two groups significantly improved between the immediate posttest and the second posttest. There was no overall difference between the three groups (Kirk, 160).

The second study's participants were Spanish III students from a Minnesota private high school. According to ACTFL guidelines, they were intermediate level Spanish learners. Their L1 was English and their ages ranged from fourteen to eighteen years of age. The study broke them into two groups of 13 and 14 students. The same tests and target structures from the first study were used (Kirk, 160).

Though all the materials were the same, the last group (group 5) was given additional output activities because they had an extra day of production practice. The first of these two groups (group 4) conducted instruction the same way as the first group in the first study (PI + PI + PI). The second group (group 5) conducted a day of PI followed by two consecutive days of OI (Kirk, 161).

Interpretation scores for both groups significantly improved, and there was a large difference between pretest and immediate posttest and from pretest to second posttest for both groups. "The participants in group 4 (PI + PI + PI) were able to identify the structures with more accuracy than those in group 5 (PI + O + O)," (Kirk, 161). The difference in the groups' ability to produce the subjunctive was not statistically significant. Kirk demonstrates that the scores of the second study are much lower than those in the first study, and points to Collentine's (2003:79) "syntactic deficiency hypothesis," to explain the results (Kirk, 161). In this

hypothesis, intermediate learners are simply not at the stage of linguistic development where they can process pragmatic connections and complex syntax that exist between clauses (161).

Kirk concludes that a combination of OI and PI doesn't yield to enhanced learning compared to just PI. Also, placing OI between sessions of PI doesn't affect results of interpretation nor production tasks. Strikingly, her study shows that if more time is given to OI than PI, "the ability to accurately produce the target structures over the long run seems to be adversely affected," (Kirk 162). The study also found that the effects of the multiple combinations of PI and OI were durative one week after instruction (162).

It is common knowledge for L2 Spanish instructors that the subjunctive often poses a problem for students, and some might argue that some are simply not ready to learn it until later stages of linguistic development. However, is the issue the learner's readiness or is it the instruction type through which they are taught the linguistic feature? In Farley and McCollan (2004), processing instruction and the Processability Theory presented by Pienemann (1998) come into play. "Processability Theory...is an attempt to account for observed acquisition orders and stages of development that are seemingly unaffected by instructional interventions," (Farley and McCollan, 50). In Pienemann's hierarchy, "each procedure is acquired independently," and "there is a set order in which these five procedures are acquired based on issues of syntax and syntactical processing," (Farley and McCollan, 50). These five procedures are: word/lemma access, category procedure, phrasal procedure, S-procedure, and subordinate clause procedure. In Farley and McCollan (2004), Pienemann denies the learner's ability to skip stages of acquisition regardless of the type of instruction to which they are exposed. In Farley and McCollan (2004), Johnston (1995) constructs a hierarchy of seven levels pertaining to the acquisition of Spanish structures. In his hierarchy, the personal *a* marker is considered a stage

five feature due to “a transfer of information across phrasal boundaries,” (Farley and McCollan, 52). Subjunctive, on the other hand, falls in the last stage of the hierarchy. “...the Spanish subjunctive...is a structure for which low-mid intermediate learners are not ready,” (Farley and McCollan, 52).

In their 2004 study, Farley and McCollan hypothesized that learners that were ready to acquire a target form would do so regardless of the type of instruction. They further hypothesized that those who were not ready would still develop through the stages if given PI or SI (structured input). “The participants were volunteers enrolled in intermediate Spanish courses at a prominent midwestern university in the United States,” (Farley and McCollan, 54). Their L1 was English. The 29 participants were randomly exposed to the following four treatments: explicit information about the target structures, structure input activities, processing instruction, and a control group with no treatment. The target structures in question were the personal *a* and the subjunctive (Farley and McCollan, 54).

In Farley and McCollan (2004), two means of assessment were used. The first means was a grammaticality judgment test (GJT) where the subjects read Spanish utterances and responded with possible, not possible, or I don’t know. The pretest included both the personal *a* and the subjunctive along with distracter items. In the immediate posttests, “the GJT included only test items for the L2 form just presented and distracter items related to mood selection and object markers,” (Farley and McCollan, 57). The second means of assessment was through a picture description task (PDT). This required one-on-one interaction with a researcher and was audio recorded. The first session determined the subjects’ beginning development stage. While the PDT presented contexts in which the subjects were to produce the personal *a* and the subjunctive, it also required them to produce other structural features. The pretest PDT included

one oral task with two parts, and the posttest “was administered separately for each structure immediately following corresponding treatment,” (Farley and McCollan, 57).

The results concluded that although nearly the entirety of the group of 29 were ready for the personal *a*, there was very little development shown. Yet, while less than half was ready for the subjunctive, almost all those treated with PI and half of the other learners showed development in the subjunctive. It was also discovered that PI allowed improvement in L2 learners’ oral production as well. The study also proved contrary to Pienemann’s development procedures and Johnston’s hierarchy. Those who were considered unready still demonstrated stage development if they were exposed to PI or SI. . “...these results support the hypothesis that readiness is not a stronger predictor of development than instruction type,” (Farley and McCollan, 59). The issue as to why the development of the personal *a* was low in ready learners could be attributed to the fact that the personal *a* is not covered nearly as much as the subjunctive in modern Spanish curricula. It is also redundant much of the time (ie., *a mí, a tí, a nosotros*). Hence, past instruction could have played a part in the results of the study. Still, this study demonstrates that readiness of the learners’ is not as great a factor as the instruction type (Farley and McCollan, 60).

Discussion

Production of the subjunctive in textbook activities ignores research on the subjunctive and questions the emphasis given to subjunctive (production activities) in the intermediate curricula. In this thesis, many factors were discussed to illustrate the complexity of the Spanish subjunctive and its acquisition, including instruction type or teaching practices and their implications on learners’ development of the subjunctive.

From a lexical perspective, VanPatten's Lexical Preference Principle is demonstrated to affect how L2 Spanish learners acquire the subjunctive. L2 learners tend to depend upon lexical features found in the sentence to derive subjunctive mood, and thus only L1 Spanish speakers could pick up on the disconnects between expressions of (non) assertion in the main clause followed by the mood markers in the subordinate verb. From a syntactic standpoint, Collentine demonstrates that students haven't acquired the pragmatic or syntactic features required to necessitate the use of the subjunctive. He further states that the subjunctive is not that pertinent to intermediate L2 Spanish learners. Furthermore, Gudmestad (2006) shows the disconnect between intermediate and advanced Spanish-learners with regards to subjunctive mood selection. Where irregular verbs as well as other linguistic features such as futurity helped predict selection of the subjunctive in advanced learners, irregular verbs worked with no other linguistic feature as a determining factor of subjunctive mood selection in intermediate students. Isabelli and Nishida (2005) conclude that study abroad cannot fully guarantee that students select the correct mood in subordinate clauses. Collentine (2010) states that even heritage Spanish speakers are vulnerable to problems with linguistic competence of the subjunctive and that syntactic and discourse-pragmatic modules don't function in the same way between L1 and L2.

Though this research has gone on for the better part of three decades, modern Spanish curricula and textbooks demonstrate continued emphasis on the subjunctive, a feature that Collentine (2010) shows only constitutes 7.2% of oral and written Spanish. In a conversation with Dr. Dolly J. Young of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, she stated that the majority of instructors that teach Spanish at the university level have taken one course in methods and fewer have studied second language acquisition. The majority specialize in literature. Naturally, this would provide a bias in favor of textbooks characterized by instruction over the subjunctive

in the third and fourth semesters even though learners are characteristically novice high to intermediate high speakers. However, the research provided in this thesis demonstrates that it is possible to take other approaches to teaching students the Spanish subjunctive that are just as (if not more) effective than contemporary approaches, and could perhaps provide teachers and students more time to dedicate to other aspects of the Spanish language.

In Collentine (1998), it was determined that processing instruction yielded great results for students attempting to acquire the subjunctive. Farley (2002), after a two-way battle with Collentine, still confirms that PI seems to outweigh tradition instruction. Kirk (2013) shows that combining output instruction with processing instruction doesn't yield better results than just PI alone. If those who make the Spanish curricula have no concern for the readiness of L2 Spanish learners to acquire a certain form, Farley and McCollan (2004) state that that's not even as important a factor as the type of instruction given, and in their study, PI proved effective in the acquisition of subjunctive even in oral contexts.

Some textbooks (i.e., *¿Sabías qué?* and *Vivelo*) demonstrate that it is possible to focus on other factors of the Spanish language while utilizing PI to help learners begin their acquisition of the subjunctive. If publishers are unwilling to yield to the amount of subjunctive required in textbooks, perhaps the integration of PI, which is more focus on indirect acquisition rather than forced production, can help guide Spanish curricula in a new direction.

Appendix A:

Chart of Subjunctive in Textbooks

	Present			Imperfect (past)	present perfect	past perfect	conditional perfect (si clauses)
Book	Noun clause	adj. clause	adv. Clause	-	-	-	-
Rumbos (10)	4	7	7	8	9	9	9
Imagina (10)	3	4	6	6	7	8	9
Anda (12)	2,3,9	5,9	7,9	10	4	10	10
Más alla de las palabras (32)	7,8,9,17, 19	18,19	-	11,17,18, 23	-	-	23
Al corriente (15)	8	11	12	12	12	12	15
Fusion (6)	2,3	5	6	Appendix	5	5	Appendix
Enlaces (6)	3	3	3	5	6	6	6
Fuentes (12)	5,6,8	7	7,8	9	6	11	11
Interacciones (12)	5,6	9	11	11	10	12	11,12
Asi lo veo (12)	3,9		4, 12	8	6		8
Más alla de las palabras (Intermediate—rojo) (15)	7,8,9	11(imperfe ct in adj. Clauses)		11			14
Más (12)	5,6	7	8	10	9	11	
Total	Total						
154	66						

Note:

A [-] indicates a lack of reference to this linguistic feature in the table of contents.

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