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A Cognitive-Operative Approach to Improve the

L2 Learning of the Spanish Subjunctive

by

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ABSTRACT

The Spanish subjunctive has proved to be quite difficult for L2 learners to acquire. Previous studies have mostly focused on L2 learners with English as L1 and have concluded that not having a distinctive subjunctive morphology in English or lacking knowledge of complex syntax represent important reasons for those difficulties. Another important reason is the way Spanish mood contrast is generally introduced in the L2 classroom, that is, by means of the traditional approach. This method encourages the memorisation of lengthy lists of subordinate structures depending on the multifarious syntactic-semantic connections between the matrix and the embedded verb (plus a different list of exceptions in which those connections do not apply). Moreover, the traditional approach does not seem to consider important discourse-pragmatic factors which also affect mood contrast.

Firstly, this investigation aimed to corroborate, by means of a series of perception and production tasks, whether the aforementioned difficulties were common to L2 learners within a specific setting, that is, UK undergraduate students taking Spanish as a subject of study. The methodology also comprised a teacher questionnaire and class observation in order to examine teachers' views on the difficulties in acquiring the Spanish subjunctive and the teaching method/s most commonly employed to introduce this mood to their students. One of the main outcomes confirmed that a traditional approach to teaching mood contrast generally prevails in the SFL (Spanish as a Foreign Language) classroom with unsatisfactory results.

A central aspect of this investigation involved an intervention study in which a new method to introduce mood contrast for the first time based on a Cognitive-Operative approach was tested. This method is grounded on the single binary opposition of *declaration/non-declaration* proposed by Ruiz Campillo (2004), which constitutes a single operative value/mechanism to explain all the mood choices without exception. The results were very positive and provided sufficient empirical evidence to demonstrate that this approach has higher effectiveness than the traditional method and thus the potential to improve the L2 learning of Spanish mood contrast.

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A todos vosotros, por estar ahí.

1. INTRODUCTION

This investigation focuses on the teaching of the Spanish subjunctive mood and seeks to examine an alternative method, the cognitive-operative approach, which may improve the learning of Spanish mood contrast by L2 learners within a UK university setting.

After many years working as a teacher of Spanish as a Foreign Language in Higher and Further Education environments, I have had the opportunity to observe time and again how challenging it is for students to learn mood contrast, especially when these students have English as their L1, as is the case for most participating in the present study. The literature on the subject shows us that, even after years of instruction, students select mood poorly in oral and written production, as described in Collentine's (2010) summary of previous studies. Furthermore, some authors (Collentine, 1995; Givón, 1979; Johnston, 1995; Lozano, 1972; Terrell, Baycroft & Perrone, 1987) have argued that the lack of a marked subjunctive morphology in the L2 learners' L1 (e.g. English) is one of the main causes for this lack of acquisition.

I anticipated that perhaps the problem rather lies with the way we teach this point of grammar to our students. Personally, as an L1 learner, I was taught the subjunctive mood at school and subsequently at university by means of a formalist approach, which mostly consisted of the deductive introduction of this mood's numerous morphosyntactic and semantical (and/or lexical) traits in the form of classifications or lists. For instance, I learned that the subjunctive was characteristic of subordination, therefore it could only appear in embedded clauses. I also learned what matrices (i.e. main verbs or impersonal expressions) trigger the subjunctive mood in the embedded verb, along with the exceptions, that is, similar or the same matrices triggering the indicative mood instead. In addition, I was introduced to the different concepts traditionally associated with this mood, such as subjectivity, unreality, hypotheticality, counter-factuality,

etc. This introduction was largely descriptive, since it was based on the 'uses' or 'effects' of the subjunctive mood (i.e. 'what is said'), and it was mainly supported by academic studies carried out by linguists which provided the 'rules' and the 'exceptions' to those rules. Furthermore, all the instances listed to illustrate each particular case of mood contrast were generally drawn from written formal contexts (e.g. novels, newspapers, journals, etc.), ignoring other less formal contexts belonging to oral language, for instance. Consequently, that is how I believed I had to introduce it to my own students when I became a teacher of SFL.

As a matter of fact, this is the approach that seems to prevail among teachers of SFL, since an exclusively communicative and inductive method (which might, in other contexts, be more commonly deployed at present) does not appear to be successful when dealing with such a challenging point of grammar. This may be due to this mood's lack of saliency (i.e. the present subjunctive regular morphology is nearly identical to that of the indicative and it has medial sentential position), its low frequency in the input, in contrast to the indicative mood (e.g. Troya Déniz, 2007), and the fact that some L1s do not have a productive subjunctive system so learners do not have a 'comparison model' at their disposal on which to base their assumptions.

It is important to point out that, although there is a clear distinction between the two main teaching methods largely employed in the L2 classroom, that is, the formalist approach and the communicative approach (i.e. communicative language teaching: CLT), within the context of this PhD thesis, and thus when dealing with Spanish mood contrast instruction, the term 'traditional' is used in reference to the combination of *both* approaches. The formalist approach is based largely on the explicit instruction of rules and vocabulary (as fixed structures) that L2 learners need to rote learn in order to complete activities which promote their entrenchment. The communicative approach would tend to do the above implicitly and also employ practice activities involving (oral) interaction; but, as noted above, is not thought to be successful when

used exclusively (i.e. without a formalist grounding). What I henceforth term the 'traditional' approach is therefore largely formalist, especially when introducing the subjunctive to L2 learners, but also includes practice activities typical of the communicative approach, since L2 learners need to develop their comprehension and production skills (i.e. communication skills) of the target language at the same time.

I began reading about alternative methods to teaching mood contrast which could improve its acquisition by L2 learners and came across the cognitive-operative approach (COA), which is mostly grounded in cognitive linguistics, and more specifically, in cognitive grammar. This method seeks to reduce grammar decisions to a single operative value or mechanism based on the intrinsic meaning/s of each grammar form. The author José Plácido Ruiz Campillo (2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2008, 2012) developed a theory in which a single conceptual pair was able to explain all the cases of mood contrast in Spanish without exception: the concept of *declaration* and its counterpart *non-declaration*. The more I read about this approach the more I became convinced that it could work if implemented appropriately.

For instance, this method does not rely on the rote learning of lengthy lists of subjunctive structures in order to be used under controlled conditions (e.g. fill-in-the-gap exercise which requires students to conjugate the infinitive form of some verbs in brackets), and which will probably be most useful when applied immediately subsequent to that introduction taking place. Instead, it relies on the understanding of 'why' the speaker (or subject) uses the subjunctive (or the indicative) based exclusively (and without exception) on a single conceptual pair (i.e. operative value). Furthermore, Ruiz Campillo (2007a) developed a Mood Map (for further details, see Figure 3 in chapter 2, section 2.3.4) which comprises 3 main contexts. These three contexts are subclassified in 6 sub-contexts: two declarative and four non-declarative. By using the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration as a mechanism, students should

be able to classify themselves all the indicative/subjunctive structures which they will encounter throughout their learning process of the target language by means of this map. Thus, in theory, this method represents a simplification or facilitation of what students need to do to understand and use the subjunctive mood in Spanish.

Due to my lack of success when employing a traditional approach, I decided to develop an experiment in order to explore the potential of the cognitive-operative method among my students (i.e. undergraduate students). A relevant aspect that should be stressed is that this experiment represents the first to test the functionality of the COA from the beginning of the L2 learning process of Spanish mood contrast and this constitutes the most important contribution of the present investigation. As a consequence, the main objective of this PhD study is to seek answers to the following main research question (i.e. 1) and related sub-questions (i.e. 2-5):

1. Is the cognitive-operative single mechanism approach more effective than the traditional approach to learn the Spanish subjunctive?

2. From a theoretical perspective, why do L2 learners of Spanish find it difficult to learn the subjunctive by means of the traditional approach?

3. How effective is traditional instruction in enabling L2 learners in a UK Higher Education context to learn the subjunctive?

4. On what theoretical basis do proponents of the COA consider that this could be a more effective approach?

5. When the COA is translated into classroom instruction, is there evidence to suggest that this has potential to be more effective than the traditional approach?

In order to answer these questions, this thesis went through several periods of research and trial-and-error experimentation which ended up adhering to the following format:

a) Chapter 2 covers the literature review and deals with general concepts regarding language acquisition and learning. It also includes a comprehensive analysis of the main approaches to teaching the Spanish subjunctive within L2 settings, contrasting the traditional method (as outlined above) with the cognitive-operative method. Therefore, this chapter seeks to answer research questions 2 and 4.

b) The methodology chapter (chapter 3) describes the research methods employed within this investigation, first, to explore the type of instruction received by L2 learners who are completing a UK university degree when being taught the Spanish mood contrast and whether this instruction is effective enough to achieve its acquisition; and second, to test a different method based on a cognitive-operative approach in order to examine whether this may bring an improvement in these L2 learners' mood contrast abilities. In order to do the above, a mixed-method approach was used.

c) Thereafter, the results for all the experimental methods employed are presented in two separate chapters. Chapter 4 (i.e. pre-intervention study) describes UK teachers' preferred method/s to introduce mood contrast in their language classroom and examines L2 learners' comprehension and production abilities after having been taught mood contrast by means of the most widely employed traditional method, and therefore answers research question 3. Chapter 5 (i.e. intervention study) consists of the implementation of the COA based on the conceptual pair of declaration/non-declaration, which is carried out by means of a two-staged experiment in which the comprehension and production of the conceptual pair are examined within a university setting, and therefore answers research question 5.

d) A final section comprising the discussion of the findings and main conclusions (i.e. chapters 6 and 7) draws to a close this investigation.

2. PREVIOUS STUDIES

2.1. Overview

This chapter aims to provide an answer to research question 2: From a theoretical perspective, why do L2 learners of Spanish find it difficult to learn the subjunctive by means of the traditional approach? It also aims to provide an answer to question 4: On what theoretical basis do proponents of the COA (i.e. cognitive-operative approach) consider that this could be a more effective approach?

It begins with an account of the most relevant research literature surrounding the study of the Spanish mood contrast, highlighting the challenges that may arise when L2 learners attempt to learn it and to the various methods employed in the L2 classroom to introduce this point of grammar and how effective they might be.

The main challenges are concerned with the multiple linguistic characteristics of mood contrast in Spanish, which include, for instance, that this language has an intricate verbal morphology and that the syntax of the subjunctive mood is quite complex since it involves subordination (as described in detailed in section 2.2.1). L2 learners whose L1 has a simpler system, such as English, have an extra difficulty when acquiring tense, person and mood in Spanish. Furthermore, mood contrast is also affected by semantic and discourse-pragmatic aspects which make it one of the most challenging points of grammar all throughout the learning process.

The two most popular teaching methods employed in the language classroom, that is, the formalist approach and the communicative approach (together referred to as 'traditional'), are discussed in detail, specifically when introducing Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners (i.e. section 2.4). This leads to the conclusion that both approaches seem to deal with this instruction

similarly, that is, they both rely on the L2 learners' ability to memorise lengthy lists of subjunctive and indicative structures based on the multiple linguistic characteristics surrounding both moods, plus a different list with the exceptions. Another relevant outcome was that neither appear to be successful enough in achieving the learning of Spanish mood contrast by L2 learners.

All this is followed by a detailed account of the cognitive-operative approach (COA) in relation to the instruction of Spanish mood selection (i.e. section 2.5). This requires first introducing an account of Cognitive Grammar, since this is the theoretical basis of the cognitive-operative approach. The COA represents a change of perspectives on the purpose and nature of grammar instruction, and also integrates more recent research-led techniques so that more effective pedagogies might be conceived. This thesis shows that, by means of a single mechanism to choose between moods (i.e. the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration), and by employing structured-input activities, which have been proven to facilitate the learning of the morphology and syntax of the Spanish subjunctive, the COA has the potential to greatly improve the learning of mood contrast by L2 learners from an early stage of the learning process.

2.2. Linguistic Theoretical Accounts of the Subjunctive

This section includes an account of some linguistic approaches to the subjunctive, focusing primarily on descriptive aspects. A description of this mood's morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic qualities is provided; these linguistic descriptions are fundamental to the traditional (formalist) approach to the study and teaching of Spanish mood contrast in L1 and L2 settings.

2.2.1. The Morphosyntax of the Subjunctive

In the current Spanish verbal system, there are three different moods: indicative, imperative and subjunctive. According to Bosque (2012), the indicative is the verbal mood by default. It can appear in simple sentences (e.g. *Trabajamos^{IND} juntos* – We work together), main clauses and subordinate clauses (e.g. *Veo^{IND} que has^{IND} traído a tu hijo* – I see that you brought your son). The imperative is restricted to matrix clauses and it is also limited to a particular function of the language: orders and requests. It shares most of its morphology with the subjunctive (i.e. the first-person plural forms, the "usted/es" forms, which correspond to the 'formal' second-person singular and plural, and all the negative forms). The subjunctive, however, is nearly exclusively used in subordinate clauses. This means that it is selected by matrices in the indicative (e.g. *Quiero que* – I want (you/he/...) to) or impersonal expressions (e.g. *Ojalá* – I wish), with the exception of a few fixed expressions (e.g. *¡Viva^{SUB} el Rey!* – Long live the King!) and the formal or negative imperative, as mentioned above (e.g. *Pasen^{SUB}* – Come in).

The subjunctive can be selected by lexical or functional heads (i.e., nouns, adjectives, prepositions, subordinate conjunctions, and adverbs); by a modal operator (i.e., adverb *no*, also called *polarity subjunctive,* or interrogation); and it can also appear without a trigger, substituting imperatives in the formal second person (i.e., *usted/ustedes*) and negative structures, as mentioned above. The following are some examples illustrating some of the numerous ways in which the subjunctive is selected:

(1) *Es una **maravilla** que tengamos^{SUB} días libres para ir de vacaciones*. (noun)

   (It is a wonder that we have some free time to go on holiday).

(2) *Es **importante** que termines^{SUB} el artículo esta semana*. (adjective)

   (It is important that you finish the article this week).

(3) *Te lo digo **para** que no te pille^{SUB} por sopresa*. (preposition)

(I'm telling you this so as not to catch you by surprise)

(4) **Aunque** *quieras*^SUB *ir ahora, tendrás que esperar.* (subordinate conjunction)

(Even if you want to go now, you'll have to wait)

(5) **Quizás** *compre*^SUB *ese coche que te gusta tanto.* (adverb)

(Perhaps I'll buy that car you like so much)

(6) **No creo que** *pueda*^SUB *venir a trabajar mañana.* (negative polarity)

(I don't think I'll be able to come to work tomorrow)

Another syntactic characteristic of some instances of the obligatory subjunctive (i.e. subjunctives that are selected by expressions denoting wish, purpose or order) is 'obviation' or 'disjoint reference'. This phenomenon refers to a particular situation when the subjunctive cannot be used if there is co-reference between the subjects of the embedded and the matrix clauses, and therefore, an infinitival complement is used instead. The following two examples illustrate this:

(7) Quiero$^{\text{1st per.sing.}}$ cantar$^{\text{INF.(1st per.sing.)}}$ profesionalmente.

(I want to sing professionally).

(8) Quiero$^{\text{1st per.sing.}}$ que cantes$^{\text{PRES.SUB (2nd.per.sing)}}$ profesionalmente.

(I want that you sing$^{\text{SUB}}$ professionally – I want you to sing professionally).

In sentence (7) the subject of the main clause or matrix (*Quiero*) is the first person singular (*yo* – I), and the subject of the subordinate clause (*cantar profesionalmente*) is also the first person singular (*yo* – I), so an infinitive complement is used. However, in sentence (8) the subject of the main clause or matrix (*Quiero*) is the first person singular (*yo* – I), but the subject of the subordinate clause (*que cantes profesionalmente*) is the second person singular (*tú* – you), and therefore, there is no co-reference and a subjunctive structure is used.

However, there are some factors that might prevent (or at least mitigate) the obviation effect

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(Ruwet, 1984, discussed in Quer, 2006), such as the use of a modal, or the passive voice, among others. Quer (2006) employs the following examples to illustrate this:

(9) *Espero que pueda ir.* (instead of *Espero poder ir*)

(I hope that I am/will be able to go – I hope to be able to go)

(10) *Espero que sea autorizado a ir.* (instead of *Espero ser autorizado a ir*)

(I hope that I am/will be authorised to go – I hope to be authorised to go).

Despite there being coreference of (syntactic) subjects in sentences (9) and (10) above, the 'implied' subjects giving permission or authorisation are different, hence the prevention of the obviation effect.

Regarding the subjunctive morphology, it is worth noting that, in Spanish, there is a whole set of verbal forms exclusive to the subjunctive mood, which includes several 'tenses' (i.e. four/five[1] tenses and six different inflectional forms, each comprising six different endings denoting person, as seen in tables 1 and 2 below). This set works in parallel with the indicative system[2], which comprises nine more tenses with its various forms. We would need to add two extra forms for the imperative (i.e. non-formal second person singular and plural). This further supports the idea that Spanish has an extensive derivational and inflectional morphology.

The morphology of the subjunctive system stems from the indicative morphology. For instance, the base form of the present subjunctive is the first person singular (i.e. *yo* – I) of the present indicative. If this form is irregular, then the six different forms denoting person will have that irregularity in the present subjunctive. The base form of the imperfect subjunctive, however, is the third person plural (i.e. *ellos/ellas/ustedes* – they/formal plural you) of the preterit, although

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[1] Although the future subjunctive disappeared from the Spanish verbal system some centuries ago, it has remained in a few set phrases (e.g. *Donde fueres*[FUT.SUB] *haz lo que vieres*[FUT.SUB] – wherever you might go, do what you see - when in Rome, do as the Romans do).

[2] The indicative comprises nine different tenses without including the continuous forms: present, preterit, imperfect, present perfect, pluperfect, future, future perfect, conditional, and conditional perfect.

there exist two different endings for the six forms denoting person (i.e. in –*ra,* and in –*se*). Table 1 illustrates this:

Table 1: The present and imperfect subjunctive morphology

Verb	Present Subjunctive	Imperfect Subjunctive
TENER (have^INF) 1st person singular Present Indicative: ***tengo,*** *tienes, tiene, tenemos, tenéis, tienen* 3rd person plural Preterit: *tuve, tuviste, tuvo, tuvimos, tuvisteis,* ***tuvieron***	*tenga* (I) *tengas* (you) *tenga* (s/he or formal you) *tengamos* (we) *tengáis* (plural you) *tengan* (they or formal plural you)	*tuviera / tuviese* (I) *tuvieras / tuvieses* (you) *tuviera / tuviese* (s/he or formal you) *tuviéramos / tuviésemos* (we) *tuvierais / tuvieseis* (plural you) *tuvieran / tuviesen* (they or formal plural you)

In addition, verb endings denoting person in the present subjunctive are shared with the present indicative's, although these are swapped depending on the type of verb (i.e. -AR or -ER/-IR), as illustrated in Table 2 and taking as a reference the third person singular of each verb:

Table 2: The present indicative and present subjunctive morphology

TYPE OF VERB	PRESENT INDICATIVE 3rd person singular	PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE 3rd person singular
-AR	cant**a** (s/he sings)	cant**e** (s/he sings)
-ER/-IR	com**e** (s/he eats) viv**e** (s/he lives)	com**a** (s/he eats) viv**a** (s/he lives)

The morphology of the perfective forms (i.e. present perfect and pluperfect) simply takes the present subjunctive for the auxiliary verb (i.e. *haber* - have) in the case of the present perfect subjunctive, and the imperfect subjunctive for the same auxiliary verb (i.e. *haber* – have) in the case of the pluperfect subjunctive. Table 3 illustrates this:

Table 3: the present perfect and pluperfect subjunctive morphology

Auxiliary Verb	Present Perfect Subjunctive	Pluperfect Subjunctive
HABER (have^INF/AUX)	*haya tenido* *hayas tenido* *haya tenido* *hayamos tenido* *hayáis tenido* *hayan tenido*	*hubiera or hubiese + tenido* *hubieras or hubieses + tenido* *hubiera or hubiese + tenido* *hubiéramos or hubiésemos + tenido* *hubierais or hubieseis + tenido* *hubieran or hubiesen + tenido*

Regarding the use of the different 'tenses' of the subjunctive, it should be noted that this mood has been linked to the violation of the concept of *consecutio temporum* (e.g. Sessarego, 2008). This concept claims that there needs to be agreement between the tenses of verbs in related clauses, as illustrated by the following two examples in the indicative mood:

(11) *Dice$^{PRES.}$ que necesitas$^{PRES.}$ terminar los deberes antes de las cinco.*

    (She says you need to finish your homework before five)

(12) *Dijo$^{PRET.}$ que necesitabas$^{IMP.}$ terminar los deberes antes de las cinco.*

    (She said you needed to finish your homework before five)

However, this concept is sometimes disregarded when using the subjunctive mood in the embedded clause. For instance, the present indicative in the matrix can be followed by the imperfect, the perfect or the present subjunctive in the embedded clause, as in the following three examples:

(13) *Espero$^{PRES.}$ que tuvieras$^{IMP.SUB.}$ un día agradable ayer.*

    (I hope you had a nice day yesterday).

(14) *Espero$^{PRES.}$ que tengas$^{PRES.SUB.}$ un día agradable mañana.*

    (I hope you'll have a nice day tomorrow).

(15) *Espero$^{PRES.}$ que hayas tenido$^{PERF.SUB.}$ un día agradable hoy.*

    (I hope you've had a nice day today).

The imperfect subjunctive, traditionally a past tense (like the imperfect indicative), as well as referring to a past event, could also carry the idea of a present event and even a future event, as in sentence (16) below:

(16) *Me gustaría que te vinieras mañana conmigo.*

    I would like that you come$^{PAST.SUB.}$ tomorrow with me.

    (I would like you to come with me tomorrow).

A study by González Rodríguez (2003) maintained that, in subordination, the subjunctive mood may have 'tense' independence (like the indicative) depending on the lexical class of the main verb. In this way, for instance, volitive verbs impose a restriction caused by their lexical characteristics, since they require the event denoted in the embedded clause to be subsequent to the event described in the main clause. This is illustrated in the following sentence:

(17) *Quiere que estudien$^{PRES.SUBJ.}$/*estudiaran$^{PAST.SUBJ.}$ su asignatura.*

   (She wants them to study / that they *studied her subject/course)

On the other hand, factive-emotive verbs (e.g. *sorprender* – to be surprised, *molestar* – to be bothered, etc.) show more 'tense' independence, as illustrated in the following sentence:

(18) *Me molesta que se examinen$^{PRES.SUBJ.}$/examinaran$^{IMP.SUBJ.}$ una semana después.*

   (It bothers me that they sit/sat the exam a week later)

Thus, it can be assumed that the morphosyntactic traits of the Spanish subjunctive are intricate and extensive. Learning these do pose a considerable obstacle, not only for L1 learners but also, and above all, for L2 learners. Furthermore, it would probably be an even major obstacle for learners whose L1 lacks a productive subjunctive system, such as English.

2.2.2. The Semantics of the Subjunctive

This section offers an account of the semantics of the subjunctive mood, mostly in contrast with the indicative mood. Many linguistic studies have focused on the description of this mood's multiple semantic characteristics. At the same time, many of these studies have attempted the search for a concept (or conceptual pair) which can explain all cases of mood selection in Spanish, some with more success than others.

For instance, Sampanis (2012) claims that the term (semantic) *modality* is not easy to explain. In his discussion of modality, Sampanis (2012) divides it into subsets as follows:

1. *Epistemic modality* relates to the speaker's degree of certainty or "attitude to the truth value or factual status of the proposition" (described as *propositional modality* by Palmer (2001: 24)).

2. *Deontic modality* has traditionally been characterised in terms of permission and obligation (Kratzer, 1979; Palmer, 1986). However, it may also be defined as an indication of the degree of the moral desirability of the state of affairs expressed in the utterance. Sampanis (2012) considers every manifestation of necessity and potentiality as belonging to deontic modality.

3. *Dynamic modality* describes the ability or willingness attributed to the speaker or subject of the clause (e.g. volitional predicates).

Modality can be expressed by conditionals, by epistemic verbs (e.g. think, believe), by adjectives after copula verbs (e.g. it is obligatory that / he is able to), by modal verbs (e.g. you may leave now), by modal adverbs (e.g. perhaps, maybe, possibly), by nouns (e.g. necessity), and by verbal morphology (e.g. Spanish subjunctive mood).

Research on mood contrast in Spanish from a semantic approach has been characterised by the contrast of several (pairs of) concepts, where normally the marked concept is associated with the indicative and the non-marked counterpart is associated with the subjunctive. One of these semantic concepts is the concept of 'assertion' (and its counterpart, 'non-assertion'), which can be defined as the commitment of the speaker to the truth of their utterance in communication. This concept has its origin in the philosophical notion of assertion by Stalnaker (1978), where an assertion is produced by any new proposition provided by the participants of a conversation in the common ground (i.e. to the set of propositions that the participants view as being true at a specific point of the conversation). This author adds that "the essential effect of an assertion is to change the presuppositions of the participants in the conversation by adding the content of what is asserted to what is presupposed" (1978: 323). Typically, the indicative conveys

assertion and the subjunctive conveys non-assertion. But this semantic notion of 'assertion' is not adequate to explain all the cases of indicative/subjunctive usage, since, for instance, a speaker's intention to present a statement as factual or true might not guarantee the truth of the utterance at any specific point (e.g. I love you). Other authors have subsequently redefined this concept (e.g. Lunn, 1995; Mejías-Bikandi, 1994, 1996) in order to be able to explain all the uses of the Spanish indicative/subjunctive contrast, without complete success.

Another conceptual pair which has been employed to explain the contrast between the indicative and the subjunctive is the opposition 'realis' vs. 'irrealis'. Due to their etymological affinity to the adjectives 'real' and 'unreal', these terms are also implemented to denote the degree of truth expressed in a statement or utterance. Indicative will be paired off with the concept of 'realis' and the subjunctive with 'irrealis'.

Sampanis (2012), for instance, employs this concept (i.e. realis/irrealis) in terms of factuality. Therefore, a verbal form is factual when the state of affairs described by the proposition has already taken place, it is taking place now, or it has a generic meaning (i.e. it can be actual/factual in any possible moment, as in "Spain is in Europe"). On the other hand, a non-factual verbal form denotes an event that has not taken place yet or cannot take place at all (i.e. counterfactual). But there are even more issues with this distinction. As a clear example, the future imperfect in Spanish (and in many other languages) belongs to the indicative mood, but what is expressed by this verb form is undeniably non-factual.

Whitley (2002) analyses the notions of 'realis' and 'irrealis' and adds that 'realis' is associated with actualised situations that are known by (direct and) *quasi*-direct perception (e.g. *Mi madre cree que eres^{IND} perfecta para mí* – My mother thinks you are perfect for me), whereas 'irrealis' is limited to situations within the sphere of thought and alternative worlds (e.g. *Luis quiere que vayamos^{SUB} a su fiesta este fin de semana* – Luis wants us to go to his party this weekend).

Other authors (Farkas, 1992; Giannakidou, 1997; Terrell & Hooper, 1974) relate these concepts to the concepts of 'contextual commitment' and 'veridicality', which are related to the concept of assertion, but with the idea of the speaker's commitment to the truth-value of the proposition, which will explain, for instance, why in the following example the use of *prometer* (to promise) selects the indicative mood in contrast to *querer* (to want), which selects subjunctive:

(19) *Luis quiere que Lidia vaya^{SUB} a su fiesta el viernes.*

(Luis wants Lidia to go to his party on Friday)

(20) *Lidia promete que irá^{IND} a la fiesta de Luis el viernes.*

(Lidia promises to go to Luis's party on Friday)

Quer's model (1998, 2001) is based on the notions of 'assertion', 'presupposition' and 'contextual commitment'. This author maintains that subordinate clauses introduce specific models of interpretation into the context. In Spanish, shifts in the model of evaluation of a (subordinate) proposition's assertiveness are marked by the subjunctive mood. Embedded propositions that are estimated as true – due to the speaker's commitment to the truth-value of the statement or the integral/intrinsic nature of the event – are weak intensional predicates[3]. Some examples include beliefs, promises and reported assertions:

(21) *Lidia cree que irá^{IND} a la fiesta de Luis*

(Lidia thinks that she'll go to Luis's party)

(22) *Lidia promete que irá^{IND} a la fiesta de Luis*

(Lidia promises that she'll go to Luis's party)

(23) *Lidia dice que irá^{IND} a la fiesta de Luis*

(Lidia says that she'll go to Luis's party)

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[3] Intensional verbs are those which take complement clauses as arguments and are divided in two types: weak (or veridical) and strong (or non-veridical), depending on whether at least one epistemic agent (i.e. the speaker or subject of the main verb) is committed to the truth of the complement (Giannakidou, 1994, 1995, 1998, 2011).

The above examples are characterised by the presence of the indicative mood, since the matrix verb introduces only one conceivable world, where the truth-value of the evaluated model is asserted. On the other hand, when the matrix verb presents a shift in the model of interpretation that consists in the evaluation of the subordinate predicate as an alternative realization of the actual world (in future or counterfactual situations), the subjunctive is used:

(24) *Luis exige que Lidia vaya*^{SUB} *a su fiesta.*

    (Luis demands that Lidia go(es) to his party)

(25) *Luis quiere que venga*^{SUB} *mucha gente a su fiesta.*

    (Luis wants that a lot of people come to his party)

For this type of shift, Quer proposes the notion of strong intensional predicates. These predicates introduce a set of possible worlds in which the truth of the embedded proposition is evaluated, or to put it differently, "the worlds introduced are not compatible with the world that models reality according to the subject" (Borgonovo, 2003). The matrix verbs in sentences (24) and (25) open the possibility to several outcomes. The veridicality of the above propositions cannot be asserted because several realizations could take place that might not coincide with what the speaker or subject proposes. Quer's mood distribution relation should not be considered to be exclusively semantic, since it acknowledges the importance of different aspects of discourse interpretation.

It should be noted that the semantics of the Spanish subjunctive has also been the focus of numerous studies, which highlight the complexity of this mood; the account provided here represents merely the tip of the iceberg.

2.2.3. The Pragmatics of the Subjunctive

The last section on the linguistic characteristics of the Spanish subjunctive focuses on studies which have dealt with its pragmatics. A characteristic of some of these studies is that they also

seek a single conceptual pair which may explain most cases of mood contrast, similarly to some of the studies mentioned in the previous section (i.e. 2.2.2), which dealt with this mood's semantics.

Discourse-pragmatics comes into play when both indicative and subjunctive can alternate within the same sentence with a slight change of meaning or implications in what the speaker (or subject of the matrix) communicates. This has been commonly called the 'optional' subjunctive, in contrast to the 'obligatory' subjunctive.

Bustos (1986, in Ahern and Leonetti 2004) and Bustos and García Aliaga (1996, 1998) presented a pragmatic approach to the distribution and interpretation of mood using the Gricean notion of conversational implicature[4] to describe its contribution to utterance interpretation. Ahearn and Leonetti (2004) rely on the post-Gricean pragmatic theory outlined by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) based on the idea that relevance is an organising factor in linguistic communication. One of the most significant characteristics of this theory is the fundamental role attributed to inferential processes in the construction of both the propositional representation being explicitly communicated – the explicature – and the implicit content – implicatures – that may be derived. Ahearn and Leonetti (2004)'s approach is based on the notion of assertion by Mejías-Bikandi (1994), in which the latter points out that speakers mark as assertions those propositions which they intend to express as information regarding some individual's view of reality. In other words, and according to the same author (Mejías-Bikandi 1994: 892), a speaker asserts a proposition P when the intention of the speaker is to indicate that P describes the world as s/he or some other individual perceives it.

Ahern and Leonetti's (2004) study of relative clauses is centred on the pragmatic inferences

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[4] Grice used this concept with regard to examples in communication where what a speaker means goes beyond the meaning literally expressed by a specific utterance (Haugh, 2002). It is essentially what is communicated less what is said.

that the use of the subjunctive activates in the interpretative process of constructing the explicatures of utterances. For these authors, the presence of the subjunctive can actively condition the context of interpretation – understood as the set of linking assumptions used to interpret the utterance. This is illustrated in the following two examples, which Ahern and Leonetti take from Quer (1998):

(26) *Le regalamos un libro que lo entretuvo*[IND]

   (We gave him a book that entertained him)

(27) *Le regalamos un libro que lo entretuviera*[SUB]

   (We gave him a book to entertain him)

The subjunctive triggers a purpose component, or one of pursuing a goal, in the relation between two situations: giving a book and entertaining the receiver with it. But if we add a modifier (i.e. by chance), as in sentence (28), this eradicates the intentional reading, and therefore rules out the subjunctive:

(28) *Por casualidad le regalamos un libro que lo entretuvo*[IND] / *entretuviera*[SUB].

   (By chance we gave him a book that happened to entertain him)

   (*By chance we gave him a book to entertain him)

In the following example by the same authors, the modifiers *Por fin* (at last) and *Finalmente* (finally) act as intensionality-creating expressions, that is, they create an opaque context, or a context whose meaning is dependent on the speaker. In sentence (29), this meaning is derived by assuming a sense of "purpose" (i.e. the speaker has been searching for a book with those characteristics for a long time, and in the end, s/he has achieved his/her goal):

(29) *Por fin / Finalmente leo un libro en el que se analice*[SUB] *el modo...*

   (At last I am reading a book that may analyse verbal moods)

This sense of "purpose" (culmination of a long wait, search or desire) is revealed in the use of

the subjunctive and caused by the intensionality-creating expressions *for fin* and/or *finalmente,* according to Ahern and Leonetti (2004). But it might be the case that this opaque context could be overcome by other more obvious semantic traits when dealing with Spanish relative clauses, and therefore the 'purpose' reading would only be reflected in the modifiers' lexical meaning and not in the embedded verb's mood. The 'rule' explains that when the relative clause refers to a known (or specific) antecedent, the embedded verb will take the indicative mood. Consequently, native speakers could probably choose the following example as more adequate to the situation[5], since the antecedent (i.e. book) is clearly known to the speaker, who is already reading it:

(29)' *Por fin / Finalmente leo un libro en el que se analiza^{IND} el modo...*

   (At last I am reading a book that analyses verbal moods)

According to Ruiz Campillo[6], a possible explanation could be related to the use of the verb "analizar" (to analyse), whose lexical traits bring the focus towards an intrinsic characteristic of the book (that identifies it). If the focus were to be brought towards what this book could do for the speaker, then this 'purpose projection' (caused by the use of *por fin/finalmente*) would become essential. This author suggests the following sentence to illustrate the above:

(30) *Por fin / Finalmente leo un libro que me explique$^{SUB.}$ el modo...*

   (At last I am reading a book that can/might explain to me verbal moods)

Another concept related to the discourse-pragmatics of Spanish mood contrast is the opposition 'background /foreground' information within the embedded proposition. Haverkate (2002) explains that the indicative's pragmatic function is often one of assertion and stating what is most relevant to the topic. The subjunctive mood has a low degree of "information value", that

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[5] In fact, I asked several native speakers (i.e. 15 in total) what mood they would use in that situation and all of them stated that, in their views, the indicative would be the only option.
[6] Personal communication.

is, it tends to connote defocalised information (i.e. background), whereas the indicative denotes focalised information (i.e. foreground), in the same way that the preterit focuses on foreground events and the imperfect on background events in narrative. Other authors (e.g. Farley 2004, VanPatten 1997) also agree with the claim that the subjunctive has low communicative value, since the lexical weight is normally concentrated in the main clause.

This section has stressed the importance of the role of the subjunctive mood's discourse-pragmatic characteristics.

2.2.4. Some Remarks

In summary, the Spanish subjunctive mood has multiple linguistic characteristics and has been widely studied, not only in L2 but also in L1 settings. For instance, this mood is nearly exclusively used in subordinate clauses, which means that it can be triggered by main clauses in the indicative, impersonal expressions, lexical and functional heads, polarity or obviation mechanisms, etc. Its morphology is also the focus of numerous studies, since some forms have disappeared over time (i.e. future subjunctive) and others dispose of two alternatives which in some cases are not completely interchangeable (i.e. imperfect subjunctive). Furthermore, the semantics of this mood has also been the focus of numerous investigations in which several pairs of concepts have been proposed. The main aim of some of these investigations, and others based on the discourse-pragmatics traits of the subjunctive, is the search for a single conceptual pair which may explain all (or the majority of) cases of mood contrast in Spanish (e.g. assertion vs. non-assertion, realis vs. irrealis, foreground vs. background). Lastly, the importance of discourse-pragmatic considerations when dealing with mood contrast has been highlighted. This has also produced numerous studies which have been included in order to draw a relevant and more complete picture of this mood.

It is important to highlight that the numerous morphosyntactic and semantic characteristics of Spanish mood contrast described above represent the basis of the formalist approach within both L1 and L2 instruction settings (further details in section 2.4.1 below), which gives some idea of the challenges that the latter will encounter. Moreover, it is worth noting that the formalist approach does not typically include important discourse-pragmatic aspects which are key to understand some cases of mood contrast in Spanish.

2.3. L2 Learning of the Spanish Subjunctive

This section offers a general view of what previous studies consider L2 learning to be about. It stresses the idea that how a foreign (or second) language should be learned is a challenging and controversial topic for everyone involved: (applied) linguists, acquisition experts, language teachers and L2 learners. Before proceeding with the next related sub-section (i.e. 2.3.1), which deals with some of the contributions made by L1 and L2 acquisition studies on the order (and difficulties) of acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive, some distinctions are drawn regarding the terms 'learning' and 'acquiring' and why, within the context of this investigation, the former is preferred.

2.3.1. L2 Learning Theories

Theorists' and empirical researchers' views on how an L2 should be studied seem to differ. Some (e.g. structuralists) are drawn from the standpoint that language, as a system, comprises a set of abstract elements which are combined by a series of rules or procedures and thus a language might be learned by learning its rules. Researchers with these views believe that underlying competence should be analysed indirectly and under controlled situations in order to be able to measure proficiency, for instance, without considering other aspects concerning communication or real use of that language. However, others (e.g. functionalists) stress the

idea that there should not be a split between competence and performance, since the only option is to study language in use and the only difference between language as a system and observed instances of language performance is one of perspective.

Other more recent views highlight the functionalist idea that L2 proficiency is best understood as having interdependent components and thus make a distinction between the different aspects which contribute to L2 development. An example of this is the CAF (complexity, accuracy and fluency) framework (Skehan, 1989). Complexity refers to the ability to use a wide range of elaborate/complex structures and vocabulary in the target language, accuracy refers to the ability to produce target-like and error-free language, and fluency is the ability to produce the target language (orally) with native-like speed, pronunciation and intonation (Housen, Kuiken and Vedder, 2012). Some researchers have investigated the best way to measure CAF components (e.g. Pallotti, 2009, 2015). In fact, these components (or a close version of them) are commonly used to measure the proficiency of L2 learners within formal contexts of study (e.g. both universities in which the current PhD investigation was carried out).

One controversial matter is whether L1 learning mechanisms continue to operate during L2 learning. Views range from the idea that these mechanisms are very much still in operation during L2 learning, to the theory that they are no longer available, but that the L1 provides a model which can be copied when learning an L2. A position in between would suggest that these learning mechanisms are available only in part, and thus they need to be supplemented by other means. Mitchell, Myles and Marsden, (2019: 102-116) provide a detailed discussion on the different perspectives about whether UG[7] is accessible to L2 learners – and in what degree – as it is to L1 learners (i.e. full access, partial access or no access).

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[7] Universal Grammar is defined by O'Grady et al. (1996) as the "system of categories, mechanisms and constraints shared by all human languages and considered to be innate" (p. 734).

Nowadays, most researchers seem to agree that cross-linguistic influences play an important role in L2 learning and use (Ortega, 2009: 31-54). This phenomenon happens when L2 learners' performance is influenced by the language/s they already know. Furthermore, cross-linguistic influences can be multidirectional, that is, the grammar of the L2 may influence that of the L1 as well (Montrul, 2014).

There is assumed to be a strong relationship between using (or performing in) an L2 and learning an L2 (i.e. developing one's competence in that language), since using or performing in that language involves not only producing output but also comprehending input. For this reason, language input is considered to be essential for normal language learning. According to N. C. Ellis (2005), implicit learning of an L2 occurs during fluent comprehension (i.e. input to intake) and production (i.e. output), whereas explicit learning takes place when there is a conscious effort to negotiate meaning and construct communication. Therefore, interaction represents a core element of L2 learning.

From a psycholinguistic perspective, L2 interaction offers learners the opportunity to adjust the input and adapt it to the situation in order to keep that interaction going. This is achieved by speaking to more fluent speakers (i.e. more advanced learners or native speakers) and involves regular negotiation of meaning. From the sociolinguistic perspective, moreover, interaction allows for the collaborative construction and reconstruction of both the learner's identity and their language knowledge.

Learners should be considered both as individuals and as social beings. Differences between individual learners comprise cognitive and affective factors, such as language aptitude, working memory capacity, learning strategies, language attitudes and motivation. For instance, 'foreign language anxiety'[8] has shown to affect academic, cognitive and social aspects of L2

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[8] This happens when there is an attempt to communicate personally meaningful messages in a foreign language,

learning (MacIntyre, 2017). In addition, the concept of 'multilingual identity' refers to how a learner identifies in relation to the languages they use and learn, as it generally entails the learner's active involvement in the language learning process (Fisher *et al.*, 2018). Lastly, the term learner 'agency' relates to that of identity and it refers to the learner's capacity to choose learning goals and to shape their environment to increase learning opportunities (e.g. Duff, 2013).

An interesting and controversial stance is the one held by the so-called 'emergentism', which is a usage-based theoretical framework and conceives language as "emerging in a dynamic fashion from language use, and its form is strongly and continuously influenced by statistical patterns detected by the learner in the surrounding input" (Mitchell, Myles and Marsden, 2019: 9). Emergentism views L2 learning as bottom-up, that is, general learning mechanisms are used by learners in order to obtain structure and patterns from the language input they receive. Therefore, formal aspects of the language "emerge" from language experience, rather than being fixed abstract features.

Studies within this framework usually focus on input-related factors (e.g. salience of specific features in the L2 input) or learner-related mechanisms (e.g. learners' L1). Regarding the former, some studies have investigated whether particular language features are acquired early or late, for instance, or to what extent some characteristics of the input (e.g. frequency, saliency, redundancy, etc.) can be used to explain why some features are more 'difficult' to learn than others (e.g. Goldschneider & DeKeyser, 2001). Regarding learner-related mechanisms, cross-linguistic influence between the L1 (or previously learned languages) and the L2 represents a popular research topic (e.g. Murakami & Alexopoulou, 2016).

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but we feel we are not projecting an accurate reflection of ourselves (Williams et al., 2015).

Finally, whether instruction enables L2 learning has also been a controversial matter among researchers. Proponents of an interventionist position (e.g. R. Ellis, 1991, 1997, 2005) claim that a better understanding of how instruction affects L2 learning may lead to more effective L2 teaching. Within this context, the term 'effect' refers to any observable change in the L2 learner outcome that can be ascribed to an instructional intervention. On the other hand, the term 'effectiveness' refers to "the extent to which the actual outcomes of instruction match the intended or desired effects (within the practical constraints imposed by the larger instructional context)" (De Graaff & Housen, in Long & Doughty eds., 2009). Regarding the possible beneficial effects of this instruction being implicit or explicit, in the summary of findings from experimental (and quasi-experimental) studies[9] into the effectiveness of L2 instruction undertaken by Norris and Ortega (2000), the overall outcome was that explicit instruction is more effective than implicit instruction.

In fact, one of the main objectives of this investigation is the testing of the effectiveness (also referred to as 'efficacy') of both the traditional approach and the cognitive-operative approach in relation to the teaching/learning of Spanish mood contrast (i.e. chapters 3-5). A relevant aspect to take into consideration is that this point of grammar is believed to be one of the most challenging for L2 learners. This is partly due to the fact that the Spanish subjunctive is said to have low saliency, low input frequency and high redundancy (see sections 2.3.3 and 2.4.4 for further details).

To sum up, it may be said that learning an L2 is a complex phenomenon which entails the development of the learner's capacity to use the target language. Larsen-Freeman (2014) claimed that the ultimate goal of L2 learning is not to develop native speaker competence, but to develop L2 'capacity', that is, the linguistic resources required to function effectively in a

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[9] These studies were carried out between 1980 and 1998.

variety of (desired and evolving) contexts, genres and speaker roles. It is also important to note that there exists a strong link between 'using' (or performing in) an L2 and 'learning' that L2. This refers to the internal processes which activate when the L2 learner uses the target language, since this usually involves both the comprehension of input and the production of output. In that way, in order to 'use' the L2, the learner needs to comprehend the input (i.e. convert it into intake) so that it can be added to the development system (i.e. automatised) and produced as output at a later stage (VanPatten and Cadierno, 1993a). Lastly, it should be stressed that it is unquestionable that the abovementioned concepts of interaction, negotiation of meaning, motivation, multilingual identity and learner agency also play a significant role in L2 learning.

2.3.2. L1 Acquisition and L2 Learning of the Spanish Subjunctive

Krashen (1982) made a distinction between 'acquiring' and 'learning' a second or foreign language. For this author, L2 acquisition is a similar process to the way children develop ability in their L1, since it is a subconscious process and there is no explicit instruction involved. Therefore, it is a natural and automatic process. Evidence of acquisition occurs when the learner is able to use instances of a grammar structure spontaneously in their output, for instance. Language learning, however, is an active process in which the learner attempts to master (or memorise) the different aspects of the language, such as grammar structures, vocabulary, etc. This may be achieved with the help of an instructor or not (i.e. self-instruction). It is worth noting that both concepts are commonly used interchangeably, inasmuch as the learning process of an L2 should result in its acquisition. This is linked to the strong connection between 'learning' and 'using or performing in' the target language, as previously pointed out.

Within the context of this investigation, the term 'learning' is preferred because, to put it simply, it largely refers to the potentially successful results of explicit instruction. For instance,

the subjects involved are L2 learners within a UK university setting, which means that we are dealing with a non-immersion situation, and thus most of the contact with the target language happens in the language classroom, that is, within a formal setting in which very few opportunities to interact with native speakers emerge. Moreover, instances of 'learning' may be recorded by means of assessing learners' communicative abilities under relatively controlled situations (e.g. tasks), but evidence of acquisition is very difficult to gather under these conditions.

Research on L2 acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive mood has mostly focused on L2 learners whose L1 is English. This is largely due to the fact that the majority of these studies have been carried out in the USA, where Spanish is the most studied L2 and which has a large population of native and heritage speakers[10]. These studies have dealt predominantly with the main difficulties L2 learners encounter when being taught mood contrast, since even at advanced levels of proficiency this mood is not often used with enough competence. Therefore, these studies have attempted to describe the intricacies of the Spanish subjunctive and provide possible explanations as to why it is so challenging to acquire for this type of learners, that is, L2 learners with English as L1 within a college/university setting. At the same time, some of these studies have also attempted to provide possible solutions to improve its acquisition.

The natural order of L1 acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive has been taken as a reference within L2 learning contexts. Dulay and Burt's (1972) Identity Hypothesis posits that both L1 acquisition and L2 acquisition follow the same patterns, which implies that the order of acquisition of the L2 is often comparable to the one found in L1 acquisition as having common

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[10] The concept of *Heritage Speaker* is mainly used in the United States to refer to speakers who have been raised as monolingual Spanish-speakers for their first years of life within the home environment. Montrul (2014) describes these speakers as individuals who emigrated in early childhood with their parents and/or relatives or as children of immigrants. Many of them are monolingual or dominant in the heritage language in early childhood, but this changes as bilingualism progresses during elementary school.

neurological causes. However, there is no robust evidence for this, since, according to Contreras and Ferreira (2013), L2 learners' cognitive and affective circumstances differ to a great extent from L1 learners' circumstances.

Table 4 below shows the order of L1 acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive according to various studies (i.e. Aguirre, 2000; Blake, 1883, 1985; Gili Gaya, 1972; López Ornat, 1994; Montrul, 2004; Pérez-Leroux, 1998) and Table 5 shows the order in which the different subjunctive structures are introduced to L2 learners within a university setting[11]. The order in Table 5 is generally followed by the main European textbook publishers[12], although the moment (within the learning process) these structures are introduced might vary according to the type of learner and/or course[13] these textbooks are aimed at. Some textbooks recommend to introduce the Spanish present subjunctive morphology at the end of the second level (i.e. A2+ or pre-intermediate level[14]) and some others do it at the end of the third level (i.e. B1+ or upper-intermediate), depending on which type of learner they are aiming for. It is worth noting that both sequences (i.e. order of L1 acquisition and order of introduction to L2 learners) are very similar.

As may be observed when comparing Table 4 and Table 5 below, the imperative forms are the first to be acquired by native speakers (i.e. monolinguals), which are, at the same time, the first forms to be taught in the L2 classroom. Deontic predicates such as the verb 'want' (i.e. volitive verbs) and their co-reference (or lack of co-reference) follow in both cases. All of this is overlaid by high variability and optionality among both native speakers and L2 learners. The

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[11] This is the order of instruction in the two universities in which this study was carried out.

[12] Some of the most used L2 Spanish textbook publishers include: Difusión, Edelsa, Edinumen, Santillana ELE, SGEL, SM ELE, etc. (Source: http://www.todoele.net/editoriales/Editoriale_list.asp?EditorialesPage=1)

[13] For instance, this learner might be studying Spanish at school or at university level, or the course might be a formal specialised university degree or a language school course aimed at adult learners who intend to use the target language as a means of communication when they go on a holiday to a Spanish-speaking country.

[14] The first label, A2+, corresponds to the terminology employed by Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which includes six different levels of proficiency (i.e. A1-C2); the second label, (pre-)intermediate, corresponds to the terminology most commonly used in the US.

last features to be acquired by monolingual children are the discourse-pragmatic features, which are at the same time the last to be covered (if at all) in the language classroom, once the learner has achieved an advanced level of proficiency.

Table 4: Order of subjunctive acquisition in monolingual children

Age	1;07[15]-1;08	2;00	2;06	4;00-6;00	5;00-7;00	10;00	12;00
D E S C R I P T I O N	Present SUBJ. emerges in imperative contexts. Errors using indicative instead of SUBJ. still common at age 1;10.	The SUBJ. morphology (i.e. present) is acquired.	Use of the SUBJ. with deontic predicates (*querer* – to want; *pedir* – to ask for).	Use of the SUBJ. with relative clauses with unspecified antecedent.	High variability in the use of the SUBJ. Children start showing co-reference between volitional and epistemic verbs.	Use of semantic and lexical strategies to select the SUBJ. in nominal clauses.	Mood selection involving discourse-pragmatic features.

Table 5: L2 instruction of the Spanish subjunctive

Level	A2+	B1	B1+	B2	C1/C2
D E S C R I P T I O N	Present SUBJ. in imperative contexts. Learning of the present SUBJ. morphology.[16] →	Use of the SUBJ. with deontic predicates. Co-reference. Use of the SUBJ. with relative clauses with unspecified antecedent. →	Use of the SUBJ. with temporal clauses (i.e. hypotheticality). This entails the use of semantic and lexical strategies to select the SUBJ. in nominal clauses. Imperfect SUBJ. in conditional sentences. →	Most 'tenses' of the SUBJ. mood are studied (i.e. present, imperfect, perfect and pluperfect).	Uses of the SUBJ. involving discourse-pragmatic traits.

When introducing the Spanish subjunctive mood, most textbooks start with the imperative (i.e. positive and negative forms with mostly regular verbs) and some deontic predicates around the same time (i.e. end of the A2 level of proficiency or beginning of the B1 level). By the next level of proficiency (i.e. B1/B1+), L2 learners see relative clauses with specified (indicative)

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[15] 1;07 corresponds to one year and seven months.

[16] The arrows indicate that these items might be introduced within two different stages of acquisition, depending on multiple factors, such as the academic sector, the learner's age, or the type of textbook, for instance.

and unspecified (subjunctive) antecedents (the latter sometimes introduced at the beginning of the level B2), followed by other volitional and epistemic predicates. Subsequently, all the 'tenses' of the subjunctive are introduced, i.e. imperfect, perfect, and pluperfect, in that order. Only when L2 learners reach more advanced levels of proficiency (i.e. B2+ and C1), might other uses of the subjunctive involving discourse-pragmatic traits be introduced.

Regarding other grammar points, past tenses in Spanish are introduced to students at the A2 level of proficiency, whereas the present subjunctive is introduced later on, at the A2+/B1 level. Contreras and Ferreira's (2013) study comparing the order of (L2) acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive and the two main past tenses (i.e. preterit and imperfect indicative), showed that 88% of the participants revealed a higher achievement in the past tenses than the present subjunctive, which seems to confirm the acquisition pattern recommended by the CEFR.

2.3.3. Main Difficulties in the L2 Learning the Spanish Subjunctive

Studies on the L2 acquisition/learning of the Spanish subjunctive have investigated the main difficulties encountered by learners, above all learners whose L1 is English.

One of these difficulties is that Spanish has an elaborate verbal morphology in general and, in addition, the syntax of its subjunctive is quite complex. L2 learners whose L1 is English have an extra difficulty when acquiring tense, person and mood in Spanish, since their L1 has a simpler system (Rodríguez & Carretero, 1996). Furthermore, the few existing subjunctive forms in English are only marked in a formal register and with volitive complements (Iverson *et al.*, 2008). In most cases, the subjunctive meaning in English is marked with modal verbs or a non-finite structure. However, the Spanish subjunctive characteristically uses subordination and thus has a more complex syntax. The same difficulty was observed with L2 learners with Swedish as an L1 (Cea, 2012), since Swedish also lacks a subjunctive system.

Another difficulty relates to this mood's lack of saliency. Irregular verb forms seem to be more noticeable for L2 learners. What this means is that the regular forms, which are very similar to the indicative's regular forms, often go unnoticed and learners might not be aware that they are dealing with a subjunctive structure. Some studies (e.g. Gudmestad, 2006, with Spanish as L2; Poplack, 1992, with French as L2) demonstrate this idea, that is, that the regular morphology of the subjunctive is harder to perceive by learners and might go unnoticed. Furthermore, according to two principles of VanPatten's (1996, 1997, 2002, 2004) Input Processing (i.e. The Lexical Preference Principle and The Sentence Location Principle), learners look for lexical content before looking for how the message is grammatically encoded, and they also process elements in initial position first, elements in final position second, and elements in middle position last. What this suggests is that because the subjunctive meaning has already been extracted and processed from the matrix (lexical meaning and first position), the subjunctive morphology might not be processed at all (no lexical meaning and middle position), especially if this morphology is regular and thus very similar to the indicative. In addition, the Spanish subjunctive, in contrast to the indicative, occurs in relatively limited contexts of use. This means that it does not appear as frequently in the input as the past tenses (e.g. Troya Déniz, 2007), for instance, and therefore L2 learners may be less likely to notice it.

Another relevant factor is that mood selection in Spanish is not only governed by morphosyntactic and semantic features, but also by discourse-pragmatic factors, as discussed above (i.e. Section 2.2). These mostly affect instances belonging to the optional subjunctive, that is, when the same matrix may trigger both moods with a slight change of meaning. These subtleties are very difficult to appreciate even for well-advanced learners.

The last difficulty concerns the fact that L2 learners are required to memorise lengthy syntactic-semantic classifications of subjunctive structures. These classifications are characterised by an account of matrix verbs or structures that trigger the subjunctive (or indicative) in the

embedded verb depending on their position within the sentence and the semantic connotations they convey. Some choices will be affected by these matrix verbs being negated and others by the sentence or utterance being a question, for instance. This means that learners not only need to memorise these lengthy classifications in order to be able to use mood contrast in Spanish, which does not seem to be very feasible in practice, but also need to memorise another classification with the exceptions in which the same rule does not apply. It is worth noting that this 'technique' is characteristic of the traditional approach (further details in the next section: 2.4).

The last difficulty is thus the one which concerns this investigation the most, since the main premise is that the traditional approach to teaching Spanish mood contrast might impose more drawbacks than advantages to L2 learners. In fact, it is important to note that this premise is also supported by previous studies (e.g. Varela Navarro, 2005; Martín Sánchez & Nevado Fuentes, 2007; Rovira Gili, 2009; Priego Casanova, 2018).

2.4. L2 Instruction of the Spanish Subjunctive

This section largely covers the most relevant aspects of Spanish mood contrast instruction within L2 settings. It stresses the fact that this instruction is widely carried out by means of the traditional approach, which basically represents a combination of the two most common ('traditional') teaching methods in the L2 classroom, i.e., the formalist approach and the communicative approach. These two methods are described in detail in sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 and contrasted in section 2.4.3, bringing the focus on how they both deal with the instruction of the Spanish subjunctive, i.e., in a very similar manner. This is followed by a brief description of other related and more recent approaches which have been employed to introduce this point of grammar (section 2.4.4). Thus, this section aims at providing an answer to research question 2 (i.e. From a theoretical perspective, why do L2 learners of Spanish find it difficult to learn

the subjunctive by means of the traditional approach?).

In general, teaching methods in the foreign language classroom have been heavily influenced by two main approaches: the formalist approach and the communicative approach (i.e. CLT). One of their main contrasts is the way grammar is viewed. For the formalist approach, grammar is the main focus of the L2 instruction. It is taught deductively, that is, grammar rules/norms are introduced by the teacher first (i.e. morphosyntax and semantics) together with some examples consisting mostly of isolated phrases or sentences containing the grammar structure in question. This is followed by some practice exercises comprising drills and fill-in-the-gap tasks in which the morphology and syntax of the grammar structure are practiced and reinforced. Formal accuracy is strongly pursued. On the other hand, the communicative approach aims at improving the learner's (oral) communicative competence, so grammar accuracy becomes a secondary consideration. Grammar tends to be taught inductively[17] and might be explicitly discussed only when it hinders communication.

In actual fact, language instructors generally employ aspects/techniques characteristic of both methods, depending on what they intend to emphasise (and/or deliver) in their classroom. For instance, when teaching a grammar point, instructors will probably tend to use a more formalist approach (e.g. linguistic explanation involving morphosyntactic and semantic and/or functional aspects followed by some entrenchment by means of fill-in-the-gap activities and drills). However, when attempting to develop their students' communication/interaction skills, they will probably use other techniques more in line with the communicative approach, such as listening activities involving comprehension and (oral) production or role-plays. One thing is clear: language teachers will always try to use what works best for their students, whichever

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[17] For instance, L2 learners might be presented with examples which comprise the target form in order to recognise it first and identify it as being specific to a particular situation. Learners are expected in turn to relate that target form to similar situations and use it in their output.

the setting or level of proficiency.

Within the context of this investigation, which deals with the teaching of Spanish mood contrast in the L2 classroom, the term 'traditional' is largely employed to entail a combination of the two main approaches.

2.4.1. The Formalist Approach

This approach originates from the interaction between structuralist linguistic principles and a behaviourist psychological tradition by which language is considered a system of structures that could be learned through a mechanical process of habit formation (Iloene, 2007). Therefore, the focus of this teaching approach is mostly on grammar (and phonetic) accuracy.

Its origins date back to the 18th century in the western world, when the Grammar-Translation method was used to teach classical languages (i.e. Latin and Greek) and later, to teach modern languages; mostly, French, German and English. This method mainly consisted of the 'assimilation' of grammar rules; first, the rule was introduced deductively, then a list of vocabulary needed to be learned/memorised, to finish with the completion of translation exercises (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). The analysis of grammatical structures was basically contrastive and thus carried out in terms of the L1's grammar, since grammar patterns were (wrongly) considered to be universal and thus could be transferred from one language to another. Grammar was taught in a systematic and organised manner. Mostly the reading comprehension and the written production in the target language were developed, disregarding the importance of other skills, such as listening comprehension and oral production and interaction. The main aim of learning a foreign language was to be able to read its literature.

It is in the 20th century when the structuralist approach develops. It is based on the central ideas that language is a system of signs and symbols (i.e. signifier and signified), whose use and/or

interpretation need to be studied, and that the speaker (or language user) is endowed with the knowledge of that system and its mechanisms to operate it. Chomsky's concepts of linguistic competence and performance have been criticised by functionalists because they do not incorporate into the theory an important factor, that is, real-life communication. The functionalist model emphasises the relationship between the speaker and the language s/he uses, as belonging to a social community. Halliday developed a social and functional model as a response to what he saw as the existing imbalance in the structuralist linguistic studies (Thompson, 2014).

Grammar-Translation, behaviourism and other methodologies such as the audio-lingual method, are related to structuralism because the study of language is focused on form (mostly phonology and morphology), rather than the communicative aspects of language.

The last third of the 20th century witnessed a growing interest in the field of applied linguistics and the processes involved in language acquisition. For instance, Error Analysis (Corder, 1967) questioned language learning as habit formation, since it was observed that many errors produced by L2 learners could not be attributed to L1 influence. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research showed that acquisition involved the modification of a cognitive system, and that this was done through communication and interaction with meaningful input. Authors like Lee and VanPatten (1995: 95) claimed that the order of acquisition was independent of the order in which grammatical items were taught and of explanation and practice. What these SLA findings had in common is the rejection of methodologies which were formalist and non-communicative in their views of language.

Basically, the formalist approach for teaching foreign languages is characterised by favouring grammar instruction over other more communicative aspects of language learning. In this sense, a typical lesson could consist of the deductive introduction of a grammatical structure

by the teacher plus the provision of some vocabulary in order to complete some fixed exercises, such as drills, fill-in-the-gap or sentence translation, in which there is only one correct option and any deviation from the norm is considered to be erroneous. The role of the teacher is one of authority, thus most of the class interaction has one direction: from teacher to the students (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

The influence of behaviourism is evident in the way language learning is seen as habit formation. The type of exercises employed tend to promote the entrenchment of fixed structures and are mechanical in nature. Memorisation of dialogues, verb conjugations and vocabulary expressions or drills, are some examples of the type of activities which encourage this habit formation technique.

A more modern strand of this approach is the Presentation-Production-Practice model, which was described by Larsen-Freeman (2003) as a method in which grammar rules are presented explicitly and manipulated through drills or de-contextualised production practice. This model is no longer advocated because it does not engage the cognitive processes necessary for grammar acquisition. According to Nassaji and Fotos (2004), in terms of grammar instruction, learners should encounter, process, and use the taught forms in all their form-meaning combinations so that those forms can become part of the interlanguage behaviour. Therefore, techniques for grammar instruction should include the provision of comprehensible input, which requires L2 learners to use processes such as noticing or making form-meaning connections. If L2 learners are provided with opportunities to use the target language in meaningful, communicative ways, they will acquire the grammar more effectively.

Regarding the L2 instruction of Spanish mood contrast, the formalist approach represents a major influence in the way this instruction is carried out in the language classroom. As previously mentioned, most native-speaking teachers have received L1 instruction on the

subjunctive by means of this formalist approach. Secondly, most reference materials available (e.g. textbooks and websites) are also based on this method, although in many cases, explanations and activities are framed in terms of the communicative approach, which is also a popular teaching approach in the language classroom and is explained in detail within the next section (i.e. 2.4.2).

Subjunctive instruction by means of the formalist approach largely consists in the explicit introduction of the different subordinate structures which select the subjunctive mood (i.e. in the form of lists or classifications), in contrast with other subordinate structures which select the indicative instead, plus the explicit introduction of its morphology. This instruction relies largely on the multiple linguistic features of the subjunctive mood, as described in sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2.

Within these classifications, it is common to read explanations stating, for example, that, verbs of belief and knowledge (i.e. 'epistemic' verbs) in the affirmative take indicative complements (e.g., *Creo que viene^{IND} Juan* – I think Juan is coming), but in the negative, there is change of mood (e.g., *No creo que venga^{SUB} Juan* – I don't think Juan is coming). Verbs of desire (i.e., volitive verbs) also take a subjunctive complement (e.g., *Quiero que te vayas^{SUB}* – I want you to leave). Similarly, it is said that verbs reporting emotional reactions or judgements, also called 'factive-emotives', take subjunctive complements as well (e.g., *Me gusta que me traten^{SUB} bien* - I like to be treated well). Causative predicates, such as 'evitar' (avoid), 'conseguir' (manage to), and verbs of helping and letting such as 'ayudar' (help) and 'dejar' (allow, let), obligatorily take a subjunctive complement. Communication verbs can also take either mood depending on the semantic interpretation of the verb in question. For example, *decir* has two different interpretations: to say (utter, report or describe) or to tell (as a directive act). In the following two examples, the same verb is interpreted in different ways, each requiring a different mood:

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(31) *Dice que vienes*^{IND} *esta tarde.* (S/he says that you are coming this afternoon)

(32) *Dice que vengas*^{SUB} *esta tarde.* (S/he tells you to come this afternoon)

Most explanations describe with what structures/matrices Spanish-speakers use the subjunctive mood, but they do not offer a clear explanation as to why they use it.

Terrell and Hopper (1974) distinguished between two positions: (1) an analysis which is syntactically based (i.e. the mood of the embedded verb is merely a morphological reflex of the class of the matrix phrase), even if the matrices are classified in terms of meaning, and (2) an analysis that is semantically based which claims that the mood of the embedded verb can be freely chosen and thus carries meaning. The latter hypothesises that there are several basic attitudes that a speaker can adopt toward a proposition, and these attitudes govern the choice of verb form and the choice of matrix. These authors opted for a classification motivated both syntactically and semantically, that is, a combination of both positions. This is the type of classification which has been and still is the most popular within L1 and L2 settings and is basically built on the linguistic traits of the subjunctive mood. Furthermore, most online classifications available to L2 learners, which are based on this type of classification, often highlight the difficulties and exceptions that these subjunctive structures convey.

Semantic-based explanations such as the ones below have been taken from two websites[18] which are aimed at helping L2 learners with their studies of the Spanish subjunctive. Due to L2 learners being encouraged to be more autonomous with their studies, above all within a higher education environment, websites like the ones cited (although they are not the only ones: this type of website abounds in the Internet[19]) are frequently consulted by instructors and

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[18] http://zonaele.com/subjuntivo/
http://studyspanish.com/grammar/lessons/subj1

[19] Other similar websites include the following:
http://www.livingspanish.com/Subjuntivo-A.htm,

learners in order to search for explanations and examples, in the case of the instructors, or to widen their grammatical knowledge, in the case of the learners. Table 6 below illustrates the type of (semantic/syntactic) classifications/explanations which are freely available on the Internet:

Table 6: Extracts from two different websites – the Spanish subjunctive

WEBSITE 1 (IN ENGLISH)	WEBSITE 2 (IN SPANISH + TRANSLATION)
…verbs like "dudar" (to doubt) introduce a quality of uncertainty.	A continuación, exponemos los principales usos del modo subjuntivo: (Next, we present the main uses of the subjunctive mood:)
…the subjunctive mood is used to express everything except certainty and objectivity.	Deseo. Normalmente con ojalá + subjuntivo. El tiempo verbal utilizado dependerá de si el hablante considera ese deseo poco o muy probable. (Wish. Usually with *I hope/wish* + subjunctive. The tense used will indicate whether that wish is considered to be very or not very probable.)
…the difference between indicative and subjunctive is the difference between certainty/objectivity (indicative) and possibility/subjectivity (subjunctive).	A veces, el verbo de la oración principal determina el modo del verbo de la subordinada. Es el caso de estos verbos introductores. (Sometimes, the verb in the main clause determines the mood of the subordinate verb. This is the case of the following introductory verbs.)
...you will usually see it in sentences that contain a main clause which introduces a quality of uncertainty or subjectivity.	Algunos verbos exigen siempre subjuntivo. Es el caso de los verbos que expresan voluntad (*anhelar, animar, ansiar, apetecer, buscar, conformarse con, conseguir, decidir, desear, elegir, esperar, intentar, lograr, procurar, querer, tolerar*), necesidad (*convenir, hacer falta, importar, necesitar, ser innecesario, ser necesario*), mandato (*decretar, encargar, mandar, ordenar*), prohibición o permiso (*aprobar, dejar, implorar, invitar, oponerse a algo, pedir, permitir, prohibir, proponer, rogar, solicitar, suplicar*), consejo (*aconsejar, recomendar, sugerir*), sentimiento o preferencia (*aburrir, alegrar, apenar, celebrar, disgustar, divertir, doler, encantar, entusiasmar, esperar, estar contento de, estar harto de, extrañar, fastidiar, gustar, importar, interesar, lamentar, molestar, proferir, sentar bien / mal, sentir, ser una pena, sorprender, temer, tener esperanza en, tener miedo de*), apreciaciones o juicios de valor (*bastar, comprender, considerar un robo, estar bien, estar mal, merecer, parecer adecuado, parecer conveniente, parecer justo, parecer una locura, ser lógico, ser magnífico, ser normal, ser una lástima, ser una pena, ser una tontería*) y posibilidad (*estar difícil, haber posibilidades, ser imposible, ser improbable, ser posible, ser probable, tener la oportunidad*. Some verbs always trigger the subjunctive. This is the case with verbs which denote will/desire (*crave, wish, long for, fancy, encourage, look for, accommodate, achieve, decide, desire, choose, expect, try/intend, seek, ensure, want, tolerate*), necessity (*suit/be convenient, require, matter, need, be unnecessary, be necessary*), command (*issue/enact, order, rule, instruct*), prohibition or permission (*approve, allow,*

http://www1.udel.edu/leipzig/depende/subj_adverbiales.htm
http://users.jyu.fi/~torremor/cursos/gramatica/213.html
http://www.dailywritingtips.com/6-forms-of-the-subjunctive-mood/
http://www.123teachme.com/learn_spanish/present_subjunctive_intro
http://grammar.spanishintexas.org/verbs/subjunctive/
http://www.elsubjuntivo.com

	implore, invite, oppose, ask, enable, ban, propose, beg, request, plead), advice (*advise, recommend, suggest*), feeling or preference (*bore, cheer, grieve, celebrate, upset, entertain, ache, love, thrill, hope, be happy, be fed up, miss, annoy, like, be important, intrigue, regret, bother, suggest, (not) agree with, be a pity/shame, fear, be hopeful, be afraid of*), value judgements (*be enough, understand, contemplate/judge a theft, be right, be wrong, deserve, seem adequate, seem fair, seem mad/crazy, be logical, be wonderful, be normal, be a shame/pity, be nonsense*) and possibility (*be difficult, there be a possibility, be impossible, be improbable, be possible, be probable, have the opportunity*.
The following is a list of clauses commonly associated with the use of subjunctive:	
As you can see, the list is quite long, and this isn't even a complete list!	

These explanations, besides being lengthy and complex, generally include a good deal of negative instruction (e.g. ...express *everything except* certainty and objectivity) or dubieties (e.g. ...you will *usually* see sentences; ...list of clauses *commonl*y used; *Sometimes*, the main verb...), and even offer very simplified explanations that cannot be applied in many cases. Therefore, it is not uncommon that L2 learners are provided with a long list of matrices which trigger the subjunctive mood, followed by a list of exceptions in which the rule does not apply.

This method mostly promotes the memorisation of structures on the part of the L2 learner in order to produce immediate output by means of fill-in-the-blank exercises or very well guided written exercises, but it does not help when mood choice is dependent on pragmatic traits, for instance. Furthermore, a real semantic explanation as to why the subjunctive is used with certain structures is hardly ever introduced to L2 learners, except for the usual associated terms, such as 'uncertainty', 'impossibility', 'willingness', 'necessity', 'prohibition', 'probability', 'advice', 'feelings', 'emotions', 'demands', 'preferences', 'value judgements', etc.

Previous studies seem to agree with the claim that the formalist approach is not the most suitable to teach Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners and have attempted to set up didactic proposals which combine other more recent methodologies. These studies generally concur

that traditional methods encourage the memorisation of lists/uses and this does not achieve the comprehension of why and how this mood is used (e.g. Varela Navarro, 2005; Rovira Gili, 2013), that explanations typical of this method are confusing and/or too complex for the type of learner they are aimed at (e.g. Martín Sánchez & Nevado Fuentes, 2007), or that this method does not take into consideration important discourse-pragmatic aspects of Spanish mood contrast (e.g. Priego Casanova, 2018).

As a final remark, it is worth highlighting that the formalist approach to teaching grammar is characterised by considering grammar rules as traits of the linguistic system and not as the result of the speaker's choice (Achard & Niemeier, 2004: 185). Therefore, in the case of mood contrast, for instance, what triggers the selection between indicative and subjunctive depends mostly on the lexical features of the matrix verb and not on what the speaker (or subject) implies (means) when s/he says something. Furthermore, it is also prescriptive, that is, 'authorities' (i.e. linguists, textbooks, teachers) tell the learners how they must write or speak the language, rather than explain them the way/s this language is spoken or written. Lastly, this approach is also descriptive, which basically means that it focuses on the description of the 'effects' (what is said), ignoring the causes (why it is said), and thus resulting in the provision of lengthy lists of 'uses' without explaining the logic which connects them.

2.4.2. The Communicative Approach

What traditionally has been referred to as a *communicative approach* alludes to a method which focuses on the need to communicate real meaning. Therefore, it seeks to develop communication abilities without concentrating on grammatical or phonetic accuracy. It is also referred to as *functional* or *notional approach,* because it breaks down the use of language in five functional categories (i.e. personal, interpersonal, directive, referential and imaginative). According to Anasiudu (2001), this approach has input not only from Linguistics, but also from

Philosophy, Sociolinguistics and Psychology.

It emerged in the 1970s, almost simultaneously to the establishment of SLA as an independent discipline. Important contributions at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, such as the publication of Corder's (1967) paper "The Significance of Learners' Errors", Dulay and Burt's investigations on how an L2 is acquired, or Selinker's (1972) concept of Interlanguage, to name just a few, had a fairly direct effect on the way an L2 was taught in the language classroom. As previously mentioned, what these SLA findings had in common was the rejection of structuralist and behaviourist methodologies for being purely formalist and non-communicative in their views of language.

It was referred to as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method by British and American scholars and it basically emerged to promote the teaching of functional communicative skills in L2 instruction (Dörnyei, 2009a). Its methodology focused on the learner's participatory experience in meaningful L2 interaction in (often simulated) communicative situations. CLT's tenet is 'learning through doing', which implies learners' active participation in pursuing situational meaning.

CLT was often associated with a strictly-no-grammar approach, but some of the founders of this method (Littlewood, 1981, in Dörnyei, 2009a) claim that one of its more salient features is that it pays systematic attention to both functional and structural aspects of language, combining them into a more fully communicative view. Other characteristics of this approach include that learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error, or that contextualisation is a basic premise. One of its tenets is that language learning is learning to communicate in a particular language, not learning about language.

Some authors (e.g. Savignon, 1990) pointed out that although the transition to the 'skills system' (i.e. listening, reading, speaking and writing) was an improvement, it did not consider

the collaborative nature of meaning making. Communicative competence requires not only grammatical competence, but also discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic[20] competence. This interactive view posed a number of questions for language teachers, such as what is an error and what should be done when one occurs, if anything? What is an appropriate norm for learners and how is it determined? How should form and function be integrated in an instructional sequence? How is L2 success to be measured?

Examination of the learning process from a communicative perspective meant analysis of learner expression and negotiation. CLT became a term for curricula that embraced both goals and the processes of classroom learning, for teaching practice that viewed competence in terms of social interaction and looked to further SLA research to account for its development.

CLT in Europe derived from functional linguistics, which views language as meaning potential and maintains the centrality of context of situation in understanding language systems and how they work. A threshold level (van Ek 1975) of language ability was described for each of the languages in Europe in terms of what learners should be able to "do" with the language. Functions were based on assessment of learner needs and specified the end result, that is, the "product" of an instructional programme. In fact, these are the characteristics which underpin the CEFR.

Meanwhile, in the United States, Hymes (1971) had reacted to Chomsky's characterisation of the linguistic competence of the ideal native speaker and proposed the term 'communicative competence' to represent the use of language in social context (i.e. sociolinguistic norms of appropriacy).

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[20] Strategic competence was defined by Canale and Swain (1980:30) as "verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence".

Typical activities within this approach include roleplays, games and other communicative (pair/group) classroom tasks. Useful phrases in order to participate in the negotiation of meaning are provided by the teacher from the beginning so as to avoid using the L1 as much as possible in the classroom.

In contrast to the formalist method, CLT puts the focus on the learner. Learner communicative needs provide a framework for elaborating program goals in terms of functional competence. This implies global, qualitative evaluation of learner achievement as opposed to quantitative assessment of discrete linguistic features. Competence is viewed as variable and highly dependent upon context and purpose, therefore, qualitative evaluation rather than quantitative (e.g. multiple-choice test with single right answers) is encouraged. But this type of evaluation is time-consuming and not so straightforward.

Research within this framework has also focused on the learner's motivation to study an L2. For instance, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) claimed that motivation is a key factor determining success in L2 learning. Dörnyei (2009b) talks about the 'L2 Motivational Self System' and its central concept, the 'ideal self', which refers to the representation of the attributes that someone (the L2 learner within this context) would ideally like to have. This is closely linked to the concepts of (multilingual) identity and agency discussed in section 2.3.1.

This method arrived at a turning point when explicit and direct elements started to gain significance in teaching communicative skills. Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell (1997) termed this new stage of CLT the Principled Communicative Approach (PCA). This approach integrates both types of learning (i.e. implicit and explicit) with the necessity to supplement new linguistic content with the awareness of the existence of psychological dimensions in the learning process. Its three main methodological areas comprise: (1) Focus on Form and Form-Based Instruction, (2) fluency and automatization, and (3) formulaic language. Dörnyei

developed the seven principles of this approach, which basically endorse "the creative integration of meaningful communication with relevant declarative input and the automatization of both linguistic rules and lexical items" (Dörnyei, 2009a).

In practice, a typical lesson within this method consists of the presentation of concise and explicit rules, followed by a series of examples that the learner can interpret and revise when necessary to subsequently undertake some controlled practice, offering abundant opportunities for repetition and specifically designed with a series of creative and engaging drills. The last stage will include open-ended activities which foster more spontaneous oral and written production among L2 learners. It is worth noting that these techniques described above bear a strong resemblance to the Presentation, Practice and Production approach (see section 2.4.1.). However, whereas PPP most probably places more emphasis on the reading comprehension and written production abilities of L2 learners, CLT will surely focus on developing their listening comprehension and oral production and interaction skills.

It is worth noting that there seems to be a distinction in how CLT is viewed between foreign language instructors and applied linguists, at least in the context of North America, according to Spada (2007). This author claims that foreign language instructors view CLT as meaning-based, learner-centred and giving priority to fluency over accuracy. Therefore, the emphasis is on the comprehension and production of messages, and not the teaching or correction of language form. On the other hand, applied linguists view CLT as an approach to L2 instruction which is primarily meaning-based and that includes attention to both fluency and accuracy. Therefore, what applied linguists recommend for successful L2 learning does not always translate in what actually happens inside the language classroom.

Regarding the instruction of the Spanish subjunctive within this framework, this grammar structure is considered to be too challenging to be introduced inductively, for obvious reasons.

These include, for instance, that the subjunctive is characteristic of embedded clauses or that regular present subjunctive morphology is nearly indistinguishable from its present indicative counterpart, which makes this mood quite hard to notice by L2 learners, especially by those learners whose L1 does not have a distinctive subjunctive system. Therefore, it is done similarly to the Presentation, Practice and Production Method described above, which is premised on the so-called formalist approach. Thereby, the presentation is most definitely carried out deductively and followed by some practice consisting mostly of drills and fill-in-the-gap exercises to learn the morphology, syntax and use of the mood. This practice is framed around 'communicative' tasks, which might include short dialogues or role-plays. Lastly, some production tasks in which the learner needs to write/utter the subjunctive structure within a sentence, and in some cases, a text, are completed.

2.4.3. The Formalist Approach vs. The Communicative Approach

Table 7 below summarises (and contrasts) the different components of both approaches: formalist and communicative, based on the ten questions formulated by Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) in order to review the principles of the different teaching methods and techniques broadly employed in the language classroom. An extra question has been added (i.e. 11) which specifies how both approaches would generally deal with the teaching of Spanish mood contrast, which highlights the idea that both deal with this instruction very similarly.

Table 7: Formalist Approach vs. Communicative Approach

FORMALIST APPROACH	COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH
1.- What are the goals of teachers who use this approach?	
To learn about grammar rules, vocabulary and the culture/s of the target language.	To learn to communicate meaning. Develop communication abilities without focusing on grammatical accuracy. Language broken down in functional categories (e.g. personal)
2.- What is the role of the teacher? What is the role of the students?	
Traditional roles: teacher as authority and students do as s/he says so they can learn what s/he knows. Teacher-centred.	Teacher as facilitator/guide; students are encouraged to participate in meaningful L2 interaction in (often simulated) communicative situations.

3.- What are some characteristics of the teaching/learning process?	
Grammar studied deductively: grammar rules and examples are provided that students need to memorise and extrapolate those rules to other examples (e.g. fill-in-the-gap activities). Activities employed tend to promote the entrenchment of fixed structures and are mechanical (i.e. 'habit formation' typical of behaviourism). Vocabulary studied separately (translation of terms into the students' L1).	Tenet: "learning through doing". Often associated with a strictly-no-grammar approach, but more recent practices of CLT claim that systematic attention is paid to both functional and structural aspects of language (Focus on Form). Learning involves trial and error. Contextualisation is a basic premise. Learning to communicate in the target language and not about language.

4.- What is the nature of student-teacher and student-student interaction?	
Most of the interaction is from the teacher to the students. Little student-student interaction in the target language, unless this is carried out by means of role-plays memorised in advance.	Student-centred. Constant interaction teacher-student and student-student.

5.- How are the feelings of the students dealt with?	
No principles of the method which relate to this area.	'Motivation' is considered to be a relevant aspect affecting the learning process.

6.- How is the language viewed? How is culture viewed?	
The input received by students is largely in the written form and from formal contexts. Culture is viewed as consisting of literature, cinema, the fine arts and other academic subjects such as history or politics.	Language is viewed as a means of communication. Wide range of contexts and registers, including the most colloquial. Culture also covers a wide range of topics: music, television, cinema, education, gastronomy, travelling, etc.

7.- What areas of language are emphasised? What language skills are emphasised?	
Vocabulary and grammar are emphasised. Reading and writing (primary skills). Less attention given to speaking and listening. Pronunciation is practised by means of read-aloud exercises (and dictation).	Vocabulary is emphasised. This is learned in 'chunks', via set phrases within short dialogues, and covers the main functions of language (e.g. personal, directive, imaginative, etc.). Listening and speaking (and interaction) are the primary skills. Less attention is given to reading and writing.

8.- What is the role of the students' L1?	
The meaning of the L2 is (largely) made clear by translating it into the students' L1. The vehicular language used in class is mostly the students' L1, at least when explaining grammar rules or when giving instructions.	The use of the students' L1 is kept to a minimum. Students' use of the target language is encouraged at all times, by means of roleplays, games and other communicative (pair/group) classroom tasks.

9.- How is evaluation accomplished?	
Quantitative in nature. Written tests in which students need to complete fixed exercises, such as fill-in-the-gap activities consisting of isolated sentences or a short text. Only one correct answer.	Qualitative in nature. In terms of functional competence. Competence is viewed as variable and highly dependent on context and purpose. Evaluation is time-consuming and not very straightforward.

10.- How does the teacher respond to student errors?	
Having the students get the correct answer is considered very important. If students make errors or do not know the answer, the teacher usually supplies them with the correct answer explicitly.	Teacher usually corrects errors only when they hinder communication. If the correction is provided, this usually has the form of a clarification request or an elicitation, so that students attempt to correct the error themselves.

11.- How do they usually deal with the introduction of Spanish mood contrast?
Deductive explanation of the morphology and syntax of the subjunctive mood. Provision of lists of matrices which trigger the use of the subjunctive (or the indicative) in the embedded clause plus another list with the exceptions. Classifications based on the multiple semantic (and functional) characteristics of both moods, which students need to memorise and use under controlled conditions.

Practice mostly carried out by means of written exercises which are mechanical in nature (e.g. fill-in-the-gap and drills).	Practice might also include communicative activities (e.g. role-plays and games).

2.4.4. Other Related and More Recent Methods

A more recent distinction was made between Focus on Meaning, Focus on FormS (with a capital S) and Focus on Form (with no S). Focus on Meaning occurs when priority is given to meaning, as its name indicates, and Focus on FormS (in the plural) occurs when attention is drawn exclusively to linguistic features. In this sense, Focus on Meaning would roughly correspond to the communicative approach and Focus on FormS would correspond to the formalist approach. On the other hand, Focus on Form (in the singular) attends to linguistic elements during a communicative activity (DeKeyser 1998; Long 1991; Norris & Ortega 2000).

Processing Instruction (VanPatten and Cadierno, 1993b; VanPatten, 1996) can be described as a Focus on Form method. It has been analysed as an effective method to introduce the Spanish subjunctive to L2 learners whose L1 does not have a particularly 'active' subjunctive mood (e.g. Collentine, 1998; Farley, 2001). Farley (2004) defined Processing Instruction as a "deliberate attempt to intervene in the acquisition process by giving the learner explicit information concerning the target item, along with activities containing structured input". He concluded that providing learners with structured input should be a priority for language teachers.

Russell (2012) further specifies that there are three components to Processing Instruction: (1) an explicit explanation of grammar, (2) information on processing strategies (highlighting the differences between the grammar of the target language and the L1 and how learners are likely to process a target structure erroneously), and (3) structured input tasks and activities through which learners will need to understand the structure in order to understand the meaning.

Structured input activities are designed to provide learners with form and meaning-focused practice. They consist of input that has been manipulated to increase the frequency and saliency of the target form, but in which meaning is kept in focus (Cameron, 2011).

Structured-input tasks should help learners to notice[21] more easily the semantic-pragmatic information that a grammatical phenomenon provides when reading or listening to authentic input after working with the tasks (Collentine, 2002). The non-optimal[22] processing strategy of Lexical Preference (VanPatten, 2004, 2007) is a good example of how Processing Instruction can be an effective method to introduce some morphosyntactic structures to L2 learners. This strategy predicts that L2 learners whose L1 is English will prefer to derive meaning from lexical items, as opposed to verb morphology that encodes the same meaning. At the same time, it is also related to one of the principles of VanPatten's (2002) Input Processing, which states that learners process elements in sentence/utterance initial position first, and in final position second, before elements in medial position.

The subjunctive morphology is usually located in the embedded clause, and has medial position, hence its low saliency, above all when regular verbs are involved, since they are very similar in form to some indicative tenses (see section 2.2.1 for further details). Furthermore, the subjunctive meaning (i.e. modality) is lexically anchored in the matrix, which is normally placed in initial position. This means that the subjunctive morphology, which has no lexical content, is not 'necessary' to derive that subjunctive meaning because this has already been extracted from the matrix. Consequently, some studies have claimed that the subjunctive morphology has high redundancy (e.g. Collentine, 2010).

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[21] This is related to the Noticing Hypothesis by Schmidt (1990, 2001), which states that input does not become intake unless it is 'noticed', that is, consciously registered by L2 learners.

[22] The Lexical Preference Strategy is non-optimal or 'inefficient' because many of the grammar elements are ignored in the acquisition process, so intake is impoverished. This happens mostly when the communicative value of these grammar elements is insubstantial or redundant (Bielak and Pawlak, 2013).

To illustrate the above, in the sentence below (30), the 'modality' is lexicalised in the verb of the matrix (*Espero* – I hope), and the verb in the embedded proposition (*termine* – s/he finishes) only contains the morphology of that modality (*-e*) which has no lexical content. This means that L2 learners will process the subjunctive morphology last, if they manage to do it at all.

(33) *Espero que termine la tarea a tiempo.* (I hope s/he finishes[SUB] the task in time)

A structured-input activity's aim will be to make this morphology more obvious by linking it with its meaning somewhere else in the sentence and placing it in a most prominent location, so it is more noticeable. An example to illustrate this follows:

(34) Choose the most adequate way (a or b) to start the following sentence:

... termine la tarea a tiempo. (…s/he finishes[SUB] the task in time)

   a) *Está claro que...* (It is clear/obvious that…)

   b) *Espero que...* (I hope that…)

It is important to note that the cognitive-operative approach advocates the use of structured-input activities, as explained in more detail in section 2.5 below.

2.4.5. Some Remarks

It should be noted that what the two main teaching approaches (i.e. formalist and communicative) are concerned about is how grammar is introduced in the L2 classroom, whether this is done deductively or inductively, by means of communicative tasks or drills and fill-in-the-gap exercises, or using mostly comprehension activities or also production activities, among other things. However, they both seem to have one thing in common: the type of grammar which needs to be introduced. This grammar can be described as having structuralist and functionalist influences, as being prescriptive (and descriptive) in nature, and in the specific case of the Spanish subjunctive, as relying on the learner's capacity to memorise the

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different classifications of matrix/proposition combinations characteristic of mood contrast plus other classifications containing the exceptions to the rule/s. Therefore, irrespective of which approach (or combination of both approaches) is implemented by teachers to introduce mood contrast, neither seems to be effective enough.

2.5. The Cognitive-Operative Approach (COA)

This section provides a thorough description of the cognitive-operative approach (COA), which is the teaching method examined within this PhD investigation as an alternative to introduce Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners. It begins with an account of the principles of Cognitive Grammar which are relevant to understanding the COA's theoretical foundations. This is followed by a description of how the COA deals with the introduction of Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners, i.e., by means of the single conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration, since this method (as the thesis will show) simplifies this introduction and thus has the potential to improve its learning. Therefore, this section attempts to answer research question 4 (i.e. On what theoretical basis do proponents of the COA consider that this could be a more effective approach?).

2.5.1. Cognitive Grammar and COA

In order to understand the influence of Cognitive Grammar in the COA and how the latter deals with the study and L2 teaching of Spanish mood contrast, it is important to introduce and explain some relevant concepts which are largely shared by both.

Langacker described Cognitive Grammar as "a theoretical framework for describing language structure as a product of cognition and social interaction" (2013: v).

Within this framework, meaning is viewed as a conceptualisation linked to linguistic

expressions, but where this conceptualisation is grounded in physical reality. Linguistic meanings are also anchored in social interaction, that is, interlocutors negotiate those meanings based on mutual assessment of their knowledge, thoughts and intentions.

The meaning of an expression depends on factors other than the situation which this expression is bound to. For instance, it is determined by a *conceptual substrate*, which includes background knowledge and awareness of the physical, social and linguistic context. On the other hand, it also imposes a specific *construal*, which represents just one of the countless ways of conceiving and describing the situation in question. This concept was introduced to capture aspects of conceptualisation that cannot be adequately analysed in terms of the object of conceptualisation but require reference to a subject's *perception*, choice or point of view. One type of construal operation that has traditionally received much attention is the different ways motion events are expressed linguistically in languages such as English and Spanish (e.g. Talmy, 2000). Basically, in English, the verb usually encodes manner (e.g. to roll), or cause or instrument (e.g. to chop or to pound). However, in Spanish, the verb marks an aspect of directionality, and factors such as manner or instrument may be expressed by means of adjuncts (e.g. *Entró en la casa corriendo.* – S/he entered the house running. / S/he ran into the house.).

These differences in conceptualisation between languages result in the need for the L2 learner to familiarise with the way/s the target language categorises and conceptualises the world. This is what has been referred to as 're-thinking for speaking' (Robinson and N.C. Ellis, 2008), which originates from what Slobin (1987; 1996) called 'thinking for speaking'. This concept is defined as the phenomenon in which a speaker of a language constructs utterances in discourse by making connections between their thoughts (or conceptualisation of an event, involving a particular perspective), and the available linguistic forms in that particular language (Slobin, 1987: 435).

To illustrate this idea, L2 learners of Spanish with English as L1 would need to be aware that, for instance, in order to construct a 'correct' utterance in the target language which conveys a demand by someone else (involved in an exchange), the linguistic form available in Spanish is different to that of their L1, that is, a subordinate subjunctive clause, rather than a non-finite complement. Thus, the L2 learner will need to 'unlearn' one linguistic form and 're-learn' that (or those if more than one) used in the target language to convey the same meaning.

A central tenet of Cognitive Grammar is that grammar is symbolic in nature. The definition of symbol comprises the pairing between meaning and form. Grammar, then, is concerned with the combination of those elements in order to form complex expressions. In Langacker's words, "lexicon and grammar form a gradation consisting solely in assemblies of symbolic structures" (2013: 5). Cognitive Grammar claims that all valid grammatical constructs are symbolic, and thus reducible to form-meaning pairings.

Cognitive Grammar is grounded in Cognitive Linguistics (CL), which in turn is part of the functional tradition. This is related to the fact that CL foregrounds the semiological function of language. It recognises a strong connection between language and social interaction, but even this interactive function is dependent on conceptualisation. Linguistic structure is seen as dependent on other basic systems and abilities, such as perception, memory or categorisation, from which it cannot be disassociated. A major goal of functional theory consists of specifying the range of structures that are prototypical in language. Cognitive Grammar is concerned with structural description, as well as with prototypicality and functional explanation.

According to this approach, grammar provides for the structuring and symbolisation of conceptual content and, for that reason, it can be described by means of images. When we use a particular construction, we thereby select a particular image to structure the conceived situation for communicative purposes. Different languages might employ different imagery

when conforming to linguistic convention, as illustrated above regarding the way verbs of motion are conceptualised and linguistically expressed by English and Spanish.

The term 'metalinguistic image' (Romo Simón, 2014) seems highly appropriate to describe the type of images referred to here. These images are mostly characterised by their simplicity and level of abstraction, which can be regulated according to the receiver/addressee. Since visual language is largely universal, using abstract concepts instead of linguistic translations could reduce the cognitive workload and achieve a deeper comprehension of those concepts. Figure 1 below illustrates how this level of abstraction and simplicity can be achieved by the use of images:

Figure 1[23]**: visual representation for the verb 'enter'**
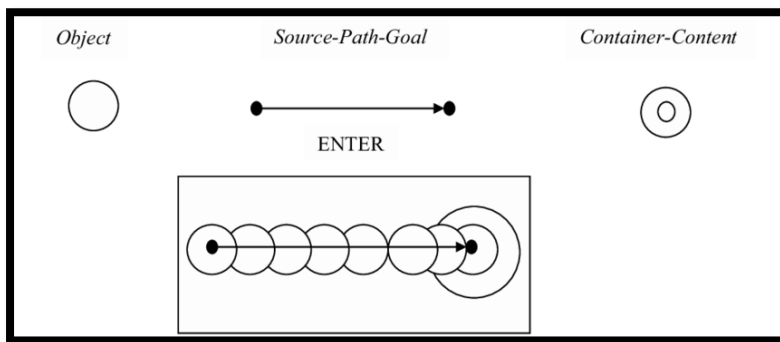
Cognitive Grammar also maintains that a speaker's linguistic knowledge is procedural rather than declarative and that linguistic knowledge is represented by an internalised grammar composed of conventional linguistic units which are activated by the speaker in order to communicate. The grammar of a language provides the speaker with an inventory of symbolic resources, which the speaker employs as standards of comparison in assessing novel expressions and usages. The construction of these symbolic resources is attributed to problem-solving activity, which requires not only the speaker's grasp of linguistic convention, but also their appreciation of the context, their communicative objectives, their aesthetic sensibilities,

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[23] Source: researchgate.net

and other aspects of general knowledge that might prove relevant.

Cognitive Linguistics posits that there is a circular relationship between form, meaning and conceptualisation: just as our mental experience develops, we allocate meaning to form and then use it to express that meaning in a communicative way (Llopis-García, 2011). Whereas Generative Linguistics focuses on *competence* (in the Chomskian sense), Cognitive Linguistics focuses on *performance* in order to consider the true role of language: communication (Cadierno & Lund, 2004).

In Cognitive Grammar, there are two important concepts to understand the different representational levels of the meaning of words and expressions: *profile* and *base* (Langacker 1987), which are a reflection of the conceptual pair foreground and background (also figure and ground). A popular example to explain these two concepts is illustrated in Figure 2:

Figure 2: profile and base
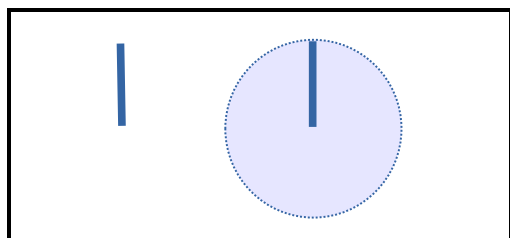
The words *line* and *radius* share the same 'profile' (i.e. thick continuous lines), but *radius* includes the presupposition of a 'base' (i.e. dashed circumference), which serves as the necessary background to understand the specificity of that line that we call *radius*. The notion of 'circumference' is only present as a base, in the background. This relates to the concept of *attention* as a cognitive phenomenon, which helps to discriminate between elements by attending to one or some of those elements at specific moments and disregard others. From the perspective of gestalt psychology (e.g. Koffka, 1934), this discriminatory ability results in the fact that one single situation can be interpreted in various ways depending on what elements

the subject is paying attention to (Ibarretxe-Antuñano & Cadierno, in Ibarretxe-Antuñano, Cadierno and Castañeda Castro (eds.), 2019).

As an illustration of the concepts of profile and base applied to Spanish mood contrast, the idea that, in some cases of the so-called optional subjunctive, the indicative entails new or relevant information (i.e. profile) and the subjunctive old or shared information (i.e. base) has been a popular matter within some of the studies described in section 2.2.3 (e.g. Ahern & Leonetti, 2004; Haverkate, 2002).

Consequently, it may be said that Cognitive Grammar provides an extra dimension to 'meaning' which cannot be reduced to what is considered to be semantically or pragmatically significant, since it includes many other subtle distinctions which depend on the perspective or what the subject is paying attention to.

There are other concepts which are paramount to understand how Cognitive Grammar attempts to build the different linguistic images which are represented in every grammar. For instance, the concept of *categorisation* refers to the interpretation of experience with regard to previous existing structures. We group a set of elements as belonging to the same category because we judge them to be equivalent for some purpose. *Focusing* or *focalisation* is concerned with the selection of conceptual content for linguistic representation, as well as its arrangement into what has been metaphorically described as 'foreground' and 'background', 'figure' and 'ground', or 'profile' and 'base' (see Figure 2 above).

The concept of *prototype* is closely linked to the one of *categorisation*. Within a set of elements belonging to the same category, some elements are more central than others. For instance, the term 'chair' is said to be more central/prototypical to the category of 'furniture' than the term 'stool'. With regards to grammatical structures, prototypical distinctions are common. An example of this is the perfective aspect of verb tenses, such as the present perfect and the past

simple tense in the following two sentences:

(35) How long have you worked for the university?

(36) How long did you work for the university?

In sentence (35) there is a presupposition on the part of the speaker that the situation still exists. However, in sentence (36) the presupposition is that the situation no longer exists. The semantic feature shared by both is 'pastness' and there is a clear prototypical distinction between them.

Lastly, the concept of radiality refers to the 'extension' of the prototype to less central but conceptually linked cases. For instance, in the case of the abovementioned terms 'chair' and 'stool', the latter would represent the 'extension of the prototype' because it is considered (generally) to be less central than the prototype 'chair'. In regard to Spanish mood contrast, for instance, the extension of the prototype is represented by the concept of "identification", which is explained below in more detail (i.e. section 2.5.2).

Cognitive Linguistics as a theoretical framework for the study of SLA began gaining ground from the beginning of this century, above all regarding Spanish as an L2, since studies on English as L2 were already common in the 1990s (Ibarretxe-Antuñano & Cadierno, in Ibarretxe-Antuñano, Cadierno and Castañeda Castro (eds.), 2019). As previously mentioned, the comparison of how different languages conceptualise motion has been an important focus of CL (e.g. Talmy, 2000; Cardierno, 2004; Ibarretxe-Antuñano & Hijazo-Gascón, 2012). Other studies, for instance, have highlighted the importance of the quantity and type of input (McDonough & Nekrasova-Becker, 2012) or the importance of interlinguistic influence (N.C. Ellis & Cadierno, 2009; Alonso M., 2011). These and other similar studies claim that the learning of an L2 constitutes a more complex process than the learning of an L1, since the L2 learner needs to attain how to categorise and conceptualise the world in a manner similar to native-speakers, that is, they need to learn how to "re-think for speaking" (*re-thinking for*

speaking: Robinson and N.C. Ellis, 2008). Therefore, L2 learners would need to acquire the strategies which will help them to shape the adequate conceptual structuring characteristic of the L2 and learn what meanings are selected for L2 expression. Furthermore, the L2 learner needs to acquire the constructions typical of the target language, process which has been referred to as 're-construction' of the L2 (N.C. Ellis & Cadierno, 2009).

Authors such as Castañeda Castro (2004) or Ruiz Campillo (2004, 2007, 2008) have investigated the Spanish subjunctive mood from a cognitive-operative perspective. The added term 'operative' refers not only to the fact that this approach has a strong didactic component, but also because it seeks a single (operative) value, or prototype, in order to explain the logic of every single grammar point to L2 learners. According to Llopis-García *et al.* (2012: 20), an operative grammar is ultimately mechanical, manipulative, allows for discreet choices of form/s and is based, primarily, on those forms' intrinsic meanings.

Castañeda and Ruiz Campillo published, together and in collaboration with another four authors, a textbook for students of Spanish as a Foreign Language called *Gramática Básica del Estudiante de Español* (levels A1-B1; Difusión, 2005). The grammar explanations are characterised by the use of graphic aids to visualise and conceptualise the relationship between the grammar form and its meaning(s). The metalanguage used and the descriptions accompanying the drawings are also simplified so learners who are not familiarised with a more formalist approach to learning grammar can understand more easily the explanations. Furthermore, activities within this textbook mostly comply with the methodological principles characteristic of Processing Instruction, mainly, the use of structured input tasks (see section 2.4.4 above for further details).

Ruiz Campillo (2007b) claims that the main problem of the traditional approach lies in the emphasis on maintaining an (artificial) division between form and meaning, between grammar

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and communication. For this author, a cognitive-operative grammar is "a grammar of basic and permanent meanings with which to take grammar decisions" (2007b: 6). Therefore, grammar becomes essential for the learner in order to become aware of the means by which s/he can communicate. The traditional approach generally separates the teaching of vocabulary and the teaching of grammar, and according to the cognitive-operative approach, this separation is artificial. Vocabulary and grammar cannot be disassociated, speakers cannot communicate without either, and thus grammar should not be taught separately, within a dedicated lecture in which grammatical structures are presented as 'rules of thumb' that learners need to memorise and use under controlled situations. Therefore, grammar is not a tool which helps in communication, grammar is communication in itself (Llopis-García *et al.*, 2012: 28).

The cognitive-operative approach (COA) maintains that manipulating authentic material intelligently will help the learners to reach the core elements quicker, which will allow them to understand the infinite manifestations that they will face when communicating in real situations. The classroom thus becomes a type of social laboratory in which learners 'examine' the meaning of a specific form in different contexts and learn how to respond and act. This form has been enhanced in some way, as described by Processing Instruction and the use of structured-input activities (see section 2.4.4. above) and linked to a metalinguistic image, in many cases. The use of images might aid this manipulation in strategic ways so as to achieve the learners' understanding. Furthermore, the learner's contribution becomes essential, since this type of instruction is meaningful and intuitive, and fosters the negotiation of meaning.

2.5.2. The Conceptual Pair of Declaration and Non-declaration

When specifically dealing with the subjunctive mood, Ruiz Campillo (2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2008, 2012) claims that the conceptual pair of declaration vs. non-declaration represents a single operative value which can explain all the instances of mood contrast between the

indicative and the subjunctive moods.

This author (2008) maintains that only an analysis based on both the 'linguistic meaning' of mood and the 'linguistic architecture' of the utterance/sentence, at the same time, will be able to provide that single operative value (or prototype, in terms of cognitive grammar), and only by presuming that the speaker (or subject) responds to that meaning in an operative and intentional manner. In other words, it is the speaker (or subject, if different from the speaker) who chooses a specific matrix and, consequently, a mood for the embedded verb (i.e. linguistic 'architecture') in order to convey what s/he wants to say in a certain 'manner' (i.e. linguistic meaning).

Ruiz Campillo (2005) defines *declaration* as "the formal and explicit manifestation of what the subject knows (asserts) or thinks (assumes), that is, of what the subject contributes (fully or partially) towards the discourse". Its counterpart *non-declaration* would hence involve the lack of declaration by the subject.

According to this author, the speaker will use the indicative when the proposition constitutes a declaration by the subject, i.e. what s/he intends to assert or assume explicitly by means of the chosen matrix. It is important to highlight that the concept of 'matrix' within this context comprises other semantic and discourse-pragmatic aspects and is defined by Ruiz Campillo (2008) as "the *meaning* of the word or group of words responsible for triggering mood in the subordinate clause, whether these words are explicit or not". This author illustrates the concept of declaration with the following examples:

(37) *Yo sé que te quiere*[IND] (I know s/he loves you) – the speaker asserts that s/he loves you.

(38) *Elena piensa que te quiere*[IND] (Elena thinks s/he loves you) – the subject of the matrix (i.e. Elena) assumes that she (or the subject of the embedded verb, if different) loves you.

(39) *Es evidente que te quiere*[IND] (It's obvious that s/he loves you) – anybody can assert that

s/he loves you.

In sentences (37-39), the subordinate proposition represents the subject/speaker's declaration, that is, what the subject/speaker wants to assert or assume explicitly. And to do so, the speaker/subject chooses an appropriate matrix and the indicative mood in the subordinate clause. It is also worth noting that the embedded or subordinate clause within this context is referred to as 'proposition'. Hence, this term here refers to both the syntactic structure (i.e. embedded clause) and the semantic structure (i.e. information contained in the embedded clause).

However, when the speaker cannot or does not want to declare a proposition, s/he will choose the subjunctive and a matrix structure appropriate to the situation.

(40) *No creo que te quiera*^{SUB} (I don't think I/he/she love/s you) – the speaker does not want to assert or assume that the speaker/he/she loves you, but quite the opposite, that the speaker does not believe it.

(41) *Es posible que te quiera*^{SUB} (It's possible that I/he/she love/s you) – the speaker does not want to assert or assume that the speaker (i.e. "I")/he/she loves you, but only that it is possible.

(42) *Marta se alegra de que te quiera*^{SUB} (Marta is glad that I/he/she love/s you) – Marta does not want to assert or assume that the speaker (i.e. "I")/he/she love/s you; she just wants to assert that she is glad of that fact.

Ruiz Campillo (2007a) further explains how to introduce the concepts of declaration and non-declaration (i.e. typical of the indicative/subjunctive contrast) to L2 learners by means of a "Mood Map", exclusively designed to be used and 'enhanced' by students according to their learning needs. This map is divided into three main contexts, and each context is meant to be explained according to this conceptual pair. The map is shown below as Figure 3:

Figure 3: Mood map: the law
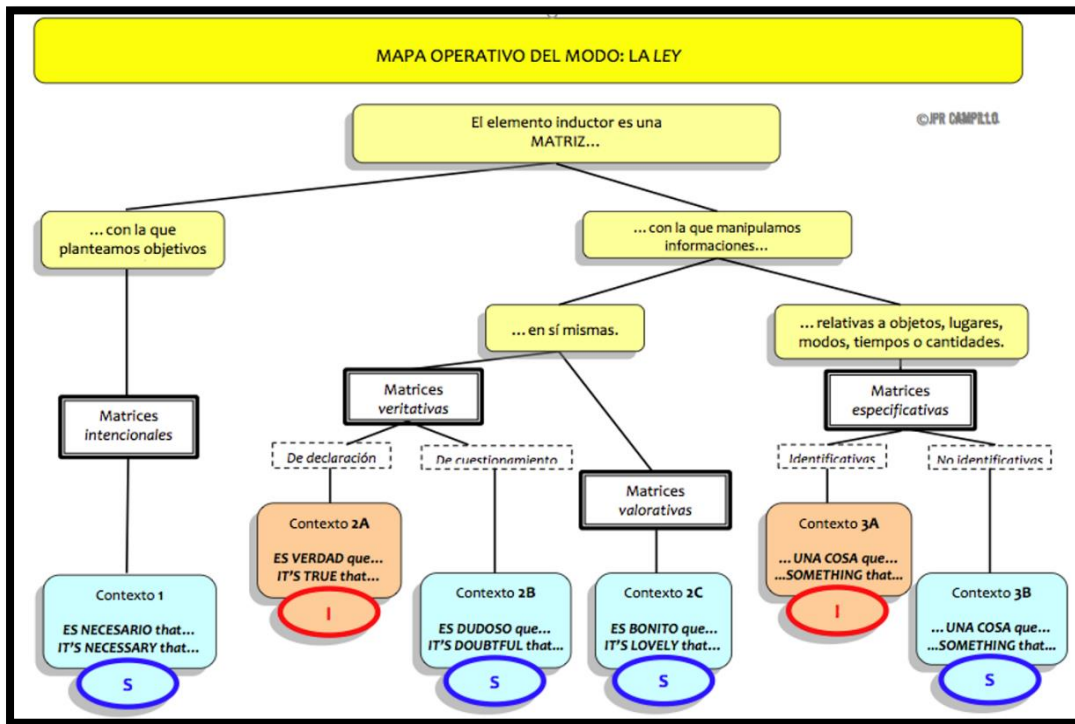
This map represents a significant improvement with regard to the traditional (and lengthy) lists of subjunctive structures based on syntactic and semantic connections between the matrix and the embedded verb. According to this author, the subjunctive is communicatively logical, and students should be able to understand why it is used and in which contexts, in order to be able to use it adequately.

This 'Mood Map' begins showing that there is always an introductory element (in a few cases this element is not explicitly present in the sentence, but it is implied) which is called the 'matrix'. By means of this matrix the speaker may: (a) set objectives (i.e. 'purposive' matrices), which are comprised by Context 1 and include volitive verbs and verbs of influence; or (b) manipulate information. This information can be manipulated in two different ways:

1. by itself; by means of 'veritative' matrices (i.e. matrices of 'declaration': Context 2A, and matrices of 'questioning': Context 2B) or evaluative matrices (i.e. Context 2C). Context 2A comprises assertions and assumptions, Context 2B comprises the rejection of an

assertion/assumption or the consideration of a possibility, and Context 2C includes value judgements and comments.

2. on objects, places, etc.; by means of 'specifying' matrices: *identifying* (i.e. Context 3A) and *non-identifying* (i.e. Context 3B), which represent the 'radiality' (i.e. extension of the prototype) of the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration (i.e. prototype or operative value).

Contexts 2A and 3A would trigger the indicative, and Contexts 1, 2B, 2C, and 3B would trigger the subjunctive. Every time the student encounters a new matrix in the input, they will need to add it to one of these six contexts themselves, since they have supposedly learnt the single operative value which will help them to build up their own classification, that is, the conceptual pair of *declaration/non-declaration*. By doing so, the student is taking charge of their own learning. It is important to stress that every single instance of Spanish mood contrast consisting in the combination of a 'matrix' (or main clause) and a 'proposition' (or subordinate clause) will be able to fit in one of those six (sub-)contexts, without exception.

Two key ideas of this conceptual pair are that it is the 'contextual meaning' of the matrix what triggers the use of mood in the embedded verb, and that the speaker (or subject of the matrix) chooses a specific matrix in order to convey what s/he wants to say in a particular situation. When introducing this conceptual pair to L2 learners for the first time, only contexts 1 and 2 are taught in order to properly understand the contrast between *declaration* and *non-declaration* before moving to its *radiality* (i.e. Context 3), that is, cases which are less close to the prototype or central (operational) value (i.e. extension of the prototype).

The first stage would thus consist of the introduction of the concept in its most basic terms (i.e. declaration is when the speaker or subject asserts or assumes a piece of information and non-declaration is when the speaker or subject does not assert nor assume a piece of information). Previously, two terms are introduced and explained: matrix (or superordinate clause elements)

and proposition[24] (or subordinated clause), since the subjunctive mood is characteristic of subordination. Some leaners might know these terms as main and subordinate clauses and have already seen them in indicative contexts. Therefore, the first exercises that learners complete consist of replacing the various matrices for 'the speaker or subject asserts or assumes…' and if that replacement works, that is, if the same (or very similar) meaning is maintained, they will be dealing with a declaration, but if the replacement does not work, then they will be dealing with a non-declaration. This strategy simplifies considerably how L2 learners begin their dealing with mood contrast in Spanish, since the focus is always on the same 'yes/no' question.

It is important to keep in mind that the concept of *matrix* within this context does not have a simple syntactic definition (i.e. topmost verb in the sentence), but a more elaborated one. As mentioned above, the definition of *matrix* comprises the *meaning* of the word or group of words responsible for triggering mood in the subordinate clause, whether these words are present or pragmatically implied. The sentences below, which all contain the subjunctive in the embedded clause, illustrate this idea[25]:

(43) ***Espero que*** *los novios sean felices.* (I hope the bride and groom are happy.)

(44) *¡**Que** vivan los novios!* (Long live the bride and groom!)

(45) **(Ø)** *¡Vivan los novios!* (Long live the bride and groom!)

The matrix in sentence (43) is comprised of a finite verb plus '*que*' (that), so it is explicit. Whereas in sentence (44), the matrix is comprised of just the particle '*que*' (that) and the main finite verb (or impersonal expression) is omitted but implied. Sentence (45) corresponds (in meaning) to sentence (44), but in this case the particle '*que*' (that) is also omitted.

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[24] The metalanguage is simplified in order to facilitate the comprehension of the learner. Although 'proposition', as a concept, is used in semantics with a different meaning, within this context, it refers to both the subordinate clause (syntactic structure) and the information (lexical meaning) contained in that subordinate clause, which the speaker or subject of the matrix communicates or mentions.

[25] The matrix, whether explicit or implicit, is shown in bold letters.

The concepts of *prototype* and *radiality* within this framework are of particular relevance. Both concepts are related to the categorisation of linguistic elements. The single binary opposition of *declaration/non-declaration* is the 'prototype' (or central concept), which easily explains the most straightforward cases of the obligatory subjunctive. However, Ruiz Campillo (2019) claims that the concept of 'prototype' is best suited to understand the evolution of lexical meanings, as the ones provided as examples in section 2.5.1 above, whereas for grammatical values, in which the main objective is to seek an 'operational' explanation of how one form can generate all the meanings observable during real use of language, this author prefers to employ the term "operative value".

Radiality or extension of the prototype refers to the capacity of accommodating all the other cases which are less central or close to the prototype. In the case of mood contrast in Spanish these would include the so-called 'optional' subjunctive. The concepts of 'identification' and 'non-identification' are employed when accounting for this single binary opposition's 'radiality' (i.e. Context 3 of the Mood Map: Figure 4 above).

In the only empirical study I found in which the radiality of the operational value of 'declaration' and 'non-declaration' was tested, Llopis-García (2010) employed the concepts of 'identification' and 'non-identification' to introduce Spanish mood contrast with relative, temporal and concessive clauses. Thus, with relative clauses, the declaration of the antecedent represents its 'identification' by the speaker or subject. Consequently, the non-declaration of the antecedent represents its 'non-identification'. Regarding temporal clauses, declaration represents the 'identification' of the moment (as experience or as routine), whereas non-declaration corresponds with the 'non-identification' of the moment (as future actions). Lastly, when dealing with concessive clauses, declaration represents the 'identification' of the problem (the communicative intent is to inform), and non-declaration the 'non-identification' of the

problem (the communicative intent is not to inform, but to provide a value judgement). The following sentences would illustrate the 'radiality' of the single binary opposition of *declaration* and *non-declaration*, according to Llopis-García (2010):

(46) *Quiere comprar una casa que tiene^{IND} garaje.* (S/he wants to buy a (particular) house that has a garage) – 'identification' of the house

(47) *Quiere comprar una casa que tenga^{SUB} garaje.* (S/he wants to buy any house that has a garage) – 'non-identification' of the house

(48) *Fui a celebrarlo cuando terminó^{IND} el examen.* (I went to celebrate when the exam finished) – 'identification' of the moment (past)

(49) *Iré a celebrarlo cuando termine^{SUB} el examen.* (I'll go to celebrate when the exam finishes) – 'non-identification' of the moment (future)

(50) *Trabajo 20 horas a la semana, aunque tengo^{IND} que estudiar para los exámenes.* (I work 20 hours a week, although I need to study for the exams). – 'identification' of the problem (the speaker informs that s/he needs to study for the exams)

(51) *Trabajo 20 horas a la semana, aunque tenga^{SUB} que estudiar para los exámenes.* (I work 20 hours a week, even if I need to study for the exams). – 'non-identification' of the problem (the speaker simply provides a value judgement)

However, Ruiz Campillo does not agree with the classification of concessive clauses as belonging to Context 3 (i.e. sentences 50 and 51 above). According to this author, concessive clauses belong to Context 2, and as such they select the indicative when the argument is a declaration (i.e. Context 2a), and the subjunctive when the argument is either being 'questioned' by the speaker or subject (i.e. Context 2b) or serves as a 'comment' or 'value judgement' (i.e. Context 2c). The following three sentences illustrate this claim:

(52) *Aunque Luis tiene^{IND} que estudiar, va a ir a tu fiesta.* (Context 2a: Even if Luis needs to study, he is going to your party). The speaker is informing the hearer that Luis needs to

study (declaration).

(53) *Aunque Luis tenga* [SUBJ] *que estudiar, va a ir a tu fiesta.* (Context 2b: I do not know if/It is possible that Luis needs to study, but he is going to your party even if he does) (non-declaration).

(54) *Aunque Luis tenga* [SUBJ.] *que estudiar, va a ir a tu fiesta.* (Context 2c: I know that Luis needs to study, but I also know that is not going to stop him going to your party) (non-declaration).

Overall, it should be noted that this method differs widely from the more traditional methods used by most teachers. The most salient difference is that traditional methods rely on the learners' memorisation of the different combinations of matrix and proposition which trigger either mood, that is, the 'effects' or 'uses' (i.e. what is said) and thus teachers need to provide students with lists of those combinations and make these aware of what situations native speakers generally use them. However, the COA focuses on the essential meaning of mood contrast in Spanish (i.e. the 'cause/s': why it is said) and requires teachers to fully understand this conceptual pair so that they can show their students how to use it as a mechanism to choose between moods at all times, without exception.

The COA was developed quite recently (i.e. 2004), relatively speaking, and for that reason, it is not broadly known and no published bibliography on its 'functionality' could be found when specifically dealing with Spanish mood contrast, with the exception of the abovementioned study by Llopis-García (2010), which tested the usefulness of this approach with German intermediate students and only focusing on the 'optional' subjunctive in relative, temporal and concessive clauses. More specifically, Llopis-García showed that the combination of a Cognitive-Operative approach to mood with a Processing Instruction method had positive

effects on how the students identified mood selection. However, no empirical studies which examine the COA from the early stages of subjunctive learning could be found.

2.6. COA vs. The Traditional Approach

Table 8 below contrasts the cognitive-operative approach (COA) with the traditional approach in a succinct manner. It includes some distinctive characteristics about both methods' typology of teaching, focusing on aspects related to how each method deals with the introduction of Spanish mood selection to L2 learners, which is the main objective of this investigation. Some samples of exercises or activities typical of each approach have also been included.

Table 8: Traditional Approach vs. COA

TRADITIONAL APPROACH	COGNITIVE-OPERATIVE APPROACH
Structuralist tradition. Behaviourist tradition.	Functionalist tradition. Cognitive Linguistics. Cognitive Grammar.
Explicit introduction of grammar rules. Grammar rules as traits of the linguistic system.	Explicit introduction of basic operative values. Use of metalinguistic images to explain the different form/meaning combinations, which are characterised by their simplicity and level of abstraction. Visual language is largely universal.
Description of 'effects' (what is said), not the causes (why it is said).	Form/meaning combinations are the result of the speaker's choice, and thus the focus is on the 'causes' (why the speaker said what s/he said).
There is a separation between grammar and vocabulary.	Grammar and vocabulary cannot be separated. Grammar is not a tool which helps in communication; grammar is communication.
Focus on morphosyntactic and semantic (or functional) features of the language.	Importance of discourse-pragmatic traits and the speaker's perspective. Focus on communication.
One-way class interaction: teacher as authority. Only one accurate answer and any deviation from the norm is considered to be erroneous. Focus on competence. Learners are told how they must write or speak.	Two-way interaction: student-centred. Classroom as a type of laboratory: reflecting on the causes of different form/meaning combinations (also in contrast with students' L1's forms). Focus on performance. True role of language is communication. Learners are shown the way/s the target language is spoken or written.
Mood selection triggered by lexical features of the matrix verb. Provision of lists of subjunctive structures according to multiple syntactic and semantic (or lexical) aspects + list of exceptions in which the same or similar structures trigger the indicative instead.	Mood selection triggered by what the speaker (or subject) "implies" when s/he says something. All cases of mood selection can be explained by means of a single mechanism (i.e. conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration).

Example of explanation/s (level A2+/B1): 1) Verbs of belief and knowledge in the affirmative take the indicative and in the negative the subjunctive: *Creo que tengo$^{IND.}$ suficiente dinero.* (I think I have enough money) *No creo que tenga$^{SUBJ.}$ suficiente dinero.* (I don't think I have enough money) 2) Verbs of desire or verbs of influence always take the subjunctive: *Quiero/Necesito que comas$^{SUBJ.}$ más.* (I want/need you to eat more) 3) Verbs reporting emotional reactions or value judgements take the subjunctive: *Me da pena que te vayas$^{SUBJ.}$.* (I'm sad that you're leaving) 4) Verbs reporting necessity, doubt, command, prohibition, permission, advice, preference, possibility, probability, uncertainty, demands, hypotheticality, etc., take the subjunctive. Exception: *A lo mejor tengo$^{IND.}$ suerte.* ('a lo mejor' denotes possibility but triggers the indicative). (I might be lucky) 5) Some matrices can take both moods. The indicative denotes high probability and the subjunctive denotes low probability: *Quizá trabaje$^{SUBJ.}$ hasta tarde mañana.* *Quizá trabajo$^{IND.}$ hasta tarde mañana.* (Perhaps I'll work late tomorrow) 6) Etc.	*Example of explanation (level A2+/B1):* 1) When the speaker or subject knows (asserts) or thinks (assumes) something (i.e. a piece of information), s/he will use the indicative mood in the proposition. When s/he does not (want to) assert or assume that piece of information but just want to say something about it, then s/he will use the subjunctive. *Es evidente que Ana va$^{IND.}$ a ganar el premio.* (the speaker asserts that Ana is going to win the award) *Dudamos que Ana vaya$^{SUBJ.}$ a ganar el premio.* (the subject does not assert or assume that Ana is going to win the award, since they are rejecting the idea)
1. Write the present subjunctive of the verbs in brackets[26]: *Es importante que (hablar, tú) en voz alta.* (It's important that (to speak, you singular) loudly) *El taxista duda que el cliente (dejar) una buena propina.* (The taxi drive doubts that the customer (to leave) a good tip) *El profesor quiere que (hacer, nosotros) los ejercicios del subjuntivo.* (The teachers wants that (to do, we) the subjunctive exercises) *Mi madre no quiere que (salir, yo) con Juan.* (My mum doesn't want that (to go out, I) with Juan) *Dudo que Juan (venir) mañana.* (I doubt that Juan (to come) tomorrow) *Etc.*	Can you change the matrix for 'the speaker or subject asserts or assumes the information contained in the proposition' and keep the same or similar meaning? If you can, the indicative is used in the proposition, but if you can't, then the subjunctive is used. *¿Creo que Juan trabaj… mucho = Afirmo o asumo que Juan trabaja mucho?* Answer: Yes ➡ *trabaja* (I think Juan works very hard = I assert/assume that Juan works very hard) *¿No creo que Juan trabaj… mucho = Afirmo o asumo que Juan trabaja mucho?* Answer: No ➡ *trabaje* (I don't think Juan works very hard ≠ I assert or assume that Juan works very hard)

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[26] Source: Activity taken from the year 1 non-beginners programme in one of the universities where this investigation was carried out.

Complete the table with the correct conjugation of the present subjunctive:		Identify the subject of the verbs in **bold**[27].

Subject Pronoun	ESTUDIAR
yo	*estudie*
tú	
él, ella, usted	
nosotros, nosotras	
vosotros, vosotras	
ellos, ellas, ustedes	

Identify the subject of the verbs in **bold**[27].

3. *Para aprender español es necesario **estudiar** con una buena gramática.* (*En general*)

(In order to learn Spanish, it is necessary to study with a good grammar textbook)

4. *Creo que ella debe saberlo. Es mejor que se lo **digas** ya.* (*Tú*)

(I think she needs to know. It is better that you tell her now)

2.7. Final Remarks

This chapter provides an answer to research question 2: From a theoretical perspective, why do L2 learners of Spanish find it difficult to learn the subjunctive by means of the traditional approach? The answer to this question is made up of various parts.

The first reason for difficulty is that the traditional approach relies heavily on the L2 learner's ability to memorise lengthy lists of structures (i.e. combination of matrices and embedded clauses) which determine the subjunctive as opposed to indicative as a choice, based on numerous syntactic, semantic and functional concepts – but which do not always apply. These lists are based on 'effects' or 'uses' (i.e. what is said), which are multifarious, and no explanation of the cause/s (i.e. why it is said) is usually provided. Moreover, L2 learners are told when to use these structures by an 'authority' figure (e.g. teacher, textbook or native speaker).

The second reason for difficulty is that the introduction of the Spanish subjunctive by means of the traditional approach includes complex metalinguistic explanations which involve subordination, and previous studies have claimed that, when L2 learners are introduced mood contrast for the first time, they are not ready to deal with complex syntax. This issue is compounded when L2 learners have English as an L1, since this language does not have a

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[27] Gramática Básica del Estudiante de Español (Alonso *et al*. 2004: 170, ex.3. Difusión).

productive subjunctive system and uses simpler syntax to convey modality, such as non-finite complements or modal verbs (e.g. Rodríguez & Carretero, 1996; Collentine, 1998; Farley, 2001).

The third reason for difficulty is that the traditional approach does not attend enough to what we now know to be the important role of pragmatics. Thus, the traditional approach does not usually include important discourse-pragmatic traits which are relevant to understand some cases of mood contrast (e.g. Priego Casanova, 2018), and therefore this introduction, besides being complex and lengthy, is not complete.

This chapter also provides an answer to research question 4: On what theoretical basis do proponents of the COA consider that this could be a more effective approach?

The COA shares various tenets with Cognitive Grammar. For instance, it fosters communicative learning, that is, the absolute focus of the study of language is on meaning. Grammar constructions are devised as symbolic units which are indissolubly linked to meaning and used in accordance with that meaning, and not with the form that goes with it. Speakers of a language select a particular linguistic form in order to communicate their thoughts (i.e. meaning) in the most appropriate manner, taking into consideration contextual factors to the highest extent. Furthermore, meaning has an extra dimension which is linked to the perspective of the subject when communicating their thoughts, that is, what the subject is paying attention to.

The use of images and simplified metalanguage to explain the different form/meaning combinations used by native speakers in communication is also fostered by the COA. This technique further facilitates the understanding of the reasons behind those choices. Moreover, the COA seeks to find the (operative) values shared by the multifarious 'uses' or 'effects' specific to a grammatical structure in order to 'operate' under minimum conditions within the

maximum number of contexts (Llopis, 2011: 107). Regarding Spanish mood contrast, that operative value (or prototype) is the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration.

Consequently, a single conceptual pair based on the intrinsic meaning of mood is the only mechanism needed to choose between the indicative and the subjunctive, without exception. This conceptual pair is based on the 'cause/s' (i.e. why is the subject (not) declaring the information contained in the proposition?) and thus there is only one explanation for the use of the subjunctive mood in the embedded verb. For that reason, there is no need to memorise lengthy lists of structures which cover the numerous uses of this mood plus another list with the exceptions.

Thus, it may be claimed that the COA represents a simplification of what L2 learners need to do in order to use mood contrast in Spanish. Hence, this method has the potential to be more effective than the traditional approach in achieving the learning of this point of grammar.

The next three chapters include this investigation's methodological approach (i.e. Chapter 3) and the results of the different empirical methods implemented at various stages in order to gather evidence to answer research questions 3 and 5. The first empirical study (i.e. pre-intervention; Chapter 4) considers teachers and learners' experience in a UK university in relation to the conclusions of the literature review, that is, whether the most popular traditional approach might lack effectiveness to achieve the learning of Spanish mood contrast by L2 learners. Chapter 5 reviews the outcomes of the intervention study, in which a cognitive-operative approach was implemented in two different UK universities as an alternative to improve the L2 learning of Spanish mood contrast.

3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The present chapter deals with this investigation's methodology. The main premise is grounded in the claim that Spanish mood selection is a very challenging point of grammar to learn for L2 learners. This observable reality has been measured quantitatively by numerous studies carried out, primarily, by linguists and acquisition experts. However, the main objective of this investigation is an alternative and largely empirically untested teaching method (i.e. cognitive-operative approach) to improve the comprehension and production of Spanish mood contrast by L2 learners, and thus the research paradigm adopted here complies with a wider range of methods, both quantitative and qualitative, which include (longitudinal) empirical and intervention testing.

Therefore, this investigation attempts, primarily, to examine a different and more recent teaching method to introduce the Spanish subjunctive mood to L2 learners based on the cognitive-operative approach, which is new for both students and teachers involved. This is carried out by means of an intervention study which required the development of a (two-staged) teaching programme, some classroom observations (and self-reflection), and the testing of students' mood contrast abilities at the lowest level of proficiency in which this point of grammar is taught (i.e. A2+/B1-). Prior to this, it was necessary to establish what the current situation is regarding the teaching/learning of this point of grammar within a UK university setting. This was carried out by means of a longitudinal pre-intervention study which involved teachers and students' views, classroom observations and the testing of students' mood contrast abilities at all levels of proficiency and throughout two academic years.

At this point, it should be noted that, in order to test student participants' mood contrast abilities, the tasks developed focused largely on rating 'accuracy', as described by the CAF (complexity, accuracy and fluency) model (Skehan, 1988) for measuring L2 learners'

production and performance. To put it succinctly, 'accuracy' is a measure for the target-like and error-free use of language. It was further defined by Housen, Kuiken and Vedder as "the extent to which an L2 performance deviates from the norm" (2012, p.4).

The 'norm', within the traditional approach, generally entails what is comprised in textbooks or reference academic sources and is based on what 'authorities' claim to be standard in the formal written modality of a particular language. However, in many cases, these 'norms' do not include possible divergences among the different (regional) varieties of the target language. Therefore, it is common among language teachers to disagree with some explanations provided in the textbook, for instance, advising their students that they would say it differently. In fact, within the explanations provided by the pre-intervention student participants about their choice of mood, some wrote: "that's how my tutor would say it" (further details in Chapter 4, section 4.4).

Within this investigation, tasks were largely developed in order to examine the student participants' accuracy when either selecting or producing both moods in their output. However, to some extent, they were also developed to reflect the effectiveness[28] (or efficacy) of the teaching methods employed to introduce this point of grammar to the type of learner targeted in this study (i.e. UK undergraduate student in a non-immersion setting). Since both teaching methods (i.e. traditional and COA) differ widely in their typology, the tasks employed in the pre-intervention study, in which the traditional approach was employed, and the actual intervention study, in which the COA was implemented, were also different. However, the ultimate goal of both sets of tasks was the same: to examine students' comprehension and production abilities of Spanish mood contrast.

Previous studies have concluded that, in order for the L2 learner to achieve some competence

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[28] De Graaff and Housen (2009) defined 'effectiveness' as "the extent to which the actual outcomes of instruction match the intended or desired effects". The term 'effect' refers to any observable change in the L2 learner outcome that can be attributed to an instructional intervention.

in mood selection, explicit instruction in the multiple linguistic characteristics of the subjunctive mood should be encouraged. Furthermore, this instruction commonly originates from a traditional approach, which mostly consists of the memorisation of classifications of structures (i.e. combinations of matrix and proposition) which take the indicative or the subjunctive in the embedded verb and which are grounded in the multiple syntactic and semantic traits of these two moods. To this should be added the other classifications with the exceptions to the rule, that is, combinations which would usually take the subjunctive taking the indicative instead, and vice versa.

However, this competence is rarely achieved within formal instruction settings, at least when it comes to (more spontaneous) production and specially with L2 learners whose L1 does not have a productive subjunctive system (e.g. Collentine, 2010), as is the case with English. Therefore, this investigation began by wondering whether and how this issue could be resolved.

Most of the aforementioned studies were carried out in the US, largely due to the facts that Spanish is the most popular L2 taught within formal settings (i.e. schools, colleges and universities) in that country and that there exists a large population of native and heritage speakers. Even though my experience as a teacher of SFL involves mostly British L2 learners of Spanish, the difficulties I observed in my students were very similar to the ones described in those studies. This is not surprising, if L1 cross-linguistic interference is assumed, considering that the majority of my students have the same L1 as the participants included in the US studies. Furthermore, I also believed that the way we usually introduce this point of grammar in the language classroom, that is, by means of the traditional approach could be hindering our students' learning of Spanish mood contrast.

Firstly, since this study was mostly concerned with the instruction of the Spanish subjunctive, it seemed relevant to ask other teachers of Spanish about their views on the subject. This would

surely help to corroborate whether practitioners working from the language classroom agreed with the research outcomes of (applied) linguists and acquisition experts (i.e. research question 3). A premise to begin this study was the demonstrable fact that what was being done in the L2 Spanish classroom to teach mood selection was not effective enough to achieve its acquisition by learners. Having the views of as many teachers as possible about this anticipated issue could provide further justification for attempting to find a possible solution. Gathering teachers' views constituted an innovation between the present investigation and most previous studies.

An obvious second step was to examine whether the researcher's own students, that is, UK university students completing a degree in which Spanish is not, in many cases, the main subject, also experience the same difficulties as those investigated in previous studies (i.e. research question 3). The focus was on one difficulty, namely, the fact that the implementation of a traditional approach was to some extent hindering (or not helping with) the learning of mood contrast among these students. In actual fact, this was the method employed by all the teachers in the university in which this investigation began, including the researcher. Another innovation between the present investigation and most of the aforementioned studies was that a longitudinal empirical study (i.e. pre-intervention) was carried out in a university which included all the levels of proficiency in which Spanish mood contrast is taught (i.e. A2, B1, B2 and C1+/C2) and which spanned two academic years (i.e. 2014/15 and 2015/16). This allowed for an extensive collection of data (i.e. 500 completed comprehension and production tasks, 186 completed surveys, 22 teacher participants in a focus group and six hours of classroom observation).

The last step to this investigation was the intervention testing of a different and more recent (and largely untested) approach to teaching grammar in the L2 classroom based on a cognitive-operative approach (i.e. research question 5). In the first instance, due to some time and

logistics issues, only the comprehension abilities of year 1 and year 2 students were observed. This was accomplished by means of a pilot study based on one introductory session. It became clear that more conclusive evidence was needed. Thereafter, and due to the change of jobs of the researcher, a follow-up study was carried out in a different UK university, although it is worth noting that the type of student was very similar (i.e. university students doing Spanish as part of their degree). The main differences between this follow-up study and the pilot were that, in the former, the intervention period was more systematic and spanned nearly three weeks, that both comprehension and production abilities were observed and that the participants were year 1 students only.

Finally, as mentioned above, the comprehension and production tasks developed for both empirical studies differed in their format, since, for instance, within the pre-intervention study, which was longitudinal, one of the main objectives was to examine whether there had been any progress in the students' mood contrast abilities throughout the entire learning process. This matter was not taken into consideration within the intervention study, due to this being the first to test the COA at the beginning of the L2 learning process of Spanish mood contrast.

It should be noted that the methodological approach employed in this investigation not only lies within a positivist approach, since some elements employed are characteristic of the Interpretive Paradigm. Thus, it would be more accurate to describe the methodology as a mixed-method approach.

Positivist research seeks to uncover the truth by means of scientific instruments. The positivist researcher has some established theoretical knowledge about the data they want to collect. According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995: 17), this researcher already knows what they are looking for, how to look for it and what to expect. These authors also pointed out that this research is generally linear and sequential, and it is carried out in a step-by-step manner. So,

for instance, if a positivist researcher adopts interviews as a method, they will ask well-structured questions. Their aim is to achieve results which represent reality accurately.

Therefore, the positivist approach relies on experimental research which is usually quantitative and focuses on reliable and valid tools to obtain a single reality. Such an approach could help to establish a relationship between teaching methods and the acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive by L2 learners.

This may be achieved:

a) by gathering evidence via direct experience and observation (e.g. comprehension and production tasks targeted to student participants)

b) by means of quantitative data (e.g. closed-ended questionnaires: second iteration of the teacher questionnaire and the student background questionnaire; or the comprehension and production tasks); and

c) by collecting participants' perspectives (e.g. teacher and student background surveys).

The positivist approach, however, has its drawbacks when used in educational research, since it attempts to reduce the complex to the simple by simplifying and controlling variables, and often variables cannot be isolated from context (Scotland, 2012). Fluctuating factors, such as ordinary life events (e.g. headache), attitudes (e.g. enthusiasm or lack of enthusiasm), and individuals' intentions, might affect these studies' results, and for that reason, scientific explanations are rarely complete.

Furthermore, this approach is characterised by its objectivism, but in many cases, researchers make value judgements throughout the research process, for instance, when selecting variables or when interpreting findings (Salomon, 1991).

The methodological approach employed in this investigation was also influenced by other

qualitative research features, which are more in line with the Interpretive Paradigm, as mentioned above. This approach is characterised by the belief that there is no single reality and that reality can be created by individuals in groups, and thereby it needs to be interpreted. It employs mostly qualitative methods, such as interviews, observation, case studies, etc. (Scotland, 2012).

The qualitative research features employed in this study include the following:

1. A focus group session with teacher participants.

2. The first iteration of the teacher questionnaire, which comprised mostly open-ended questions.

3. Classroom observation: in order to both, gather evidence of the most popular teaching methods employed when introducing the Spanish subjunctive, and as part of the intervention study, determine how student participants were receiving the new methodology based on the conceptual pair of *declaration/non-declaration,* and how teachers were introducing it.

4. A reflective diary completed by the researcher during the second stage of the intervention study.

In short, this investigation employed a longitudinal mixed-methods approach, since various methods characteristic of different approaches were used, and some were employed throughout two academic years. This allowed to gain a deeper and broader understanding of the participants' abilities, for instance, and thus more confidence in the results and conclusions drawn from the research.

3.1. Research Methods

This section provides details of the sets of data collected as part of this investigation. These

include the sample selection for each stage of the process, the research instruments and data collection methods employed and lastly, how the data gathered was analysed. The actual analysis and discussion of the results are included in the next three chapters (i.e. 4-6).

Table 9 below maps this investigation's research questions (i.e. main question and four related sub-questions) and the methods employed to gather evidence in order to answer each of them.

Table 9: Research Questions and Methodology Items

RQ1: Is the cognitive-operative single mechanism approach more effective than the traditional approach to learn the subjunctive?	
SUB-QUESTIONS	**METHODS**
RQ2: From a theoretical perspective, why do L2 learners of Spanish find it difficult to learn the subjunctive by means of the traditional approach?	Literature Review
RQ3: How effective is traditional instruction in enabling L2 learners in a UK Higher Education context to learn the subjunctive?	Pre-Intervention Study: • Teacher and student surveys • Focus group discussion • Student tasks • Classroom observation
RQ4: On what theoretical basis do proponents of the COA consider that this could be a more effective approach?	Literature Review
RQ5: When the COA is translated into classroom instruction, is there evidence to suggest that this has potential to be more effective than the traditional approach?	Intervention Study: • Experimental teaching programme • Classroom observation • Reflective diary • Pre- and post-attitudinal surveys

3.1.1. Pre-Intervention Study: The Teacher Questionnaire

The first step of this investigation consisted of gathering UK language teachers' views on the teaching and learning of the Spanish subjunctive. This was carried out by means of an online questionnaire.

Previous studies have used surveys as a research method. According to Cohen (1998), there is an advantage when using large-scale surveys, and it is that they allow the generation and testing of hypotheses and an extensive collection of data. However, online surveys' response rates might be affected by several factors (Comley, 2000), one being the respondent interest or

relevance of the survey, but even the format/design of the first page might be essential to achieve a robust response rate. According to Comley (2000), the average response rate for online surveys is between 15% and 29%.

In order to ask as many language teachers as possible about their views on the subjunctive instruction, this online questionnaire was distributed via Qualtrics[29]. It was completed by teachers working for UK institutions from different sectors (i.e. mostly higher/further education and secondary school teachers) during the academic year 2014/2015 and it had two iterations. The first iteration of the teacher questionnaire (see Appendix A) mostly comprised open-ended questions, and the main purpose of this was to gather first-hand data from teachers in order to tailor the multiple-choice questions which formed the second iteration (see Appendix B). In this way, the second iteration's questions and options could be more relevant and easier to respond, which would facilitate its completion and consequent analysis. Therefore, the analysis of the first iteration's results also complied with a qualitative method, which is more characteristic of the Interpretive paradigm. This first iteration consisted of mostly open-ended answers, which needed to be interpreted by the researcher in order to select the most relevant data for the multiple-choice questions which formed the second iteration. The second iteration was more in accordance with a quantitative method, which is more in line with the positivist paradigm.

Questions for both iterations focused on teachers' views on teaching methods, particularly when introducing mood contrast to their students. Special emphasis was placed upon their own experience teaching the subjunctive: what method/s they believed to be more effective and whether they assumed their students were achieving the 'learning' of this point of grammar at some point in their learning process.

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[29] www.qualtrics.com

The first iteration of the questionnaire for UK Spanish teachers included three different sections. The first section (titled 'teaching the subjunctive mood') covered the participants' relationship with the subjunctive and its instruction. The second section (titled 'you as a teacher') addressed the participants' considerations on themselves as language teachers. Finally, the last section (titled 'some feedback') sought some feedback on the questionnaire and any further relevant information on the subject which had not been covered by the questions.

There were 34 questions in total; more than half of the questions were open-ended or had an 'other' option with text-entry. The feedback received helped modify the second iteration, i.e. focusing on key questions for this study (to be able to gather further data on specific issues) and simplifying the format of the answers, in order to facilitate the process of completion of the questionnaire (since multiple-choice questions are quicker to respond than open-ended questions).

The second iteration had the same sections as the first iteration, but the number of questions was reduced to 17, in order to facilitate the completion of the questionnaire and to gather more specific data regarding the main research questions. Most of the questions on this second iteration were multiple-choice, and the options were based on the first iteration's replies, therefore, time required for completing the questionnaire was reduced considerably.

Both iterations were distributed online via the program Qualtrics, which is available to staff and students in the university where this investigation began.

3.1.1.1. Participants

The target population for the questionnaire comprised UK Spanish teachers from several sectors, such as secondary schools, higher and further education, private language schools, and

private tuition. It should be noted that the teacher questionnaire referred to in this section is a combination of the two iterations.

The questionnaire was sent to schools, universities, colleges and language schools, via different educational networks: SCILT (Scotland's National Centre for Languages), the Spanish Ministry of Education in Edinburgh, two universities, and Instituto Cervantes in Manchester. Since these institutions distributed the survey to third parties and in turn the questionnaire was forwarded to other relevant subjects, it is not possible to know the exact number of prospective participants who received the questionnaire to be completed.

Table 10 below shows a classification of the teacher participants according to their sector and whether they were native speakers of the target language.

Table 10: Teacher questionnaire participants

Teacher participants (N = 89)					
Higher/Further Educ. Teachers 62 (70 %)		Secondary School Teachers 25 (28 %)		Other 2 (2 %)	
Native Speakers 52 (58.5 %)	**Non-Native Speakers** 10 (11 %)	**Native Speakers** 4 (4.5 %)	**Non-Native Speakers** 21 (24%)	**Native Speakers** 2 (2 %)	**Non-Native Speakers** 0

From a total of 89 completed questionnaires received (45 from the first iteration and 44 from the second iteration), nearly two thirds of the participants (65%) were native speakers of Spanish. Well over two thirds (69.5%) of the participants were Higher/Further Education Teachers, and over a quarter (28.5%) were Secondary School Teachers. The remainder (2%) belonged to other sectors (e.g. private tutors). Lastly, among the Higher/Further Education Teachers, 84% were native speakers of Spanish, whereas only 16% of Secondary School Teachers had Spanish as an L1.

3.1.1.2. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

As previously mentioned, the online teacher questionnaire was distributed by email. It is worth noting that the fact that third parties were asked to distribute it among teachers of Spanish in the UK means that the number of prospective participants who received the survey cannot be precisely established. Much the same applies to the second iteration of the survey, since some of these third parties might have assumed that most of the participants had already completed the first iteration so there was no need to send the second one. Due to this possibility, I personally emailed most of the secondary schools and some universities in England where Spanish is taught, asking them to distribute the second iteration of the questionnaire among their Spanish teachers. I received no replies from any of the secondary schools, and this was reflected in the extremely low numbers (i.e. just one) of secondary teachers who completed the second iteration.

The results were firstly analysed according to the participants' work sector in two groups: Secondary School Teachers and Higher/Further Education Teachers. This was due to the possibility that both sectors might differ in teaching approaches, and this decision proved to be justified because they differed in responses to certain key questions, such as the methods used in class to introduce the subjunctive mood, and their beliefs about the main difficulties students have when learning this mood, among other things. The fact that the majority of Higher- and Further-Education teachers were native speakers of Spanish and most Secondary School teachers were non-native speakers of Spanish was also a consideration when analysing some responses. Thus, separate frequency tests were run between native and non-native speakers from both groups at a later stage.

It should be noted that non-native speaking teachers are at the same time L2 learners of Spanish and this might have influenced their responses to the questionnaire. This could be the case, for

instance, when asked how confident they felt when using and teaching the subjunctive mood to their students.

3.1.2. Pre-Intervention Study: The Focus Group of Teacher Participants

A focus group session (see Appendix C) was recorded during a workshop as part of a conference (i.e. *Encuentro* ELE-UK 2014) which took place in an English university in November 2014. The participants were all UK teachers of Spanish as a Foreign Language working for different institutions (i.e. universities, secondary schools and colleges). No more personal background details could be gathered during this session, since it was delivered during a workshop where time constraints did not allow it.

The recording was transcribed, and the content analysed to be added to the teacher questionnaire's results. The facts that the focus groups were asked to comment on other teachers' responses (i.e. first iteration's results) and that these participants had the opportunity to provide more in-depth views on the subject were key factors to examine the results separately.

There were 22 participants in the focus group session who were gathered in groups of 4 or 5 each during the abovementioned workshop. Their discussion was voice-recorded and lasted for 10-15 minutes. Only the most relevant questions were commented on due to time restrictions and the most frequently selected responses for each question were provided so that these participants could add whether they agreed or not.

3.1.3. Pre-Intervention Study: Student Background Questionnaire

An online background questionnaire (see Appendix D) was sent via Qualtrics to every student of Spanish at the first university where this investigation was carried out (i.e. 576) at the end of the first semester (i.e. course 2015/16) and again after the Christmas break. The main

purpose in delivering this questionnaire was to gather measurable data on students' aims and motivation in achieving a qualification in the target language. Furthermore, this background questionnaire was also targeted at finding out the main difficulties experienced by these L2 learners when acquiring the target language.

A total of 97 completed questionnaires were received, which suggests a response rate of 17%. This is in line with what Comley (2000) claims to be an average response rate for online surveys (i.e. between 15% and 29%), as discussed in section 3.1.1. above.

3.1.3.1. Participants

The target population for the questionnaire comprised all students enrolled in Spanish in the first university where this investigation was carried out. The link to the questionnaire was emailed to 576 students. Table 11 below shows the demographics of this group of participants.

Table 11: Student Participants Background Questionnaire

Student Participants (N = 97)							
GENDER		AGE		L1			
Female	Male	18-25	25+	English	French	Italian	Other
76 (78%)	21 (22%)	86 (89%)	11 (11%)	78 (81%)	6 (6%)	5 (5%)	8 (8%)

From the group of respondents who completed the questionnaire (i.e. 97), nearly four fifths (78%) were female and just over one fifth (22%) male. This result reflects the reality that Modern Languages Studies are more popular among female students (e.g. UCAS End of Cycle 2016 Data Resources)[30]. The majority (i.e. 89 %) of the participants were in the 18-25 age bracket. Slightly over four fifths (81%) of students had English as L1. For the remainder (20%) whose L1 was not English, French and Italian were the most frequently mentioned L1s: six

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[30] Of a total of 3505 acceptances in 2016 in UK universities for the subject of European Languages, Literature and related, 2445 (70%) were from female students (www.ucas.com; last search on January 27th, 2017). In addition, according to the Students Equality Monitoring Report 2017 of the university in which this investigation began, in the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, 71% of students were female and 29% were male.

respondents had French as L1, and five respondents had Italian as L1.

3.1.3.2. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

The background questionnaire was developed using the program Qualtrics and was distributed among all students of Spanish (i.e. 576) at the end of semester 1 during the academic year 2015/2016. Since these students were going on their Christmas vacation, a reminder was sent at the beginning of the second semester in order to receive as many completed surveys as possible. It had 17 questions, and most were multiple-choice questions so as to reduce the time of completion to the minimum. Other questions required the participant to write a short answer (e.g. French) if the option selected was 'other', for instance.

Students were advised to answer all the questions, although they could leave some blank if they were not comfortable selecting any of the options available (e.g. 'what is your gender/age?'). In fact, all the completed questionnaires received had all the questions answered. The analysis was based on simple frequencies and it aimed at having a better idea of the demographics of the type of student who studies Spanish as part of a university degree.

3.1.4. Pre-Intervention Study: Classroom Observation I

In order to investigate how the Spanish subjunctive is generally introduced in the L2 classroom within a university setting, some classroom observation (see Appendix E) was carried out by the researcher in the university where this investigation began. These observations took place during the academic years 2015/2016 and 2016/2017.

Table 12 shows the different lessons observed or recorded during both academic years.

Table 12: Classroom observation I

Academic year	Year 1 (beginners)	Year 1 (non-beginners)	Year 2	Year 3	Year 5
2015/2016	Tutor 1 (one lecture) Tutor 2 (one lecture)	Tutor 3 (one lecture)	N/A	N/A	Tutor 4 (one lecture)
2016/2017	N/A	N/A	N/A	Tutor 4 (one voice-recorded lecture)	Tutor 4 (one lecture)

The classroom observations carried out for this investigation included tutorials and lectures for both year 1 courses, year 3 and year 5 (i.e. Honours)[31]. The Spanish subjunctive is introduced for the first time at the end of year 1, so classroom observation included this level as well.

A total of four lecturers agreed to have their lessons observed (i.e. Tutors 1-4). For the year 3 class, due to some timetable constraints, it was not possible for the researcher to be present. Therefore, Tutor 4 agreed to voice-record the whole session. Each session comprised the observation of a 50-minute lecture plus a 10-minute conversation with the tutor after the dismissal of students so that (electronic) copies of the class and homework material used could be collected. Therefore, a total of five hours of classroom observation was undertaken plus an extra hour which was voice-recorded.

3.1.4.1. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Data collection was carried out by means of a diary (i.e. freehand record) simultaneously to the lessons taking place. The prime concern was to gather information about the main method/s employed, the type of interaction between teacher and student or among students, the type of class activities completed during the session, whether any (real) audio-visual or reading material was used, or whether students were required to complete some extra activities outside

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[31] Year 1 courses include: Introduction to Spanish 1A/B, which is a course for complete beginners, and Spanish 1A/B, which is a course for students who have achieved a Higher or Advanced Higher qualification at school. In the year 2 course, the new COA was already being (partly) implemented during 2016/17 so classroom observation was carried out as part of the intervention study only. Year 4 is taken abroad.

the classroom. Furthermore, the reaction of the students towards a new, in some cases, and challenging point of grammar and whether these showed some understanding of the main concepts were two important elements for this study.

The analysis was thus descriptive in nature, and interpretive, since it was based on observation exclusively. A list of characteristics was gathered in order to identify the type of method/s employed by these teachers to introduce mood contrast in the language classroom at different levels. Some other yes/no questions were also answered, such as:

- Are students engaging when asked questions by the teacher?
- Do students confirm in any way that they understand (or not) the explanations provided by the teacher?
- When completing the exercises, do all students participate? And, are they accurate in their responses?

3.1.5. Pre-Intervention Study: Comprehension and Production Tasks

The next step of the investigation comprised several comprehension and production tasks (see Appendix F) at all levels of proficiency which were completed by student participants on paper as a class activity. The prime objective for employing these two types of task was to determine the student participants' understanding and use of mood contrast in Spanish at each level of proficiency. Since previous studies had concluded that L2 learners with English as L1 generally experience the same issues when attempting to learn the Spanish subjunctive mood, the tasks employed in this study were developed in order to determine whether the student participants involved would experience the same obstacles, and whether these were characteristic of particular levels of proficiency or, on the contrary, these issues could become 'fossilised'. In fact, it was possible to gather some evidence about the above because this study was longitudinal, that is, it was carried out throughout two academic years and all the levels of

proficiency were included.

The use of both comprehension and production tasks was motivated by the fact that different retrieval procedures are used in each activity. According to Ringbom (2007), both intra-linguistic and cross-linguistic effects come into play at the same time, and this makes the interplay between comprehension and production more complex. Therefore, a difference in the performance of L2 learners when completing comprehension tasks as opposed to production tasks was expected.

Comprehension aims at decoding contextual meaning while structural features remain in the background. Therefore, semantic similarity might cause confusion in L2 comprehension, in contrast to L1 comprehension. In L2 comprehension, the direction of mapping is from sound to meaning, whereas in production, the direction is from meaning to sound. For L2 comprehension, the importance of form is revealed in the learners' making use of both intra-lingual similarities and cross-linguistic similarities, whereas for production, cross-linguistic similarities of form are not as instinctively used. Comprehension takes place when input and knowledge complement each other. The form of a word is already provided, and it is mapped on to pertinent existing knowledge, while in production the speaker needs to give linguistic form to a preverbal intention.

Comprehension tasks within this study had two different formats:

1) Several situations which were explained with great detail in English so that there were no possible misunderstandings, followed by two sentences in Spanish, both exactly the same but with a change of mood in the embedded verb. Participants needed to select the 'most appropriate' sentence for that particular situation and explain why. Two other options were provided: both sentences are correct/appropriate, and neither is correct/appropriate. In some of the cases, both options could be appropriate depending on the explanation, but there

were no responses in which the 'neither' option was meant to be selected[32]. Participants were required to explain the reason/s for any of their choices at the end. Some distractors were included, which comprised the use of different grammatical constructions, such as the preterit and the imperfect indicative (i.e. aspect), or the choice between *ser* and *estar* (both corresponding to the verb 'to be'), among others.

2) A text telling a story in Spanish, in which 13 of the subordinate verbs (i.e. in indicative or subjunctive) were removed and replaced by both the indicative and the subjunctive forms in brackets. Participants were required to select one of the two options as more appropriate to the situation, but they did not need to provide an explanation for their choice. In just one case, the option implied choosing between the subjunctive and a non-finite form because there was co-reference between subjects.

The first type of comprehension task was used at all levels of proficiency, but the second type was only used with the lowest level, that is, year 2 (i.e. B1).

Production tasks had also two different formats:

1) Several situations were explained with great detail in English so that there were no possible misunderstandings, followed by two/three lines where participants were required to write a sentence (or ask a question) in Spanish to comment on the situation described above.

3) A text in which 13 of the subordinate verbs (i.e. in indicative or subjunctive) were removed and participants were required to write the most appropriate form of the verb in the gap provided. The infinitive form of the verb plus the subject pronoun were provided in brackets, so that participants had to concentrate solely on mood choice, and not on deciding

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[32] For the C1+/C2 comprehension task, a fifth option, 'I don't know', was added after computing the results for the native speakers' comparison group, since some of the situations proved to be quite challenging.

which grammatical person was needed in each gap. One of the options implied the production of a non-finite form because there was co-reference between subjects.

In the same way as the comprehension tasks, the first type of production task was employed in every level of proficiency, but the second type was only used with the year 2 participants. In fact, the format of all the tasks was very similar to the type of practice activities which these students are accustomed to complete in the classroom.

3.1.5.1. Participants

Participants included all the year 2, year 3 and year 5 (i.e. final year) students of Spanish at the first university in which this investigation was carried out. Year 2 is expected to correspond to a B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), year 3 to a B2 level and year 5 to a C1+/C2 level. Year 4 is compulsorily taken abroad, and therefore there are no year 4 language students at this university.

Although the Spanish subjunctive is introduced for the first time at the end of year 1 (A2 level), it is in fact throughout year 2 when L2 learners start using the present subjunctive with some cases of the obligatory subjunctive (i.e. volitive verbs, purpose clauses, verbs of influence), and one particular case where there is a choice between the indicative and the subjunctive moods (i.e. restrictive relative clauses). The imperfect subjunctive is introduced briefly with one type of conditional clause. In year 3, the past subjunctive morphology and uses are introduced (i.e. imperfect, perfect, and pluperfect), as well as some situations where there is a choice between the indicative and the subjunctive indicating pragmatic differences. During the last year of their language degree (i.e. year 5), students are expected to have already learned how to use the subjunctive mood in most situations where it is required, although the reality

might be quite inconsistent[33].

A comparison group of native speakers of Spanish (n = 110) completed the comprehension task designed for the most advanced level of proficiency (i.e. C1+/C2) prior to student participants. The main objective was to investigate any possible variation in the use of the subjunctive among native speakers, as well as to receive some feedback in order to improve the tasks before being distributed to student participants. The comprehension task was distributed online (i.e. Qualtrics) to native speakers via a Facebook page titled *Profesores de Español como Lengua Extranjera* (Teachers of Spanish as a Foreign Language), as well as being emailed to contacts in Spain and Chile.

Prior to distributing the same comprehension task among student participants in the following year (i.e. 2016/2017), another 58 native speakers completed it in order to receive further data from subjects with little or no experience of teaching Spanish. From the 110 participants in 2015/2016, there were only 33 participants who did have little or no experience of teaching Spanish. The remainder (i.e. 77) were teachers of SFL.

Table 13 shows the number of tasks completed by the comparison group of native speakers during the two academic years in which this study was undertaken.

Table 13: Tasks completed by the comparison group of native speakers

TASKS	Teacher Group (n) 2015/2016	Teacher Group (n) 2016/2017	Chileans (n) 2015/2016	Spaniards (n) 2016/2017	Total (n)
Comprehension task – level C1+/C2	77		33	58	169
Production task – level C1+/C2		4		1	5
Both tasks					**N = 173**

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[33] Some students have spent most of their fourth year in France, for instance, because they are doing a joint degree in French and Spanish. Therefore, their proficiency level in Spanish might be lower than the students who have spent their fourth year in a Spanish-speaking country.

3.1.5.2. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Tasks were delivered twice in two consecutive years (i.e. 2015/16 and 2016/17), so, for instance, roughly the same students who completed the year 2 tasks during 2015/16, completed the year 3 tasks during 2016/17 (with the exception of those doing an Erasmus year abroad and the students not attending the lesson during which the tasks were delivered). Therefore, it was possible to develop a longitudinal picture of these students' progress in their learning of the subjunctive.

A total of 327 tasks completed by student participants were available for analysis at the end of the second academic year. On top of this, 173 tasks completed by the comparison group of native speakers were also collected as data.

Table 14 shows the different comprehension and production tasks completed by student participants.

Table 14: Comprehension and production tasks completed by student participants

TASKS	2015/2016 (n)	2016/2017 (n)	Total (n)
Comprehension task 1 – level B1	48	23	71
Comprehension task 2 – level B1	N/A	22	22
Production task 1 – level B1	29	17	46
Production task 2 – level B1	N/A	20	20
Comprehension task – level B2	48	31	79
Production task – level B2	N/A	0	0[34]
Comprehension task – level C1+/C2	35	16	51
Production task – level C1+/C2	N/A	38	38
All tasks	**N = 160**	**N = 167**	**N = 327**

As previously mentioned, the tasks addressed to student participants were distributed as a class

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[34] The teacher forgot to distribute this task among her students before the course had finished. Therefore, it was sent via email to her students, but no completed tasks were received.

activity on paper and individually, hence the high number of completed tasks collected. The compilation of usable data was carried out manually, that is, by reading each individual task and selecting the relevant elements to be consequently analysed. Both comprehension and production tasks required some sentence/text production by student participants, thus the data collection process was time-consuming and cumbersome. However, since students were also required to explain their choices (i.e. multiple-choice) in the comprehension tasks and to write a sentence or paragraph in the production tasks, highly valuable data were gathered.

For both types of task, a quantitative approach was employed by means of the computation of the 'correct' answers. The multiple-choice questions of the comprehension tasks had one option which was more adequate to the situation described than the other option, thus if the more adequate option was selected it was computed as 'correct'. However, in the (frequent) cases in which the explanation provided was incomplete or did not correspond with the mood selected, some relevant comments were added in the discussion of the results as evidence of the (lack of) effectiveness of the teaching approach employed, that is, the traditional approach (for further details see Chapter 4, section 4.4). Regarding the production tasks, if the situation required the use of the subjunctive and the participant used an indicative form (or vice versa), the item was accounted for as 'incorrect'. However, if the situation required the use of the subjunctive and the participant clearly attempted to use a subjunctive form, even if the morphology was not completely adequate, it counted as 'correct'. These cases were frequent, especially with the lower levels.

The above classification was more in line with an interpretive approach, since there was an attempt to identify and categorise the types of error and the level of their occurrence.

3.1.6. Intervention Study: Stage 1

The main objective of this investigation was the testing of a new teaching method to introduce

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Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners within a UK university setting based on the cognitive-operative approach (COA). This was carried out by means of a two-staged intervention study.

Stage 1 of the intervention study began as a pilot. It aimed at observing L2 learners' first reactions to a new method to introduce mood contrast based on the COA which contrasts sharply with the more common traditional method.

It consisted of the introduction of the conceptual pair of *declaration/non-declaration* (Ruiz Campillo, 2004) by means of a PowerPoint presentation (see Appendix J for the updated version of this presentation, which was employed in the main follow-up study or Stage 2 described in section 3.1.8 below). This introduction was carried out during a 50-minute lecture and was delivered in English to avoid possible misunderstandings. New concepts and related metalanguage were also introduced as common to most languages, thus cross-linguistic references were made. These included concepts such as 'modality', 'linguistic mood', 'matrix' (i.e. main clause) and 'proposition' (i.e. subordinate clause). All the above was supported by the aid of images and straightforward examples in both languages, English and Spanish, to facilitate the learners' understanding.

An (online) activity (see Appendix G) was completed by student participants after the presentation. This exercise was extracted from the textbook employed in the year 1 non-beginner and year 2 courses[35], which follows a COA to explaining grammar. It consisted of a series of contextualised sentences (i.e. eight in total) describing a police interrogation which implied a 'play on words' of the verb 'to declare', since it was used in both senses: 'testify' and 'assert/assume' the proposition of the embedded clause. After replying to the question: 'Is

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[35] Gramática Básica del Estudiante de Español. Alonso R., Castañeda A., Martínez P., Miquel L., Ortega J., Ruiz Campillo J.P. (2011, new edition: exercise 1, page 168) Difusión.

the speaker declaring in the following sentences?' students needed to explain why they had answered yes or no.

3.1.6.1. Participants

A total of 144 year 1 and year 2 students participated in this first stage of the intervention study. These participants were studying a university degree in which Spanish was one of the subjects, not necessarily the main subject. They were grouped in three different levels: 16 were year 1 beginner students with no previous knowledge of mood contrast, 50 were year 1 non-beginner students and 78 were year 2 students[36] both with previous knowledge of mood contrast, as shown in Table 15 below.

Table 15: Student Participants - Stage 1 of the Intervention Study

Year 1 Beginners (n)	Year 1 Non-Beginners (n)	Year 2 (n)		
16 (Tutor 1)	50 (Tutor 4)	28 (Tutor 5)	27 (Tutor 6)	23 (Tutor 4)

Four university teachers were involved in the introduction of this conceptual pair to the student participants. In order to do this, all of them received two informal training sessions in advance in which the conceptual pair of declaration/non-declaration and the pilot's procedure were explained in detail.

3.1.6.2. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Data collection was carried out mostly by means of a diary (i.e. freehand record) simultaneously to the lessons taking place. However, for the activity that was completed by student participants after the presentation, a game-based learning platform[37] was employed for the largest group only (i.e. 50 year-1 non-beginner students) so all students could complete the

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[36] The 78 year 2 students were grouped in three smaller groups of 23, 27 and 28 students, respectively.
[37] www.kahoot.com

practice activity. This platform has the advantage of gathering the results in the form of percentages when the quiz has been completed, which showed the number of participants who responded accurately to the eight situations presented. Therefore, it was possible to gather some quantitative data as well.

The analysis was mostly based on the interpretation of the different elements observed during those sessions. Responses to the following questions were collected in order to be analysed qualitatively:

- Are students answering all the questions asked by the lecturer?[38]

- Do the images used help these students to understand the different concepts presented to them?

- Do crosslinguistic references and examples help these students to understand the different concepts these illustrate?

- Are these students able to answer accurately to the question 'Is the speaker or subject declaring or not declaring the information comprised in the proposition?' for all the examples comprised in the last slide of the presentation?

- Do any of these students look overwhelmed at the end of the presentation?

Regarding the final (online) comprehension task taken from one of the exercises from the textbook used in year 1 and year 2 classes, answers to the following questions were sought:

- Are students able to answer accurately to the same yes/no question[39] for all the situations presented to them (i.e. eight sentences in total)? Do they take some time to reflect before answering?

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[38] Nearly all the slides of the PowerPoint presentation required an answer or confirmation by students.
[39] Is the speaker or subject declaring or not declaring in the following situations?'

- If they do, are they able to provide some type of explanation as to why the speaker or subject is declaring or not the information contained in the proposition? Is this explanation based on the new (and recently introduced) conceptual pair or, on the other hand, is influenced by concepts related to the traditional approach?
- Do all students participate in the discussion?

As mentioned above, the largest group (i.e. 50 year-1 non-beginner students) completed this task using an online platform which produced the percentage of students who replied to all the situations correctly. However, in order to gather further details, the lecturer needed to go over each situation and ask students why they had answered yes or no. The responses offered by the students who were willing to share their views were annotated by the researcher-observer during the classroom observations (see next section 3.1.7).

3.1.7. Intervention Study: Stage 1: Classroom Observation II

As part of the first stage of the intervention study, some classroom observations (see Appendix H) were undertaken while the introduction of the new conceptual pair of declaration/non-declaration was taking place with the additional aim to examine how the lecturers involved were dealing with this new method. We need to consider the fact that this method based on the COA was new to all of them and they had only received two introductory sessions so they could become familiar with the method and be able (and comfortable) to present it to their students.

As seen in Table 15 above (section 3.1.6.1), four tutors were involved in this introduction (i.e. Tutors 1, 4, 5 and 6). However, Tutor 4 was only observed when teaching the Year 1 Non-Beginner group, since the same presentation was employed for all the groups and two of the Year 2 groups had this lesson at the same time (groups with Tutors 4 and 5). Due to this clash,

I was only able to attend one lesson and as I had already observed Tutor 4 with the Year 1 Non-Beginner group, I decided to attend Tutor 5's lesson.

3.1.7.1. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Data collection was carried out by means of a diary (i.e. freehand record) simultaneously to the presentations taking place, so mostly qualitative data were gathered. Furthermore, the views of the four tutors involved in this experiment were also collected after the presentation had taken place by means of an informal interview at a later date (see Appendix I). The main concerns in doing this were to examine whether these tutors were clear enough in their explanations, whether they were comfortable enough with this change of method, and whether they believed it could work long-term with their students. For this reason, their personal views were sought post-presentation as well.

The analysis was mostly based on the interpretation of the classroom observations and the informal interview data collected from the tutors involved. Answers to some relevant questions were sought, such as:

- Are tutors presenting the relevant concepts with clarity? Are they confirming this with their students?
- Are tutors giving students enough time to reflect on the new information presented? (e.g. to be able to respond to all the questions in the slides which were addressed to students)
- How long does it take each tutor to go over all the slides?
- In what way do they explain their students what these need to do in order to complete the practice (online) activity at the end of the session? (e.g. do they warn their students that they need to provide an explanation for their yes/no answers before or after the task is completed?)

3.1.8. Intervention Study: Stage 2

As previously mentioned, Stage 1 of the intervention study began as a pilot in the first UK university in which this investigation was carried out. Due to the change of jobs of the researcher, the main follow-up study (i.e. Stage 2) was undertaken in a different UK university.

The results for the pilot study (i.e. Stage 1) helped to adapt and develop a more systematic approach for the second stage of the intervention study. It consisted of a more thorough introduction of the conceptual pair to year 1 beginner students. The instruction period spanned two and a half weeks (i.e. nine contact hours) and both the comprehension and production abilities of L2 learners were tested by means of three tasks completed as class activities on paper. All students went through the same process, although only the completed tasks of those who accepted to participate and signed the consent form (i.e. 72) were used as data.

On the first day, the same introduction described above (section 3.1.6), including a few modifications in the content which are explained in chapter 5 (section 5.2.1), was delivered (see Appendix J for the updated version of the PowerPoint presentation). This took place during the first grammar lecture, in which all students enrolled in the course met in two big groups of 77 and 45 students, respectively. This was followed by three contact hours in which students were grouped in smaller numbers (i.e. 20 maximum). Students were introduced to the subjunctive's morphology and most activities completed consisted of deciding whether the speaker or subject was declaring or not the embedded proposition (see Appendix K for some examples of the activities completed by student participants). This aimed at reinforcing this conceptual pair as a mechanism to choose between moods.

The imperative was also introduced at this stage, since it has the same morphology (with the exception of the second-person singular and second-person plural in Peninsular Spanish, which

is the variety employed at this level) and non-declarative meaning as the subjunctive mood.

Part of the Mood Map[40] by Ruiz Campillo (2007a) was introduced during the second grammar lecture (see Appendix L). This contained two 'contexts' in which both moods were used: one 'declarative' (comprising two sub-contexts: asserting and assuming), which students were expected to distinguish with ease, and one non-declarative (comprising three sub-contexts: questioning, commenting, wanting). The concept of co-reference[41] was also explained at this stage. Practice activities consisted of different situations in which students needed to decide first if they were declarations or non-declarations to continue with a classification into the 2 declarative sub-contexts (i.e. asserting, assuming) and the 3 non-declarative sub-contexts (i.e. questioning, commenting or wanting).

Throughout the following contact hours, several practice activities using this classification were completed by students. Furthermore, they all completed Task 1 (see Appendix M) of the intervention study as a class activity, which was a comprehension task. This task consisted of eight compound sentences (i.e. matrix and proposition) in Spanish whose embedded verb was in indicative or subjunctive. Students needed to answer a yes/no question about each sentence: Is the speaker or subject of the matrix declaring (or not) the information in the proposition? Thereafter, they had three options available to explain why that sentence was a declaration or a non-declaration. Option *a* stated that the reason was that the matrix could be replaced by 'The speaker or subject of the matrix asserts…' keeping the same (or similar) meaning. Option *b* stated that the reason was that the matrix could be replaced by 'The speaker or subject of the matrix assumes…' and option *c* stated that the reason was that the matrix could not be replaced by 'The speaker or the subject of the matrix asserts or assumes…' Therefore, options *a* and *b* described a declaration and option *c* a non-declaration.

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[40] This map was slightly modified/simplified for these students, since the third context (3A/B) was not included.
[41] This concept refers to the use of a non-finite structure when there is co-reference of subjects.

The last contact hour was dedicated to the summing-up of the most relevant concepts involved in mood contrast at this stage of the learning process (i.e. A2+/B1−), that is, the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration and the further classification into the five (sub-)contexts mentioned above. Students completed Task 2 (comprehension) and Task 3 (production) during the revision week which followed.

Task 2 (see Appendix N) consisted of ten compound sentences (i.e. matrix and proposition) in Spanish whose embedded verb was in indicative or subjunctive. Students needed to classify the sentences provided according to the meaning of their matrix and the mood of the embedded verb (i.e. asserting, assuming, questioning, commenting or wanting).

Lastly, Task 3 (see Appendix O) was a production task. It consisted of eight compound sentences (i.e. matrix and proposition) in which the embedded verb was in either indicative or subjunctive. A box with a number of matrices was also provided. This box contained 29 matrices, nine of them triggered indicative and 20 triggered the subjunctive. Students were instructed to change the sentences in which the speaker or subject was declaring the proposition into sentences in which the speaker or subject was not declaring the same proposition, and vice versa. Therefore, they needed to choose a relevant matrix from the box and change the embedded verb's mood, accordingly.

3.1.8.1. Participants

All students enrolled in Spanish Language 1 Beginners at the university (i.e. 122 students) in which the second stage of the intervention study was carried out completed the instruction period and the three tasks which were part of it. However, only the tasks completed by those who agreed to participate and signed the consent form (i.e. 72) were photocopied to be further analysed.

This was a beginner course, so learners had not studied Spanish before or they had studied more than four years prior to enrolling. From the total number of students enrolled in the course (i.e. 122), over a quarter (i.e. 27%) had an L1 different from English. Therefore, some of these students were studying Spanish as an L3 or even as an L4. Three quarters of the students enrolled in this course were year 1 students (i.e. 81), from which, depending on their main degree subjects, not all of them had the choice to progressing to level 2. The remaining 25 % (i.e. 31) were year 2 students doing Spanish as an elective with no possibility of progressing to level 2.

One of the requirements to participate in the intervention study was class attendance for the two and a half weeks in which it was going to take place, and so only students attending classes regularly were able to participate. It is important to note that attendance is not compulsory in the university in which the second stage of the intervention study took place. In fact, only around 60 % of the students enrolled in the course attended class regularly.

3.1.8.2. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Three tasks were delivered to students: two comprehension tasks and one production task. These were completed on paper and individually by the participants as class activities. Only the tasks from students who signed the consent form (see Appendix R) and decided to participate in this study were photocopied in order to be used as data for this investigation.

Table 16 shows the number of completed tasks collected during the second stage of the intervention study.

Table 16: Tasks completed by student participants

Task 1 (comprehension)	Task 2 (comprehension)	Task 3 (production)	TOTAL
N = 71	N = 72	N = 57	N = 200

The compilation of usable data was carried out manually, that is, by reading each individual task and selecting the relevant elements to be consequently analysed. For both types of task (i.e. comprehension and production), a quantitative approach was employed by means of the computation of the 'correct' answers.

For task 1, for instance, there were three options available to explain the answer to the question *Is the speaker or subject of the matrix declaring (or not) the information in the proposition?* If the answer was *YES*, participants had options *a* and *b*, and if the answer was NO, they had option *c*. Answers were computed as correct when both the reply to the question and the option chosen to explain why were adequate to the situation. Task 2, however, had five different choices to be selected by participants: two for the declarative sentences (i.e. asserting and assuming) and three for the non-declarative sentences (i.e. questioning, commenting and wanting). Since the aim of this investigation is to test the operationality of the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration, the fact that some participants could select a non-adequate context for the non-declarative sentences was not considered to be a completely incorrect response, because identifying the sentences as declarations or non-declarations was more relevant at the stage of proficiency in which this study was carried out (i.e. A2+/B1-). This was taken into account when analysing this task's results.

Finally, the last task was a production task and only when participants employed a relevant matrix and the adequate mood in the embedded verb, were these sentences computed as correct. However, if the embedded verb had issues with the morphology or the spelling but there was a clear attempt on the part of the participant to use the adequate mood, these sentences were also computed as correct.

Therefore, the analysis of the results also comprised characteristics typical of the interpretive approach, since other considerations were taken into account, such as when attempting to find

out the reasons behind certain choices by the participants (e.g. preference for the non-declarative sub-context 'commenting' over the other two non-declarative sub-contexts: 'questioning' and 'wanting').

3.1.9. Intervention Study: Stage 2: Reflective Diary

A reflective diary (see Appendix P) was carried out to complement the second stage of the intervention study described in the previous section (i.e. 3.1.8). It was aimed at recording the researcher's observations throughout the course of the experiment and helping with the analysis of its different elements.

This reflective diary had a 'double-entry journal' format as described by Moon (1999: 194). One part provided a detailed account of the experiment, that is, what exactly happened within each session (i.e. nine sessions in total), and another part represented the investigator's reflection on that experience. The latter attempted to detect what worked and what did not work (plus the anticipated reasons why that could have happened), as well as to identify problems in order to apply possible adjustments before moving to the following session.

Furthermore, the reflective diary was carried out not only with the objective to help with the analysis of the results but also to reflect on how all students reacted to a new (and challenging) grammar point being introduced by means of a different approach.

Two other university teachers were involved in this second stage of the experiment; thus, some post-session meetings took place in which these teachers commented on how their groups were doing and whether they themselves had any questions or concerns about the explanations and tasks planned for the two weeks in which this experiment was carried out. Some of their questions and the responses on the part of the researcher were also included in the reflective diary.

3.1.9.1. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Data collection was carried out by freehand notetaking subsequently to each session, so mostly qualitative data were collected. The main concern was to gather information about students' first reactions to the new concepts and method.

Elements which were noted down as relevant include: number of students present in each session, students' level of energy/motivation, possible reasons for missing the session, whether the students' understanding of the different concepts introduced was confirmed or not, the level of participation and/or interaction with the teacher and among students, which components students were struggling with the most in order to reinforce (or modify the strategy) the next session, etc. The diary's right column (i.e. teacher's reflection) was completed both at the same time as the left column (i.e. experience) and, in some cases, subsequently.

The analysis was mostly based on the interpretation of the different elements observed and was employed as support of (or counterbalance to) the results for the three tasks which were comprised in this stage of the experiment.

3.1.10. Intervention Study: Stage 2: Pre- and Post-Experiment Questionnaire for Student Participants

In order to examine year 1 students' perceptions on the subjunctive mood, not only in the target language but also in the students' L1, a questionnaire (see Appendix Q) was delivered before and after Spanish mood contrast was introduced to them. This questionnaire had a Likert-scale format and consisted of 10 statements plus a 10-point response table (i.e. from 1-strongly disagree to 10-strongly agree). The statements concerned students' abilities regarding mood contrast, such as knowing the difference between tense and mood, understanding the difference

between indicative and subjunctive, or whether they knew English had a subjunctive mood or not, among other things.

The questionnaire delivered after mood contrast was introduced in the classroom (i.e. post-experiment) consisted of exactly the same statements but included a question at the end so that student participants could explain, in their own words and in two lines, what the subjunctive mood is and conveys.

This questionnaire was delivered to students from both year 1 courses, that is, not only beginner students who participated in the intervention study but also non-beginner students who were introduced to the subjunctive mood by means of the traditional approach.

The main goal was to examine whether there was a difference between these two groups in their perception of what mood contrast is in the target language and whether their answer to the last question would reflect the type of instruction they had received.

3.1.10.1. Participants

The questionnaire was delivered to the researcher's year 1 beginner students who agreed to participate in this PhD investigation and signed the consent form (i.e. 20, although only 16 completed all the tasks as well) and to year 1 non-beginner students who also agreed to participate by completing this questionnaire and signed the same consent form (i.e. 43). Therefore, a total of 63 completed pre-experiment/instruction questionnaires were received. However, only 5 completed post-experiment questionnaires were gathered from the first group of beginner students[42] and 18 from the second group of non-beginner students, as shown in Table 17 below.

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[42] A possible explanation for the low number is that the questionnaire was delivered online once the second semester had finished, that is, during the Easter break and right before the April/May exam diet.

Table 17: Student Participants – Pre-/Post-Experiment Questionnaire

	Year 1 Beginners (N)	Year 1 Non-Beginners (N)
Pre-experiment/instruction	20	43
Post-experiment/instruction	5	18

3.1.10.2. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Both iterations of the questionnaire were delivered on paper, with the exception of the post-experiment questionnaire for beginner students, which was delivered online by means of an editable word document. The reason to distribute it online was that the second stage of the experiment finished nearly at the same time as the course finished, thus students were going away for their Easter break.

3.2. Ethics

Ethics approval was applied twice, when this investigation began (i.e. March 2014), and subsequently, when Stage 2 of the intervention study began (i.e. January 2019). The reason for this was that the second stage of the intervention study was carried out in a different university and thus with different participants. A general risk-assessment form was also submitted, and no hazards were identified.

Participants to this study were either language teachers or L2 learners of Spanish within a university setting. Teachers participated by completing an online survey (Appendices A and B), by means of a focus group discussion (Appendix C) or by classroom observation when introducing Spanish mood contrast to their students (Appendices E and H). Students participated by completing several comprehension and production tasks as class activities (Appendices F, G, M, N and O) and also by completing a survey (Appendices D and Q).

Teacher participants who completed the questionnaire were made aware that the results for the questionnaire would be used as data for a PhD study. The questionnaire was completed online and anonymously[43]. Despite including two questions inquiring about gender and age group, both were optional, and therefore, the only relevant personal information gathered was related to the type of institution these teachers belonged to, that is, secondary school or higher/further education, and whether their L1 was English or different from English. No personal information from the focus group teachers was gathered whatsoever. These teachers were assured that no names of particular institutions would be mentioned in the study, even if any of the participants had disclosed that information in the recordings.

Lastly, regarding the teacher participants involved in the class observations, no mention of their names or the names of their institution was made, other than being a UK university. Tutors or lecturers involved in these classes were notified in advance about the classroom observation taking place and students were informed that my presence was due to a PhD investigation on teaching methods and nothing to do with their performance.

All student participants in this study were emailed and handed in (by their language teacher) a participant information sheet (PIS) plus a consent form (see Appendix R[44] for both) in which relevant details of the PhD investigation were explained, including the reasons why they were being asked to take part and what they would need to do in case they decided to participate in the study. This sheet also specified that no potential risks were identified other than those normally associated with attending class in a university[45]. The idea that they could decide to

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[43] In fact, both iterations of the teacher questionnaire and the student background questionnaire were delivered online via Qualtrics, which allowed to maintain the complete anonymity of the participants.

[44] Appendix R includes the PIS and consent form for Stage 2 of the Intervention Study.

[45] Since both universities have comprehensive health and safety regulations in place, as a member of staff and all research participants being also students, everyone was covered by those regulations.

withdraw from the study at any point without any consequences was highlighted, as well as the fact that their anonymity would be protected at all times. Furthermore, the PIS also specified that all the research data gathered would be stored by a maximum of two years after the study had been completed and could be shared with other researchers, but it was stressed again that their personal details would never be shared. The consent form included a signature box so that students who agreed to participate could sign and return, accordingly.

Therefore, by signing the consent form, student participants gave permission for the use of their answers to the tasks as data to be analysed and included in a PhD investigation. As all the tasks needed to be completed anonymously, student participants were reminded not to write their name or student number immediately prior to the completion of each task. They were also assured that abstaining from participating in the investigation would not affect their class results whatsoever. No students (from either university) refused to participate at any point.

For the Pre-Intervention Study, student participants only needed to answer a yes/no question, whether their L1 was English or not. Furthermore, only the ones who agreed to participate and signed the consent form were asked to hand in their completed tasks. Identification numbers were assigned subsequently by the researcher in order to facilitate their analysis and once all tasks had been collected. For the second stage of the Intervention Study, student participants were assigned a number randomly at the beginning of the experiment (i.e. first comprehension task) and they were asked to note down that number so they could add it to the remainder of the tasks (i.e. comprehension task 2 and production task). The few students who were not participants (i.e. students who had not signed the consent form) completed the tasks as practice activities and thus signed them with their names so that they could receive some feedback at a later time. In fact, since I was these students' teacher (as well as the researcher), and with a

view that no student would feel under an obligation to participate, I made them clear that their participation was entirely voluntary. No rewards or penalties were applied at any point.

As stated by the ethical guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (BERA[46]), anonymity and voluntariness are key aspects in most educational research. For that reason, all student participants were repeatedly made aware of the facts that their names would never be disclosed, not even as a group, and that all the tasks being completed as part of the experiment were not part of the Continuous Assessment. Therefore, they would not receive any results/marks for those tasks, and thus they could drop their participation at any point without this affecting their final course mark whatsoever. No students showed any concern or dropped their participation throughout the entire process of this investigation.

Lastly, participants were advised that they would receive a summary of the outcomes either via personal communication or by publishing the results in an electronic platform or relevant academic journal. Student participants also received feedback for the comprehension and production tasks completed as class activities at a later date.

3.3. Final Remarks

This chapter describes the methodological approach employed within this PhD investigation. As mentioned in the introduction, the methods employed are characterised as belonging to different paradigms, since some are described as 'positivist' and others as belonging to the 'interpretive' paradigm. Furthermore, it may be said that the approach applied is a longitudinal mixed-method approach, inasmuch as some methods spanned two academic years, such as the teacher questionnaire, the classroom observation or the comprehension and production tasks delivered to student participants within the pre-intervention study, as well as the latter including

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[46] https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018

all the levels of proficiency in which mood contrast is taught.

This investigation focuses on the examination of an alternative and largely (empirically) untested teaching method to introduce Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners based on the cognitive-operative approach. In order to achieve this, a range of research methods, both quantitative and qualitative, were employed, including a teaching intervention programme, a reflective diary, a student questionnaire, and a series of comprehension and production tasks to test students' mood contrast abilities. However, prior to doing this, it was necessary to achieve a more complete and comprehensive idea of the current situation, that is, what is being done in the language classroom to introduce Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners and whether the method/s employed is/are effective enough to achieve the learning of this point of grammar by students within a UK university setting. This stage of the investigation comprised a longitudinal empirical study (i.e. pre-intervention) in order to examine students' mood contrast abilities at all levels of proficiency over a period of two academic years, who had received instruction based on the most popular traditional approach.

It should be noted that by using a mixed-method approach, it was possible to gather varied and abundant data with which to corroborate previous studies' results and thus be able to make stronger claims which provided answers to this investigation's research questions. As a matter of fact, a total of 1,021 items (i.e. 750 tasks, 249 questionnaires and 22 focus group responses) were completed by the participants of this investigation.

The following three chapters (i.e. 4-6) cover a thorough description of the results for all the research methods listed in this chapter plus a final discussion where the results are interpreted, and the new findings highlighted.

4. RESULTS I: PRE-INTERVENTION STUDY

The first stage of this PhD investigation consisted of the gathering of empirical evidence on the premise that the way Spanish mood contrast is usually taught by means of the traditional approach may be hindering its learning. This claim is not only sustained by previous studies (e.g. Varela Navarro, 2005; Martín Sánchez & Nevado Fuentes, 2007; Rovira Gili, 2013; Priego Casanova, 2018) but also by other fellow teachers (see section 4.1 below), and is largely based on this method's reliance on the L2 learner's memorisation skills to learn by rote lengthy lists of subjunctive structures. These classifications are heavily supported by the multiple syntactic and semantic (and/or functional) characteristics of this mood, and thus they include complex linguistic explanations and do not provide a satisfactory account of the real cause/s for mood selection, which should also comprise relevant discourse-pragmatic aspects.

Consequently, a series of research methods were employed in order to examine whether this was the case within a UK university setting, which included: (1) a teacher questionnaire to determine what is being done in the UK language classroom to introduce the Spanish subjunctive and to gather participants' views on the abovementioned premise, (2) a student background questionnaire to investigate what type of student chooses to learn Spanish at university level and their motivation/s and concerns surrounding their learning process, (3) some class observation in order to find out how this point of grammar is introduced at all levels of proficiency in the university where this investigation began, and (4) a series of comprehension and productions tasks delivered to students enrolled in Spanish at the university in which this investigation began and in order to examine their mood contrast abilities over the entire process of subjunctive learning/acquisition (i.e. all levels of proficiency were included).

The following sections describe the results and highlight the most important aspects related to this investigation which provide some evidence to answer one of the research questions (i.e. question 3), repeated here for ease of reference:

1. Is the cognitive-operative single mechanism approach more effective than the traditional approach to learn the subjunctive?

2. From a theoretical perspective, why do L2 learners of Spanish find it difficult to learn the subjunctive by means of the traditional approach?

3. How effective is traditional instruction in enabling L2 learners in a UK Higher Education context to learn the subjunctive?

4. On what theoretical basis do proponents of the COA consider that this could be a more effective approach?

5. When the COA is translated into classroom instruction, is there evidence to suggest that this has potential to be more effective than the traditional approach?

4.1. Teacher Questionnaire and Focus Group

This section describes the results of the two iterations of the teacher questionnaire (Appendices A and B) and the focus group (Appendix C) which are most relevant to this investigation (see sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 in previous chapter for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods).

The main purpose in delivering the questionnaire was to find out teachers' views and experience when introducing Spanish mood contrast to their students. The focus group provided more in-depth views on the answers provided by teachers to some of the key questions of the questionnaire's first iteration. Therefore, only the results for the most relevant questions

are included here:

1. Preferred teaching method/s to introduce the Spanish subjunctive mood.

2. Preferred teaching methods in the language classroom in general, if different.

3. Main challenges for students in learning/acquiring the subjunctive and whether that learning is always (or ever) achieved.

4.1.1. Preferred Teaching Methods to Introduce the Spanish Subjunctive

One of the key questions enquired about the teaching methods preferred by teachers when specifically dealing with the subjunctive mood (i.e. Table 18 below). The choices in the second iteration were based on the answers to open-ended questions from the first iteration.

It is worth noting that, when referring to (preferred) teaching methods, teachers tended to describe them using several items, or, in a few cases, they did not leave a comment whatsoever, so percentages do not add up to 100%. This also applies to the next question (section 4.1.2), which concerns teaching methods employed in the language classroom in general. In addition, in the second iteration of the questionnaire, teachers needed to agree/disagree with each item, so only the ones with which they agreed or strongly agreed were accounted for. Lastly, some of the participants' responses[47] in the first iteration were not detailed enough to classify them as an item in the second iteration, that is why some of the percentages for some groups might seem quite low. There were also several specific comments (i.e. particular techniques or curriculum issues) which could not be included in the main 'approaches' list.

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[47] For instance, one participant simply replied with "lots of examples" when asked what methodologies s/he preferred to use when introducing the subjunctive mood to students.

Table 18: Teaching methods employed to introduce the subjunctive mood

TEACHING METHODS TO INTRODUCE THE SUBJUNCTIVE	All n = 89	NSs n = 58	NNSs n = 31	HFETs n = 62*	SSTs n = 25*
Formalist[48] approach (i.e. deductive grammar = morphology and lists of subjunctive structures plus exceptions + drill exercises + 'communicative' exercises)	59 (66%)	46 (79%)	13 (42%)	28 (45%)	6 (24%)
Importance of (contextualised) practice	55 (62%)	58 (100%)	13 (42%)	62 (100%)	10 (40%)
Communicative approach	35 (39%)	31 (53%)	4 (13%)	30 (48%)	3 (12%)
Cognitive approach	18 (20%)	16 (28%)	2 (6%)	16 (26%)	0%
Mixed approach (i.e. introduced communicatively first + deductive grammar + drill and elicitation exercises)	12 (13.5%)	12 (20.5%)	2 (6%)	3 (5%)	2 (8%)

two participants were private tutors.

It is important to highlight that contextualised practice (i.e. activities where the situation described is key/facilitatory to choose between moods) was mentioned/selected by 100% of the native-speaker participants and less than half (42%) of the non-native speakers. Another salient remark is that both sets of teachers preferred a formalist approach over a communicative approach when introducing the Spanish subjunctive to their students. This shows that teachers regard the numerous morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic considerations – which need to be taken into account when using this mood – as too challenging to be learned in a more communicative and inductive way.

The focus groups agreed that a formalist approach is more appropriate when introducing the subjunctive mood to students. Although some participants stressed that they preferred a more communicative or functional approach, they acknowledged that when dealing with the subjunctive it was easier to employ a grammar-based (formalist) method. Others emphasised

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[48] The term 'formalist' here corresponds to the traditional approach. It gives greater emphasis to the entrenchment of the 'formal' characteristics of the language, but some communicative practice is often included.

the need to teach the pragmatics of the subjunctive, and not only its syntactic-semantic properties, since the contexts in which this mood is used are key to understanding when and why we use it. One of the participants mentioned that making students memorise the structures of the subjunctive was not a good recourse in the long run, and others seemed to concur with this.

Most of them agreed with the importance of making students understand that the Spanish subjunctive is frequently used by native speakers in everyday situations and that they should not be scared of it. According to these participants, some teachers make their students believe that the subjunctive is very difficult, and consequently, they exclusively teach them fixed structures to be memorised in order to be able to produce them in controlled situations.

4.1.2. Preferred Teaching Methods in General

Table 19 below shows the results for the question inquiring about the preferred methods employed in the language classroom in general.

Table 19: Teaching methods employed in the language classroom

TEACHING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM	ALL n = 89	NSs n = 58	NNSs n = 31	HFETs n = 62*	SSTs n = 25*
Communicative approach	60 (67.5%)	47 (81%)	13 (42%)	48 (77%)	11 (44%)
Teach grammar deductively	41 (46%)	37 (64%)	4 (13%)	32 (51.5%)	4 (16%)
Teach grammar inductively	30 (33.5%)	21 (36%)	9 (29%)	20 (32%)	6 (24%)
Task-based approach	29 (32.5%)	24 (41%)	5 (16%)	25 (40%)	0%
Content-centred approach	27 (30%)	18 (31%)	9 (29%)	20 (32%)	5 (20%)
Cognitive approach	23 (26%)	21 (36%)	2 (6%)	20 (32%)	0%
Formalist approach	20 (22.5%)	10 (17%)	10 (32%)	16 (26%)	5 (20%)

two participants were private tutors.

A communicative approach[49] to teaching an L2 was the most mentioned method by over two thirds (67.5%) of the participants. There was a difference among groups. For instance, four fifths (81%) of the native-speaker participants selected this approach to teaching Spanish, whereas less than half (42%) of the non-native speakers stated so. A chi-square test for independence indicated that there was significant association between these two groups, $\chi2 = 14.06$, $p < 0.05$. This contrast was similar between Higher/Further Education Teachers (77%) and Secondary School Teachers (40%). A chi-square test for independence indicated that there was also significant association between these two groups, $\chi2 = 9.12$, $p < 0.05$.

Regarding the use of a formalist approach in the language classroom in general, a chi-square test for independence indicated no significant association between both subgroups: native vs. non-native speakers ($\chi2 = 2.61$, ns) and Secondary vs. Higher/Further Education teachers ($\chi2 = 0.33$, ns).

Nearly half of the participants (46%) said they prefer a deductive[50] approach to teaching grammar. Again, the difference among groups was evident, with nearly two thirds of the native speakers (64%) selecting this option and only 13% of the non-native speakers doing so ($\chi2 = 21.06$, $p < 0.05$). The same applied to the other two groups (i.e. 51.5% of HFETs vs. 16% of SSTs), whose chi-square test for independence indicated there was significant association ($\chi2 = 9.32$, $p < 0.05$).

Only one third (33.5%) of the participants said that they mostly use an inductive approach

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[49] A communicative approach is based on the idea of learning language through having to communicate real meaning. Classroom activities are characterised by attempting to produce meaningful communication. Emphasis is placed on skills rather than systems, lessons are learner-centred, and it is common to use authentic materials.

[50] A deductive approach involves introducing the grammar point explicitly and prior to practice (i.e. drill and gap-filling exercises to practice morphology and main uses + contextualised communicative practice – oral or written), whereas an inductive approach involves introducing the grammar point implicitly after an oral or written activity has been carried out. The latter also assumes that L2 learners need to infer the (new) grammar point's meaning themselves.

when teaching grammar. Differences among groups were not noticeable.

4.1.3. Main Challenges to Learn the Spanish Subjunctive

An important question implied the need to determine whether teacher participants believed that mood contrast in Spanish is a highly challenging point of grammar and thus quite difficult to attain for L2 learners. Teachers were first asked to list in ascending order of difficulty some of the most challenging grammar points in the learning of Spanish. Almost all participants (98%) agreed that the subjunctive mood is the most challenging grammar point for L2 learners, above the imperfect/preterit contrast, copulas *ser/estar*, prepositions *por/para*, gender agreement, and number agreement (in decreased order from most challenging to least challenging). Only two non-native speaker participants, who were Higher/Further Education Teachers, believed that the imperfect/preterit contrast was more challenging than the subjunctive. This is not surprising, since the imperfect/preterit contrast was selected as the second more challenging by the rest of the participants (98%).

Having checked that participants considered the subjunctive to be the most challenging point of grammar their students will encounter, the questionnaire proceeded with the main difficulties for non-native learners of Spanish when learning the subjunctive mood especially for L2 learners whose L1 is English. The questionnaire's choices were mostly based on the outcomes of previous studies.

Table 20 below shows the differences between native speaker (NSs) and non-native speaker (NNSs) participants' views on this particular question, and also between Higher/Further Education Teachers (HFETs) and Secondary School Teachers (SSTs). The order corresponds to what teacher participants consider to be the main obstacles for their students to acquiring the Spanish subjunctive mood, from most to least relevant.

Table 20: Difficulties in acquiring the Spanish subjunctive mood for L2 learners

Difficulties in Acquiring the Spanish Subjunctive Mood (both iterations)	All (Agree /Strongly Agree) n = 89	NSs (Agree /Strongly Agree) n = 58	NNSs (Agree /Strongly Agree) n = 31	HFETs (Agree /Strongly Agree) n = 62*	SSTs (Agree /Strongly Agree) n = 25*
Lack of a subjunctive system or distinctive forms in their L1	72 (81%)	49 (84%)	24 (77%)	55 (89%)	19 (76%)
Students need to remember all the structures which require subjunctive	69 (77.5%)	44 (76%)	25 (81%)	49 (79%)	19 (76%)
Syntactical structure required in Spanish is very different to the one required in English	67 (75%)	45 (78%)	22 (71%)	48 (77%)	15 (60%)
Students need to pick up on the speaker's connotations /implications	63 (71%)	42 (72%)	21 (68%)	43 (70%)	16 (64%)
Lack of formal grammar instruction in their L1 (lack of metalanguage)	58 (65%)	33 (57%)	25 (81%)	38 (62%)	20 (80%)
Subjunctive is essentially communicatively redundant	35 (39%)	19 (33%)	16 (52%)	20 (32%)	13 (52%)
Similarity in form for regular verbs in present indicative/subjunctive	24 (27%)	15 (26%)	9 (29%)	15 (24%)	8 (32%)

The lack of a subjunctive (or distinctive forms) in their L1 (i.e. English) was the most strongly agreed reason among all participants (i.e. 81%). There was one reason, however, that caused some disagreement between both sets of groups (i.e. native speakers vs. non-native speakers and Higher/Further Education Teachers vs. Secondary School Teachers): the majority of non-native speakers (81%) and Secondary School Teachers (80%) agreed or strongly agreed that the lack of formal grammar instruction in their L1 was an important reason for the difficulty in acquiring the subjunctive mood, whereas only 57% of the native speakers and 62% of the Higher/Further Education Teachers thought the same. This 'option' in particular might not have been clearly outlined to participants. It intended to make reference to the fact that when students begin their learning of this mood, their syntactical knowledge of the target language is still underdeveloped (Collentine, 1995; Pereira, 1996) and this means that they will struggle

when attempting to acquire the subjunctive mood, which requires the knowledge of complex syntax. The teacher questionnaire option, however, specified that the reason for difficulty in acquiring this mood was related to the belief (by some teachers) that their students lack formal morphosyntactic knowledge (and the metalanguage involved) in their own L1 (i.e. English) and this makes it harder for them when learning the Spanish subjunctive, or rather, Spanish grammar in general. Therefore, the questionnaire statement (i.e. Lack of formal grammar instruction in their L1) might have not been specific enough.

The focus groups' views were in line with the results of the first iteration: the most relevant difficulties that L2 learners encounter when acquiring the subjunctive mood were the lack of a subjunctive system in the L1, the need to remember all the different subjunctive structures, and the fact that the corresponding syntactical structure in the L1 is very different.

However, there were some who believed that the lack of formal grammar instruction in the L1 was as relevant as (or more relevant than) the other three. They mentioned the fact that teachers sometimes need to start teaching their students about their own L1's grammar because the students lack metalinguistic knowledge to deal with the L2's grammar, and, in particular, with the subjunctive mood, since subjunctive is characteristic of embedded clauses.

It is worth noting that non-native speaking teachers are at the same time L2 learners of Spanish and this fact might have influenced their responses to the questionnaire. This showed, for instance, when teacher participants were asked how confident they felt when using and teaching the subjunctive mood to their students. A tenth of the non-native participants said they did not feel confident when using the subjunctive mood or teaching it to their students, whereas all the native speakers felt (very/quite) confident teaching it. Table 21 below shows the results to the above question:

Table 21: How confident do you feel when using and teaching the subjunctive mood?

SUB-GROUP	(1) Not at all confident	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Very confident
NATIVE SPEAKERS (n = 58)	0%	0%	5 (9%)	16 (27%)	37 (64%)
NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS (n = 31)	0%	3 (10%)	7 (22%)	12 (39%)	9 (29%)

Lastly, when teachers were asked at what stage of their students' learning process these began to produce Spanish mood contrast with accuracy, most claimed that, at least while under their tutelage, this achievement hardly ever happened. Some also added that, only when these learners had spent a considerable period of time in a Spanish-speaking country, they began to use the subjunctive, to some degree, in their output.

4.1.4. Conclusions

The results for the two iterations of the teacher questionnaire show that participants mostly agree with previous studies regarding the difficulties L2 learners experience when learning the subjunctive mood in Spanish. More importantly, all the participants acknowledged that, although they prefer to use a communicative approach in the language classroom, when dealing with Spanish mood contrast, they tend to use a more formalist approach. This is mainly due to the fact that they consider this point of grammar too challenging for their students to learn inductively and thus explicit instruction of the subjunctive morphology, its syntax and an account of its numerous uses (and exceptions) are necessary when formal instruction is carried out within non-immersion settings.

There were a few noticeable differences between the responses of native-speaking teachers (NS) and those of non-native teachers (NNS). For instance, the former preferred to employ a communicative approach in the language classroom in general but also acknowledged their

preference for a formalist approach when specifically introducing the Spanish subjunctive to their students. On the other hand, the opposite was true for non-native teachers.

Lastly, all teacher participants believed that the majority of their students seldom achieve a comprehensive knowledge of mood contrast in the target language, at least while under these teachers' tutelage. Thus, these results partly answer research question 3.

4.2. Student Background Questionnaire

A total of 97 students enrolled in Spanish as part as their university degree completed this questionnaire (Appendix D; see also section 3.1.3 in previous chapter for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods). The most relevant results are described below and largely comprised aspects related to these students' motivation and reasons to learn the target language, as well as the elements of the learning process which they might find more challenging, interesting, frustrating, etc.

4.2.1. Motivation to Study the Target Language

The background questionnaire results show that students at university level choose to study a foreign language. Thus, their reasons for doing so are likely to be guided by personal interest and the desire to improve their career perspectives. For instance, over four fifths (82%) mentioned their love for learning foreign languages and the fact that Spanish is widely spoken in many countries and this should help them improve their career perspectives. Over two thirds (70%) said they would like to work for an international company in the future and were aware of the importance of speaking more than one language.

On the other hand, only around a third of participants pointed out that they were considering

becoming language teachers (30%), translators (37%) and/or interpreters (35%)[51]. This could be related to the degree of motivation[52] and interest that students show when learning a complex point of grammar in the target language such as the subjunctive mood.

It is worth noting that, regarding the motivation L2 learners might have to learn the target language, this not only originates from the reasons they have to acquire it (e.g. to improve job opportunities, to have an extra qualification, to move abroad, etc.), but it could also be affected by the teaching methods employed in the language classroom or the same learning settings (e.g. large size classes, lack of opportunities to develop oral skills, etc.). When specifically having to learn a complex point of grammar which is also considered to be non-essential to deliver the message (VanPatten, 2002), some L2 learners might not make the necessary effort to learn it. Additionally, some teachers begin the teaching of the Spanish subjunctive mood stressing the fact that it is a very complex point of grammar for L2 learners whose L1 does not have a similar structure, such as English. If these students normally have little motivation when the word 'grammar' is included in the class programme, it might disappear completely if they are told the above.

4.2.2. Learning Objectives

Four fifths (80%) of the student participants agreed that their priority was to be able to communicate proficiently in Spanish. They were slightly more worried about making mistakes when speaking (70%) than doing the same when writing (61%). We need to consider the fact that these learners begin their language learning process in a non-immersion environment and

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[51] This was a multiple-choice rating scale question (i.e. strongly disagree – strongly agree) and only the answers including the 'agree' and 'strongly agree' options were taken into account when analysing the responses.

[52] The term *investment* is preferred by some authors (e.g. McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 2000) within bilingual (or heritage) settings, and refers to the learner's motivation to speak in the target language being affected by other investments "connected to the ongoing production of learners' identities and their desires for the future" (Norton 2000: 120). This is clearly related to what Dörnyei (2009b) calls the *L2 Motivational Self System*.

their only contact with the L2 is within a formal setting, where the focus lies largely on the comprehension and written production skills. However, they are presented with fewer opportunities to develop their oral production abilities. Large classes at university level may be overwhelming for some of them and might affect negatively the building up of confidence to have the courage to speak in front of other students.

More than four fifths (83%) were studying (or had been studying) another language at the same time. From that group, French was the most frequently chosen language (64%) and most of the participants had begun studying it slightly before (71%) or at the same time (28%, considering that they started studying both languages in secondary school) as Spanish.

4.2.3. Conclusions

This background survey provided some qualitative data in relation to the motivation and learning objectives of the participants in order to learn and use the target language. The most relevant outcome was that this type of student (i.e. UK university language student) chooses to learn Spanish guided by personal reasons and in order to widen their career perspectives. Furthermore, a big proportion of the participants also claimed that they study the target language because it is a useful communication 'tool' (e.g. to travel or live in Spanish-speaking countries or to work for a multinational company), rather than as an 'object of study' (i.e. to become teachers, translators or interpreters).

4.3. Class Observation I

During the academic years 2015/16 and 2016/17, some class observation (Appendix E) was carried out when Spanish mood contrast was introduced at all levels of proficiency at the university where this investigation began (see section 3.1.4 in previous chapter for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods).

The main purpose to employ this research method was to gather information on the teaching approach/es used to introduce Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners at all levels of proficiency (i.e. year 1, year 2 and year 5, which correspond, respectively, to A2/B1-, B2 and C1+/C2). Furthermore, another relevant aspect was the observation of students' immediate reactions to the explanations provided and their abilities to complete the practice tasks presented to them.

4.3.1. Teaching Method/s to Introduce Spanish Mood Contrast

The most salient outcome was that all the tutors involved in these observations employed a method (and techniques) typical of the most widely employed traditional approach (see section 2.3.1. in Chapter 2 for a detailed account on this method). The following sub-sections are organised according to the level of proficiency of the student groups observed.

4.3.1.1. Year 1 Beginners (Level A2)

Tutor 1 was the class coordinator and one of the three teachers involved at this level of proficiency. There were 34 students present and the lesson had a clear teacher-centred approach, which was characterised by the introduction of the obligatory subjunctive and its morphology. Tutor 1 used mostly English as a medium. At the beginner level, grammar tends to be taught in the students' L1 to ensure their understanding, above all when a challenging point of grammar is being introduced. This introduction followed a traditional approach but included some aspects related to the new concept/s of *declaration/non-declaration*. This resulted in a rather complex introduction, which comprised new metalanguage and concepts related to both approaches, such as mood, modality, speaker's attitude, statement of fact, non-statement, opinion marker (instead of 'matrix'), subordinate clause, wishes, denial, possibility, value judgement, etc. Some examples (i.e. sentences) were provided with their English translation. A practice exercise was completed by students at the end of the lesson, which was

based on an activity taken from the textbook used in year 1 non-beginners and year 2 courses, which follows a Cognitive-Operative approach, and not the textbook used by these students (i.e. Beginners).

The observation of Tutor 2's lesson confirmed that a traditional approach based on the syntactic-semantic connections between the matrix and the embedded verb is normally used at this level. There were 19 students attending the lesson I observed. The teacher mostly used the target language both to welcome students and to introduce the subjunctive mood for the first time (i.e. explanation and activity instructions). Therefore, the use of the target language or the students' L1 when explaining grammar at this level seems to be a question of each teacher's style or preference.

Tutor 2 used a communicative approach in which situations were presented with the aid of pictures. This lesson focused on how to express 'wishes' and made use of cross-linguistic references to facilitate the understanding of students. The present subjunctive morphology was also shown in two boxes, one with regular verbs and another with the most common irregular verbs[53]. Furthermore, the concept of co-reference was also introduced at this stage, which was followed by a fill-in-the-blank activity in which the students needed to write either the infinitive or *que* + subjunctive of the verb in brackets.

It is worth noting that the textbook[54] used at this level follows a communicative-functional approach, although when grammar is explained, it adopts a more traditional syntactic-semantic approach. The coordinator of this course (also Tutor 1) confirmed that a traditional approach is normally employed to introduce the Spanish subjunctive to students. However, we need to consider that at this level the subjunctive mood is introduced at the end of the course and is not

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[53] The irregular verbs included in the second box were *tener* (have), *ir* (go), *ser* (be), *venir* (come) and *estar* (be).
[54] Nuevo Español en Marcha (Nivel Básico). Castro et al. (2014) Ed, SGEL.

assessed by any means.

4.3.1.2. Year 1 Non-Beginners (Level A2+ / B1-)

In spite of using the same textbook[55] as the second-year courses, which follows a Cognitive-Operative approach, the teaching method employed by Tutor 3 had a more traditional approach. This means that there exists a disconnection between how this mood is introduced to students in the classroom and how it is explained in the textbook. The type of practice these students are required to do in class is also different to the type of exercises the textbook comprises. If these learners were to use the textbook exercises outside the classroom, with no support from their tutor, they would probably have trouble understanding why some of these exercises use the concept of *declaration* while the exercises they do in class do not. The fact that this textbook includes an answer key section at the end, means that some students, if they have trouble understanding the instructions (in Spanish) to an exercise, will go straight to the answer key in order to complete it. That would most probably not ensure the comprehension of the exercise by the learner.

Tutor 3 delivered a traditional lecture with 37 students (out of 55 enrolled in that class). The Spanish subjunctive was introduced with the aid of some examples (i.e. isolated sentences) which were also translated into English. This introduction incorporated the concept/s of *declaration/non-declaration* by attaching them to both moods (i.e. Indicative Mood – declaration vs. Subjunctive Mood – non-declaration). However, no detailed explanation of what these concepts mean was provided, with the exception of some semantic-based characteristics, such as that the indicative expresses facts, certainty and reality, or that the subjunctive expresses doubt, wishes, uncertainty, unreality, or subjectivity, which are typical of the traditional approach rather than the COA. I was informed that these students were

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[55] Gramática Básica del Estudiante de Español. Alonso et al. (2013) Ed. Difusión.

expected to read the grammar explanations provided in their textbook, which are based on the conceptual pair of declaration/non-declaration, on their own and as preparation for this class. However, the lesson I observed, and the grammar reference documents available on the Moodle platform (post-lecture self-study) were clearly supported by a traditional approach.

During the lecture, some cross-linguistic references were made comparing subjunctive structures in both languages (i.e. English and Spanish) to continue with the introduction of this mood's regular and irregular morphology and the concept of co-reference.

4.3.1.3. Year 3 (Level B2)

Tutor 4 was in charge of the grammar lecture for the third-year class and there were around 60 students present the day the lesson was audio-recorded. Since I was not able to attend, Tutor 4 agreed to audio-record the lecture so that I could listen to it retrospectively. The session had a clear teacher-centred approach and there was little participation on the part of the students. It was delivered using the target language as a medium.

The lesson mostly covered subjunctive structures of *possibility* (i.e. *Estructuras para expresar hipótesis* – structures that convey hypotheses), having first reintroduced (briefly) the 'Galaxy of the Subjunctive', which consisted of a PowerPoint presentation in which subjunctive structures were presented to students in the form of a 'galaxy'. This galaxy comprised a sun, several planets and satellites, and even a shooting star. Each planet represented a 'type' of subjunctive structure (e.g. "the planet of thought and emotion", "the planet of relative clauses", or "the planet of conjunctions"). The classification was based on syntactic and/or semantic notions traditionally linked to this mood. Other slides focused on specific planets, which, at the same time, had several countries. These countries had names as well, such as "the country of verbs of commands, wishes and emotion" or "the country of value judgements and impersonal expressions".

The lesson involved the provision of different structures comprised of a matrix and an embedded clause with the subordinate verb in the subjunctive (or in the indicative if there were any 'exceptions to the rule'), and some de-contextualised sentences as examples for each case. Furthermore, the explanations for the use of one structure over the next one were based on a 'probability range'[56] which spanned from around 40% to 95% in most cases. The concept of *declaration* was not employed.

The textbook used at this level[57] explains the grammar (in English) subsequent to the reading of a text[58]. The grammar points are highlighted on the text, so learners think about their use in context. The grammar explanations, however, follow a traditional syntactic-semantic approach. Lengthy lists of verbs and expressions (usually) triggering the subjunctive are provided. Furthermore, the explanation of what subjunctive is simply states that "the subjunctive mood is generally used in subordinate clauses to refer to events which are unreal, or which have not yet taken place, but also found after a main verb expressing some kind of emotion" (Kattán-Ibarra & Howkins, 2003: p. 91).

The practice exercises following the grammar explanation consist of fill-in-the-gap single sentences, sentences which need to be completed with the embedded clause or sentences where two different verb forms are provided, and learners need to choose the most appropriate form. None of those practice exercises are contextualised. The chapters covering the subjunctive mood usually start with a lengthy list of verbs and expressions that (not always) trigger this mood, followed by some fill-in-the-blank exercises comprised of de-contextualised sentences.

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[56] As an example, the tutor explained the following: "If I say "*posiblemente voy al cine*" (I will possibly go[IND] to the cinema), there is an 85 % or 90 % probability that I will go to the cinema, but if I say "*posiblemente vaya al cine*" (I will possibly go[SUB] to the cinema) the probability drops to 50 %."

[57] Spanish Grammar in Context (Kattán-Ibarra & Howkins, 2003. Hodder Education).

[58] It supports an inductive approach to introducing grammar, that is, learners need to deduce the 'rule' by extracting it from real input in the target language.

4.3.1.4. Year 5 (Level C1+ / C2)

Tutor 4 was also in charge of the fifth-year grammar revision class (i.e. level C1+/C2). At this level of proficiency, L2 learners are expected to have already learned how to use the subjunctive mood in most situations where it is required[59]. The observation of one of the lessons in which mood contrast was revised showed that there was an imbalance in these students' ability to use the subjunctive adequately, even among the ones who had spent their year abroad in a Spanish-speaking country. During both academic years, I could observe the same tutor (i.e. Tutor 4) teaching with a similar approach.

Grammar revision classes at this level are delivered using the target language exclusively. There was more interaction between teacher and students than with the third-year course, although this is more likely when the group is smaller (i.e. 23 students attended the day I observed the lesson). A very similar method to the one employed with the third-year class was used with these students, as confirmed by the course coordinator for both courses (i.e. Tutor 4). This method consisted of a visualisation of the subjunctive mood as an imaginary galaxy, as described above.

Lastly, it should be noted that no textbook is used at this level and grammar is usually re-introduced or revised as part of translation and/or writing tutorials.

4.3.2. Students' Reactions and Mood Contrast Abilities

Another relevant aspect that was considered when carrying out the class observations was the students' reactions to the explanations and practice material provided. For instance, some of the aspects recorded included: whether (all) students confirmed their comprehension when

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[59] Most of them have spent nine months in a Spanish-speaking country studying at university level or working as teaching assistants, although there are a minority who have spent their fourth year in France or Italy.

being introduced to the main concepts, whether they asked any further questions, or, whenever students were required to complete some practice activities, whether they were able to do this accurately.

4.3.2.1. Year 1 Beginners (Level A2)

Only a few students (two of them did not have English as L1) answered some of the questions asked by Tutor 1. Most students in that group did not participate at all, so it was not possible to know whether they had understood the explicit explanation provided. The final task was completed on screen by the teacher with some help from students, but as can be expected when students are required to answer questions orally in front of the class, only a few of them participated. At this level, the subjunctive mood is introduced at the end of the second semester, but it is not assessed, and students are aware of this. However, the only activity these students completed in the lesson observed was based on the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration, although the deductive introduction provided by Tutor 1 comprised aspects of both teaching methods: traditional and COA. This resulted in some degree of confusion and thus Tutor 1 had to help students to complete the activity.

Tutor 2's students completed a more interactive task in which they had to express their wishes regarding some specific topics, that is, the matrix and the subject of the embedded verb were provided. They were then asked to discuss their choices with their classmates. This activity basically consisted in conjugating some infinitives in the present subjunctive, and thus students did not need to select between both moods. Due to this group being smaller and the fact that the teacher used the target language on most occasions, either to ask students questions to ensure their understanding or to describe the different situations, there was more interaction between teacher and students (and among the same students) in the target language.

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4.3.2.2. Year 1 Non-Beginners (Level A2+ / B1-)

There was little interaction between teacher (i.e. Tutor 3) and students, except when the former asked the latter direct questions so they could confirm their understanding, and even in this case, only two or three students attempted to respond orally.

Students were required to complete a Kahoot activity. The questions were mostly related to the grammar explanation provided by Tutor 3 during the presentation. It included 19 questions in total: 4 about the concepts presented and 15 fill-in-the-gap sentences in which students needed to choose between the verb in the present indicative or the present subjunctive. Among the former, these students were asked, for instance, whether the subjunctive was a mood or a tense (i.e. 2-choice answer), or whether it was true that the indicative is used to 'declare' (i.e. true/false). From the 15 questions consisting of fill-in-the-gap sentences, these students only had time to complete two, which both comprised a 2-choice answer. The results gathered referred just to the first 6 questions. There was a total of 67% of correct answers, but it should be noted that this percentage only applies to a third of the activity. Furthermore, since all the responses involved a 2-choice answer, it is likely that some of the correct answers could have been due to chance and thus not actually well informed.

4.3.2.3. Year 3 (Level B2)

The students completed an activity on screen following Tutor 4's explanation. This activity consisted of an image with a young woman standing next to a car talking on the phone and looking quite distressed[60]. Students were required to make their own assumptions about what possibly could have happened using the recently learned subjunctive structures. They also needed to differentiate with what structures they could be more assertive (i.e. higher positions

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[60] The class material was available in advance on the virtual platform (i.e. Moodle).

of the 'probability range' explained in section 4.3.1.3 above).

Another activity consisted of a series of short conversations (in writing) and students needed to decide which participants were more optimistic. However, there was no time to complete this second activity. Tutor 4 asked individual students by their names, choosing randomly among them, in order to prevent the same two or three students who are always keen to participate from completing the activity. However, some of the students who were asked directly did not provide an adequate response or said that they did not know the answer.

4.3.2.4. Year 5 (Level C1+ / C2)

Tutor 4 asked students several questions during the presentation and also while completing a fill-in-the-blank exercise on screen. As with the third-year level, a few of these students were asked by their names, in order to prevent the same few students who are always keen to participate from completing the activities. Several students had trouble in selecting the correct form of the subjunctive, even in cases of obligatory subjunctive, which was not expected at this level of proficiency. Therefore, these students showed a lack of knowledge of the subjunctive morphology. At this level, it is assumed that learners have already acquired the subjunctive morphology, and for that reason, the presentation delivered by Tutor 4 consisted of a revision of the 'uses' of this mood, exclusively (e.g. to express probability, to convey wishes, etc.).

4.3.3. Conclusions

Class observation at this stage of the investigation showed that lecturers involved in the teaching of language classes (i.e. grammar lectures or tutorials) at all levels of proficiency in the university in which this investigation was carried out, follow a clear traditional approach when introducing mood contrast to their students.

Most classes observed had a distinct teacher-centred approach, so there was little interaction between the lecturer and the students. This is common when the number of students is high, which results in little participation from students. Furthermore, it is also common that the same few students answer all the questions asked by the teacher.

Both Tutor 1 and Tutor 3 attempted to explain the concepts of declaration and non-declaration. However, since they also used terminology from the traditional approach, their explanations were quite complex and not completely clear to students. Furthermore, when Tutor 4 asked some questions to her students at the upper-intermediate and advanced levels, either to confirm their comprehension or as part of an exercise, these had some trouble to reply accurately or simply said they did not know the answer.

4.4. Comprehension and Production Tasks

A series of comprehension and production tasks (Appendix F) were developed in order to examine L2 learners' understanding and use of mood contrast in Spanish at every level of proficiency within a UK university setting having received instruction by means of a traditional approach (see section 3.1.5 in previous chapter for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods).

Previous studies determined, to a lesser or greater extent, what the main issues are when L2 learners attempt the acquisition of Spanish mood contrast, above all when these learners have English as L1, since this language does not have a productive subjunctive system. Therefore, the tasks employed at this stage of the investigation were developed so that empirical evidence could be gathered in order to examine the following aspects:

1. Are students influenced by the way Spanish mood contrast has been introduced to them in the language classroom? (i.e. by the most widely employed traditional approach). Has this method helped to improve these L2 learners' mood contrast abilities?

2. Which other issues related to mood contrast learning, of those claimed by previous studies, are more noticeable among these student participants?

The tables below show the results for each task employed at this stage of the investigation. These comprised two comprehension and two production tasks for year 2 students, a comprehension task for year 3 students[61] and a comprehension task and a production task for year 5 students. The comprehension task for year 5 students was also completed by a comparison group of native speakers, thus some aspects are discussed as well as being potentially relevant for this investigation.

4.4.1. Level B1 (Year 2): Comprehension Task 1

Table 22 below shows the results for the first comprehension task completed by the Year 2 group of student participants. The most adequate answer to each situation is marked with a 'tick' symbol beside the option. It is worth recalling that each situation comprised a detailed description in English in order to contextualise it to the extent possible.

Table 22: Comprehension Task 1 Results (Level B1 – Year 2)

Perception Task 1 (level B1)	Options	Total (n = 71)
Situation 1: *Está claro que Ana...* (It is clear/obvious that Ana is…) a) *está...* b) *esté...*	a) indicative √ b) subjunctive both	64 (90%) √ 5 (7%) 2 (3%)
Situation 2: *Es posible que Ana...* (It's possible that Ana is…) a) *está...* b) *esté...*	a) indicative b) subjunctive √ both neither	7 (10%) 62 (87%) √ 1 (1.5%) 1 (1.5%)

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[61] A production task was also delivered online, once the course had finished, but no completed tasks were received by these students.

Situation 3: *Quiero...* (I want (you) to go…) a) *ir...* b) *que vayas...*	a) infinitive b) subjunctive √ both neither	4 (6%) 58 (81%) √ 7 (10%) 2 (3%)
Situation 4: *...pero cuando...* (…but when I go/come back…) a) *regreso...* b) *regrese...*	a) indicative b) subjunctive √ both neither no response	25 (35%) 38 (53.6%) √ 3 (4.2%) 3 (4.2%) 2 (3%)
Situation 5: *Es ese señor que...* (It is that man who has/wears…) a) *lleva...* b) *lleve...*	a) indicative √ b) subjunctive both	63 (88.5%) √ 7 (10%) 1 (1.5%)
Situation 6: *...para...* (...in order to grow…) a) *cultivar...* b) *que cultive...*	a) infinitive √ b) subjunctive both neither no response	39 (54.9%) √ 9 (12.6%) 18 (25.3%) 2 (3%) 3 (4.2%)
Situation 7: a) *¡No comes más!* b) *¡No comas más!* (Don't eat anymore! / Stop eating!)	a) indicative b) subjunctive √ both neither no response	22 (31%) 41 (57.5%) √ 1 (1.5%) 5 (7%) 2 (3%)

Each situation had a textbox so that student participants could provide a brief explanation for their choices. This helped to ascertain whether these students' adequate responses were well-informed or perhaps due to chance.

For instance, the choice for the present indicative (i.e. *está* – s/he is) in situation 1 was explained by some participants in the following manner: "this situation requires the present tense (i.e. it is happening now)". This response possibly suggests that the subjunctive option (i.e. *esté* – s/he is/be) was not recognised as being a present form. In addition, some participants thought that the verb form *lleve*[PRE.SUBJ.] (s/he wears or I wear) in situation 5 did not correspond to the 3rd person singular, according to the explanation provided, so they selected *lleva*[PRE.IND.] (s/he wears) as the only possible choice.

In situation 3, participants were required to choose between a sentence where there was co-reference of both subjects (i.e. use of the infinitive) and a sentence where a subjunctive subordinate construction was employed (i.e. *que* + subjunctive). Since only a few participants

mentioned the concept of co-reference (or lack of co-reference) as an explanation of their selection, it can be inferred that other not entirely adequate reasons influenced this result. Over four fifths (81%) of the participants chose the subjunctive subordinate structure. This choice was the most adequate for the situation described, but only 15% of those participants mentioned the concept of co-reference in their explanations (i.e. different subjects), which was the only possible reason to select that sentence. The rest of the explanations comprised terms and concepts characteristic of the traditional approach, such as 'wish/desire', 'not certain', 'suggesting, not demanding', 'order', 'doubt', etc., which could be equally applied to both sentences. These learners did not make those semantic connections when their choice involved the infinitive structure instead (e.g. situation 6).

It is worth mentioning that, in the situation when the negative imperative was used (i.e. situation 7), which is a case of obligatory subjunctive, there was some hesitation from some of the participants to recognise it as such.

Lastly, situations containing temporal clauses, like that in situation 4, seem to be more challenging for L2 learners. This is a case of the 'optional subjunctive', so the choice of mood is dependent on the action described by the embedded verb having been realised or not, according to the more traditional approach. Therefore, the indicative is used when the verb is in the past and thus completed or in the present indicative when referring to actions which have occurred and still occur on a regular basis. On the other hand, the subjunctive is used when referring to actions which have not happened yet. The situation explained in considerable detail (and in English) that the moment referred to by the embedded verb had not happened yet, but only over half of the respondents (i.e. 53.6%) chose the subjunctive option adequately.

4.4.1.1. Key Points: Comprehension Task 1

In relation to point 1 (i.e. influence and efficacy of the traditional method), the results for the

first comprehension task at the lowest level (i.e. B1) show that student participants' explanations for their choice of mood are heavily influenced by the teaching method employed in the language classroom to introduce this point of grammar, since their accounts were entirely based on the morphosyntactic and semantic (or functional) concepts typical of this approach (e.g. person agreement, same subject, wishes, doubt, order, etc.). However, these explanations, on many occasions, where not adequate to the choice of mood or were not related to the 'real' cause of that selection. In fact, only half of the participants recognised the semantic-based arguments linked to the choice of mood in temporal clauses. Thus, it can be derived that the traditional method did not seem to help a great deal with these students' mood contrast abilities.

Furthermore, in relation to the second point (i.e. which other issues were noticeable among student participants), these participants experienced some trouble to distinguish between the different grammatical subjects involved. For instance, in cases of co-reference, only 15 % of the participants who selected the correct form recognised it as the reason for using a non-finite form. In cases in which the morphology of two different grammatical subjects matched (i.e. the first- and third-person singular forms of the present subjunctive), some participants believed they were dealing with other tenses of the indicative (i.e. preterit). Hence, there exists some evidence within the results of Comprehension Task 1 that these participants had issues with the morphosyntactic traits of the Spanish subjunctive.

4.4.2. Level B1 (Year 2): Comprehension Task 2

Table 23 below shows the results for Comprehension Task 2 at the same level of proficiency (i.e. B1 – Year 2) in the form of percentages of correct responses for each gap for which two options were provided: present indicative (or future indicative in one case) and present subjunctive. There was one gap in which the two options included the present subjunctive and the infinitive form of the verb (i.e. co-reference). This task was a contextualised text so no

further cues explaining each choice were provided, as with Comprehension Task 1. Therefore, it was essential that the vocabulary was familiar to student participants and, for that reason, a glossary was also provided.

Table 23: Comprehension Task 2 Results (Level B1 – Year 2)

Perception Task 2 (level B1)	
Selection between two different forms **(indicative/subjunctive)** ***(infinitive/subjunctive)**	**Results** **(n = 22)**
1) *Creo que **tengo**…* (I) [I think I have…]	15 (68%)
2) *…pero no **estoy** seguro.* (I) […but I'm not sure.]	17 (72%)
3) *Espero que mi madre me **envíe**…* (S) [I hope my mother will send me…]	12 (54.5%)
4) *…cuando **empiecen** las clases.* (S) […when classes start.]	3 (13.5%)
5) *…y **está** en el centro…* (I) […and it is in the city centre…]	20 (91%)
6) *…y la verdad es que **son** todos muy majos.* (I) […and the truth is that they are all very nice.]	21 (95.5%)
7) *…así **tendré** tiempo libre para…* (I) […in that way I will have some spare time to…]	20 (91%)
8) *Me encanta que los edificios de la universidad **estén** todos tan cerca…* (S) [I love that the university buildings are all so close to the city centre…]	1 (4.5%)
9) *…ya que **es** perfecto para salir…* (I) […because it is perfect to go out…]	15 (68%)
10) *…no sé si **voy** a entender a mis profesores…* (I) [I'm not sure I will be able to understand my teachers…]	10 (45.5%)
11) *Espero no ***tener** muchos problemas…* (INF) [I hope I won't have too many issues…]	7 (32%)
12) *…todo el mundo me aconseja que **organice** un intercambio…* (S) […everybody recommends that I organise a language exchange…]	5 (22.5%)
13) *…para aprovechar al máximo el tiempo que **pase** en este país.* (S) […in order to make the most out of my time spent in this country.]	7 (32%)

As can be noted from the above table, there appear to be some mismatches in the results, above all when the adequate selection was the subjunctive mood. For instance, the matrix '*Espero que*' (I hope that) is one of the first cases of obligatory subjunctive students are introduced to and, in addition to that, it appears frequently in the input. However, only over half of the

respondents (i.e. 54.5%) selected that mood in gap 3. Furthermore, gap 11, with the same matrix, comprised two choices: present subjunctive and infinitive, which should have provided an extra indication that this matrix was a case of obligatory subjunctive. The correct choice was the infinitive because there was co-reference of subjects and, furthermore, the sentence was missing the particle '*que*' (that), which clearly suggests that only an infinitive structure is possible. As a matter of fact, less than a third of the participants (i.e. 32%) selected the infinitive option.

Gap 8 involved a value judgement and L2 learners are usually told that with this type of matrices, the speaker or subject expresses an opinion or emotion and thus the subjunctive is needed in the embedded clause. However, only one student selected the subjunctive (i.e. 4.5%). A possible explanation for this result may be due to the fact that there was some 'separation' between the matrix verb and the embedded verb, since the subject of the latter was a rather lengthy noun phrase (i.e. *los edificios de la universidad* – the university buildings).

Lastly, regarding gap 12, the matrix was also well-known to students. The traditional approach claims that matrices which main function is 'giving advice' trigger the subjunctive. Therefore, this is a case of obligatory subjunctive which is also introduced at the beginning of mood contrast instruction. Despite that, just over a fifth of student participants (i.e. 22.5%) selected this mood.

It should be noted that the type of contextualised task employed here could have affected, to some extent, the unfavourable results obtained by means of Comprehension Task 2. The lack of a detailed explanation (in English) for each instance in which student participants needed to select between both moods might have caused these students to hasten their decisions when completing the task, and thus not giving them enough time for reflection.

4.4.2.1. Key Points: Comprehension Task 2

In relation to point 1 (i.e. influence and efficacy of the traditional method), the results for the second comprehension task at the lowest level (i.e. B1) do not offer enough evidence of what possible reasons could have affected the choice of mood among these participants, since the format of the task did not require students to add an explanation. However, there are obvious signs that the technique of memorising the different combinations (i.e. matrix and embedded clause) characteristic of subjunctive structures (e.g. *Espero que* + subjunctive, verbs of emotion + subjunctive, verbs of influence + subjunctive), which is typical of the traditional approach, did not help these students to select the correct mood, since only a low (average) percentage of participants selected the subjunctive option in these cases.

Furthermore, in relation to the second point (i.e. which other issues were noticeable among student participants), these participants experienced some trouble to recognise the single case of co-reference presented to them, even when the particle 'que' was not present in the sentence, which plainly indicates that only the infinitive form was possible. In addition, there was a clear tendency to select the indicative even in cases of the obligatory subjunctive, and this may indicate that the lack of a productive subjunctive system in these participants' L1 could have also represented an obstacle.

4.4.3. Level B1 (Year 2): Production Task 1

Table 24 below shows the results for Production Task 1 completed by Year 2 student participants. This task was similar in format to Comprehension Task 1 thus it comprised several situations described in considerable detail (and in English) followed by a matrix which student participants needed to complete or finish by adding an adequate proposition or embedded

clause. A brief glossary was also provided for each situation[62] so that student participants could write their responses without having to use a dictionary or ask their tutor while completing the task.

Table 24: Production Task 1 Results (Level B1 – Year 2)

Production Task 1 (level B1) (n = 46)	CORRECT	INCORRECT	No answer
Situation 1: *… es muy posible que...* (subjunctive) […it is very possible that…]	14 (30.5%)	32 (69.5%)	0%
Situation 2: *Necesito silencio para...* (infinitive or *que* + subj.) [I need silence in order to/so that…]	40 (87%)[63]	6 (13%)	0%
Situation 3: *Creo que...* (indicative) [I think/believe that…]	34 (74%)	12 (26%)	0%
Situation 4: *¿Me pone un pollo que...* (relative - subjunctive) [Could I have a chicken that…?]	13 (28%)	33 (72%)	0%
Situation 5: *Supongo que Alejandro...* (indicative) [I guess that Alejandro…]	26 (56.5%)	17 (37%)	3 (6.5%)
Situation 6: *Te recomiendo que...* (subjunctive) [I recommend you to…]	19 (41.3%)	24 (52.2%)	3 (6.5%)
Situation 7: *...cuando...* (subjunctive) […when…]	9 (19.5%)	29 (63%)	8 (17.4%)
Situation 8: *...pero sólo si...* (Pre. Ind. or Imp. Subj.) […but only if…]	29 (63%[64])	8 (17.4%)	9 (19.6%)

In Comprehension Task 1, the majority of participants (i.e. 87%) selected the subjunctive, adequately, when the situation involved the matrix "*Es posible que*" (It's possible that). This is one of the first subjunctive cases introduced to students as conveying a "possibility" and thus obligatory triggering the subjunctive mood. However, in Production Task 1, only 30.5% of the

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[62] Example: Situation 1: *estar enferma = to be ill // venir = to come // estar en cama = to be in bed // etc.*

[63] Only one participant supposedly attempted to use the subjunctive subordinate form, with no success. Firstly, this participant did not use the linking particle (*que*), and secondly, the form of the verb corresponded to the present indicative instead.

[64] Only two participants provided with both the indicative and the imperfect subjunctive options. The rest of the participants used the present indicative.

participants produced a subjunctive form with the same matrix, the remaining 69.5% produced an indicative form.

As with the comprehension tasks, student participants seemed to have a few issues with relative and temporal clauses, which are cases of the so-called optional subjunctive. Both types of subordinate clauses had just been introduced in class when these students completed these tasks, so it is possible that they did not quite understand when to use each mood. For instance, in situation 4, which is a case of a relative clause in the subjunctive, 72% of the participants used the indicative instead, inaccurately. In a similar case in Comprehension Task 1, the adequate choice was the indicative and 88.5% of the participants selected that mood. This contrast suggests that these students might not have understood the difference and, as in many other cases, they tend to choose the indicative mood, which is the mood they have studied and used since the beginning of their learning process.

Situations 3 and 5 comprised the matrices "*Creo que*" (I think/believe that) and "*Supongo que*" (I suppose/guess that), which both trigger indicative and are quite frequent in the input these students had received. Over a quarter of the participants (i.e. 26%) selected subjunctive with "*Creo que*" (I think/believe that) and well over a third (i.e. 37%) did the same with "*Supongo que*" (I suppose/guess that).

Lastly, it is worth noting that matrices such as "*Te aconsejo que*" or "*Te recomiendo que*" (I advise you to/I recommend that you) always trigger the subjunctive mood. However, these student participants had some issues when identifying these matrices both in Comprehension Task 2 and Production Task 1.

4.4.3.1. Key Points: Production Task 1

In relation to point 1 (i.e. influence and efficacy of the traditional method), the results for the

first production task at the lowest level (i.e. B1) show that student participants had considerable issues in recognising the 'uses' of the subjunctive which had been introduced to them in the language classroom. For instance, over two thirds (69.5 %) used the present indicative with *'es posible que'* (it is possible that), which represents an instance of obligatory subjunctive and it had appeared quite frequently in the input received by these participants. Furthermore, more than half of the participants (52.2 %) used the present indicative with *'te recomiendo que'* (I advise/recommend you) also a frequent case of the obligatory subjunctive at this level of proficiency. Lastly, some of these students showed some issues when using the subjunctive with indicative structures as well, such as *'creo que'* (I think/believe) and *'supongo que'* (I assume), which both were widely used before mood contrast was introduced to these students (i.e. from level A2). This may indicate that the traditional explanation about the necessity to use the subjunctive mood when expressing 'doubt' or 'uncertainty' might have had some influence in these student participants' responses.

Regarding the second point (i.e. which other issues were noticeable among student participants), not much evidence could be drawn from this particular task, with the exception of some mismatches with grammatical subjects, as with Comprehension Task 1 (e.g. the first and third person singular forms of the present subjunctive) or some issues with the syntax (e.g. *Te recomiendo que *tú buscar* - I recommend *that you to look for…), which were clearly influenced by the students' L1.

4.4.4. Level B1 (Year 2): Production Task 2

Table 25 below shows the results for Production Task 2. It was completed by student participants during the academic year 2015/16 only so the number of completed tasks is lower.

It had the same format[65] as Comprehension Task 2, but instead of having the two mood forms available to choose from, there was a gap and the infinitive form of the verb appeared in brackets along with the subject personal pronoun needed to conjugate it.

Table 25: Production Task 2 Results (Level B1 – Year 2)

Production Task 2 (level B1) (n = 20)										
Gap-filling task (infinitive form + subject pronoun)	Pres. Ind.	Pres. Subj.	Fut.	Inf.	Imp. Ind.	Imp. Subj.	Pret. Indf.	Pret. Perf.	Cond.	N/A
1) *Creo que **tengo**...*	**8** **40%**	5	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	0
2) *...pero no **estoy** seguro.*	**16** **80%**	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3) *Espero que mi madre me **envíe**...*	6	**6** **30%**	4	0	0	1	1 envié	0	1	1
4) *...cuando **empiecen** las clases.*	14	**3** **15%** *empezcan	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
5) *...y **está** en el centro...*	**19** **95%**	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6) *...y la verdad es que **son** todos muy majos.*	**17** **85%**	1 sepan	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
7) *...así **tendré** tiempo libre para...*	6	3	**4** **20%**	0	2	0	0	0	**4**	1
8) *Me encanta que los edificios de la universidad **estén** todos tan cerca...*	19	**1** **5%**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9) *...ya que **es** perfecto para salir...*	**12** **60%**	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
10) *...no sé si **voy** a entender a mis profesores...*	**9** **45%**	6	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
11) *Espero no *tener* muchos problemas...*	5	8	4	**0**	1	1	0	0	1	0
12) *...me aconseja que **organice** un intercambio...*	13	**1** **5%** *organizco	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
13) *...para aprovechar al máximo el tiempo que **pase** en este país.*	9	**1** **5%**	6	0	0	0	0	1	0	3

The results for the last task delivered to Year 2 student participants show that all the issues highlighted in the previous tasks were more evident here. The percentages of accurate

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[65] It was the same contextualised text about an Erasmus student arriving in Glasgow.

responses when the subjunctive mood was the adequate choice spanned from 5% (i.e. just one student) to 30%. Furthermore, even in these cases, the morphology of these subjunctive forms was not completely accurate.

For instance, in gap 4, one of the participants produced an inaccurate form for the verb "*empezar*" (to begin/start), which has a vowel change in its root both in the present indicative and the present subjunctive, that is, E > IE (e.g. empiezan[PRES.IND.] / empiecen [PRES.SUBJ.]). This participant used a typically irregular form for the first person singular of the present indicative of certain verbs whose infinitive ends in *-cer/-cir*. These verbs have just one irregular form in the present indicative: the first person singular[66]. Since the present subjunctive takes its form from the first person singular of the present indicative, the whole conjugation in the latter would adopt this irregularity (i.e. *traduzca, traduzcas, traduzca,* etc.). However, in this particular case, the infinitive ended in *-zar* (*empezar* – to start/begin) and had a different irregularity, as mentioned above, but this participant produced an inaccurate form: **empezcan*, mixing up two different irregularities. A similar case corresponds to gap 12 in which another participant produced an inaccurate irregular subjunctive form for a regular verb (i.e. **organizco* instead of *organice* – I organise/to organise).

Whereas in Comprehension Task 2 over two thirds of student participants (i.e. 68%) selected indicative with the matrix "*Creo que*" (I think/believe that) accurately, only 40% produced an indicative form when completing Production Task 2. A similar result is observed with the matrix "*Espero que*" (I hope that), which obligatorily triggers subjunctive: 54.5% selected the correct form in Comprehension Task 2, whereas less than a third of participants (i.e. 30%) attempted to write a subjunctive form in Production Task 2.

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[66] E.g. *traducir* – translate: *traduzco* – I translate, *traduces* – you translate, *traduce* – s/he translates, *traducimos* – we translate, *traducís* – you translate, *traducen* – they translate.

Lastly, regarding other cases of obligatory subjunctive, such as those shown in gaps 8 and 12 (i.e. providing value judgements and giving advice), it is worth noting that only one student (i.e. 5%) attempted to produce a subjunctive form in the embedded clause.

4.4.4.1. Key Points: Production Task 2

In relation to point 1 (i.e. influence and efficacy of the traditional method), the results for the second production task at the lowest level (i.e. B1) do not offer enough evidence of what possible reasons affected the choice of mood among these participants, since the format of the task did not require students to add an explanation. However, if we compare the results with Comprehension Task 2, which comprised the same text, those apparent signs that the technique of memorising the different subjunctive structures introduced in the language classroom is not helpful for students to learn Spanish mood contrast, were even more salient here. The percentages of correct answers fall considerably in all the situations which required the subjunctive (i.e. 5 % - 30 %).

Furthermore, regarding the second point (i.e. which other issues were noticeable among student participants), these participants had issues with the production of subjunctive morphology (e.g. *empezcan* for *empiecen* – they start, *organizco* for *organice* – I organise), and used irregular morphology with regular verbs. In addition, there was a clear tendency to select the indicative even in cases of obligatory subjunctive, and this seems to show, again, that the lack of a productive subjunctive system in these participants' L1 might have served as an obstacle.

4.4.5. Level B2 (Year 3): Comprehension Task

Table 26 below shows the results for the only task completed by the Year 3 group. It was a comprehension task and consisted of a series of situations in which the context was explained with considerable detail in English. Responses included other options as well, such as "both a)

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and b) are adequate for the situation" or "neither is adequate for the situation". A textbox was

added for each situation so that student participants could further explain their choices. The

most adequate answer to each situation is marked with a 'tick' symbol beside the option.

Table 26: Comprehension Task Results (Level B2 – Year 3)

Perception Task (level B2)	Options	Total (n = 79)
Situation 1: *¿Tienen un libro que se...* a) *llama* b) *llame*	a) indicative √ b) subjunctive both neither No answer	68 (86%) √ 6 (7.6%) 3 (3.8%) 2 (2.6%) 0
Situation 3: *Sería como si me...* a) *tocara* b) *tocaba*	a) subjunctive √ b) indicative both neither No answer	55 (69.6%) √ 12 (15.2%) 4 (5%) 4 (5%) 4 (5%)
Situation 4: *Cuando...* a) *regreso* b) *regrese*	a) indicative b) subjunctive √ both neither No answer	29 (36.7%) 42 (53.2%) √ 5 (6.3%) 3 (3.8%) 0
Situation 5: *Para...* a) *cultivar* b) *que cultive*	a) infinitive b) subjunctive √ both neither No answer	29 (36.7%) 16 (20.2%) √ 33 (41.8%) 0 1 (1.3%)
Situation 6: *Le dice que...* a) *compra* b) *compre*	a) indicative b) subjunctive √ both neither No answer	31 (39.2%) 38 (48.1%) √ 5 (6.3%) 3 (3.8%) 2 (2.6%)
Situation 7: a) *Me temo que no queda...* b) *Temo que no quede...*	a) indicative √ b) subjunctive both neither no response	26 (33%) √ 37 (46.8%) 5 (6.3%) 5 (6.3%) 6 (7.6%)
Situation 8: *No está claro que...* a) *está* b) *esté*	a) indicative b) subjunctive √ both neither no response	14 (17.7%) 59 (74.7%) √ 3 (3.8%) 0 3 (3.8%)

At this level of proficiency, there seems to be some confusion with the use of the subjunctive

forms. For instance, in situation 3, the embedded verb was '*tocar la lotería*' (to win the lottery),

whose imperfect subjunctive form in the 3rd person singular[67] is '*tocara*'. Nearly a fifth (18%)

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[67] In Peninsular Spanish you do not win the lottery, the lottery 'touches' you.

of the respondents who chose this option as the most adequate believed that this was the future indicative instead (*tocará*), which only differs from the imperfect subjunctive form in one graphic accent.

Other issues with the subjunctive morphology can be observed in situation 4, for instance, for which three respondents believed that the present subjunctive form *regrese* (I return) was the preterit form *regresé* (I returned). Four respondents who selected the indicative option thought that *regrese*$^{PRE.SUBJ.}$ (I return or s/he returns) was not the 1st person singular and that, for that reason, *regreso*$^{PRE.IND.}$ (I return) had to be the right choice, although the more adequate answer in that situation was *regrese* in the subjunctive. One participant even mentioned that *está* (s/he is) in situation 8 was feminine[68], probably due to the fact that feminine nouns and adjectives ordinarily end in the vowel -*a*.

Situation 1 comprises a relative clause and the most adequate option to the situation described was the indicative. A high percentage of student participants (i.e. 86%) selected the indicative option accurately. However, their explanations as to why they selected it were quite disparate. Over a third of these participants (i.e. 36.7%) offered an appropriate explanation, that is, that the speaker knew the book title and thus was a specific book and/or the speaker knew the book was available in that shop. On the other hand, other explanations referred to morphosyntactic and/or semantic aspects which were not adequate or even represented incomplete explanations, such as "third person singular", "no doubt", "it's not a mood", "indicative for facts and subjunctive for hypotheses", "sounds more natural", "that's how my tutor would say it", "definite, not a probability", "it's a fact", "*llama* is present tense and *llame* is conditional[69]", "formal situation", "*Tienen* should be in the subjunctive[70]", etc.

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[68] This was also an issue among the participants in the lowest level of proficiency (i.e. B1 – Year 2). Beside some thinking that *está* (s/he is) was feminine, one participant believed that *regreso* (I return) was masculine.
[69] The conditional form is actually *llamaría*.
[70] The subjunctive mood is characteristic of subordinate clauses. Matrix verbs always go in indicative.

The results for situations 4 and 5 show that students at this level of proficiency continue to experience issues with mood contrast in regard to temporal clauses and cases of (lack of) co-reference.

Among the explanations for the use of the subjunctive in situation 4 within the student participants who selected this option (i.e. 53.2%) only 16.6% provided a roughly adequate justification, that is, that the speaker does not know when she will return home (i.e. 4.7%) or that '*cuando*', when referring to a future event, requires the subjunctive (i.e. 11.9%). Other less adequate (or inaccurate) explanations included: "possibility", "uncertainty", "not definite", "first person agreement", "*tengo que* prompts subjunctive", "it might not happen", "doubt", "sounds more natural", "subjunctive is better here", "waiting for friend's approval", etc.

Regarding situation 5, the most adequate response was b) in the subjunctive because there was no co-reference of subjects. Only a fifth of the respondents (i.e. 20.2%) selected this option, whereas over a third (i.e. 36.7%) selected the infinitive option and even a higher percentage (i.e. 48.1%) chose both as adequate. Nevertheless, when explaining their reasons of their choice, 37.5% of the participants who selected the option in the subjunctive mentioned that it was a case of lack of co-reference (i.e. different subjects). Other explanations for this choice or the other two choices (i.e. indicative or both as adequate) include: "wish/desire", "uncertain", "it's a direct object", "*que* not needed", "first one explains why and second explains how", "same meaning", etc.

Situation 6 relates to the different contextual meanings of the verb "*decir*": "to say/report something" vs. "to tell/ask someone to do something". The description provided clearly showed that this situation concerned the second meaning (i.e. to tell/ask someone to do something). Less than half of the participants (i.e. 48.1%) selected the option with the subjunctive and only 4 participants (i.e. 10.5 %) mentioned that it was an order/command or

imperative. The explanations provided by most respondents (whichever the option selected), however, comprised a great deal of inconsistencies, such as "no guarantee Laura will do it", "nobody agrees with him and perhaps they won't do what he says", "indirect speech", "different subjects", "not the truth", "sounds more natural", "uncertainty", "needs the future tense", "person agreement", "action is certain", "present tense", "it's a fact", "subjunctive only if it was negative", "in the present", "certainty", "something that just happened", "it's a statement", etc.

4.4.5.1. Key Points: Comprehension Task

In relation to point 1 (i.e. influence and efficacy of the traditional method), the results for the comprehension task at the upper-intermediate level (i.e. B2) show that student participants' explanations for their choice of mood are heavily influenced by the teaching method employed in the language classroom to introduce this point of grammar, since their accounts were entirely based on the morphosyntactic and semantic (or functional) concepts characteristic of this approach (e.g. person agreement, not a fact, wishes, doubt, order, etc.). In fact, an improvement from the previous level could not be observed.

If we compare specific structures which were common to both levels (i.e. B1 and B2), we can determine a certain lack of progress. For instance, with temporal clauses in the subjunctive which refer to future events, 53.6 % of Year 2 student participants selected the correct mood, so did a similar percentage of Year 3 student participants (i.e. 53.2 %). However, for both sets of students, most explanations for their choice of mood were not adequate. Furthermore, when the situation comprised a relative clause in which the most adequate choice was the indicative, that is, when the antecedent is specific, both sets of student participants were highly accurate in their selection (i.e. 88.5 % and 86 %, respectively), but the explanations provided were related to the most common and arbitrary concepts characteristic of the traditional approach,

such as 'it's a fact', 'not a probability', 'no doubt', 'it's not a mood', etc. which do not correspond with the real explanation, that is, that it refers to a specific (or existing) antecedent. This last result might suggest that student participants were highly accurate in their choice of mood because the correct option was the indicative.

In relation to the second point (i.e. which other issues were noticeable among student participants), these participants not only experienced some trouble to distinguish between the different grammatical subjects involved, but also to recognise subjunctive forms as belonging to the subjunctive system. These participants believed they were dealing with indicative forms instead (i.e. future and preterit). Furthermore, in one case of lack of co-reference in which the subjunctive was the correct choice, only a fifth of the participants (20.2 %) selected the subjunctive, and among those, 36.7 % (i.e. six participants) provided a relevant explanation for their choice (i.e. different subjects). These students seem to experience the same issues (if not more) than the students from the Year 2 group.

4.4.6. Level C1+/C2 (Year 5): Comprehension Task

Table 27 below shows the results for the Comprehension Task completed by Year 5 students and the native speaker comparison groups. It had the same format as previous comprehension tasks at lower levels, that is, a series of situations in which the context was explained in detail (in English in the case of student participants and in Spanish for native speaker participants) followed by two sentences which differed in the mood of the embedded verb. Other options included "both sentences are adequate to the situation", "neither is adequate to the situation" and "I don't know". A textbox was also provided for each situation so that respondents could explain their choices in more detail. The most adequate answer to each situation is marked with a 'tick' symbol beside the option.

Table 27: Comprehension Task Results (Level C1+/C2 – Year 5 + Native Speakers)

Perception Task (level C1+/C2) student + comparison groups	Options	Students (n = 51)	Native-Speaking Teachers (n = 77)	Chileans (n = 33)	Spaniards (n = 58)
Situation 1: *¿Tienen un libro que se...* a) *llama* b) *llame*	a) ind. √ b) subj. both neither don't know	45 (88%) 3 (6%) 3 (6%) 0% 0%	67 (87%) 5 (6.5%) 5 (6.5%) 0% N/A	20 (61%) 6 (18%) 6 (18%) 1 (3%) N/A	42 (72.4%) 5 (8.6%) 8 (13.8%) 3 (5.2%) N/A
Situation 2: *Lo que más le molestaba era que...* a) *se reían* b) *se rieran*	a) ind. √ b) subj. both neither don't know	35 (68.5%) 13 (25.5%) 0% 0% 3 (6%)	7 (9%) 37 (48%) 27 (35%) 6 (8%) N/A	9 (27%) 18 (55%) 5 (15%) 1 (3%) N/A	5 (8.5%) 44 (76%) 9 (15.5%) 0% N/A
Situation 4: *...ha dicho que Laura...* a) *compra* b) *compre*	a) ind. b) subj. √ both neither don't know	14 (27.3%) 26 (51%) 7 (13.7%) 3 (6%) 1 (2%)	17 (22%) 43 (56%) 15 (19.5%) 2 (2.5%) N/A	7 (21%) 19 (58%) 2 (6%) 5 (15%) N/A	6 (10.3%) 48 (82.8%) 2 (3.45%) 2 (3.45%) N/A
Situation 5: a) *Le molesta que le llamen* b) *Lo que le molesta es que le llaman*	a) subj. b) ind. both √ neither don't know	15 (29.4%) 21 (41.2%) 11 (21.6%) 0% 4 (7.8%)	37 (48%) 8 (10.4%) 25 (32.5%) 7 (9.1%) N/A	17 (52%) 3 (9%) 4 (12%) 9 (27%) N/A	38 (65.5%) 7 (12.1%) 12 (20.7%) 1 (1.7%) N/A
Situation 7: a) *Me temo que no queda...* b) *Temo que no quede...*	a) ind. √ b) subj. both neither don't know	9 (17.5%) 29 (57%) 2 (4%) 2 (4%) 9 (17.5%)	50 (65%) 10 (13%) 17 (22%) 0% N/A	16 (48%) 10 (30%) 6 (18%) 1 (3%) N/A	45 (77.7%) 7 (12%) 6 (10.3%) 0% N/A
Situation 8: *Lo bueno es que no...* a) *tenemos* b) *tengamos*	a) ind. b) subj. both √ neither don't know	28 (55%) 17 (33.2%) 4 (7.8%) 0% 2 (4%)	63 (82%) 3 (3.8%) 11 (14.2%) 0% N/A	21 (64%) 6 (18%) 1 (3%) 5 (15%) N/A	48 (82.8%) 3 (5.2%) 6 (10.3%) 1 (1.7%) N/A

For most of the above situations, which largely comprised cases of the optional subjunctive, more than one option could be adequate depending on the explanation provided by the respondents. This was mostly the case with situations 5 and 8, in which both moods could be selected depending on the respondent's interpretations.

Situation 1 comprised the same relative clause as that included in Year 3's comprehension task. When dealing with restrictive relative clauses in Spanish, the concept of 'specificity' is well known by upper-intermediate and advanced L2 learners. This concept implies that whenever the antecedent is specific, either because it is present (or exists) or because the speaker refers

to one particular item and not another, the embedded verb will go in indicative. In contrast, when the speaker does not refer to a particular antecedent but to any which might have the characteristics described in the relative clause, then the embedded verb will go in subjunctive.

The majority of Year 5 student participants (i.e. 88%) selected the most adequate option in the indicative. However, the explanations provided by nearly a third of the respondents (i.e. 29.5%) stated that there was certainty by the subject about the book's title (i.e. "s/he knows the name/title of the book), which does not entirely correspond with the explanation provided in class, that is, that it refers to an existing or specific object. More specifically, since the question began with *"¿Tienen un libro que…?"* (Do you have a book that…?), rather than referring to the existence of the book, it referred to its availability in that particular shop. Other explanations included that "the subjunctive is not necessary", "correct conjugation", "because it sounds better", "not hypothetical", "it's formal", "a fact", etc. As a matter of fact, just 11 students (i.e. 21.5%) mentioned the existence of the book in their explanations.

In situation 2 there were other discourse-pragmatic considerations involved. However, these were only picked up by some of the native-speaking participants. This explains the contrasts in the responses provided by students and the comparison groups. Interestingly, a much higher percentage of student participants (i.e. 68.5 %) than any of the comparison groups selected the option with the indicative, which was the most adequate to the situation. Their explanations, however, were mostly based on the fact that the imperfect indicative carries the connotation of describing repetitive actions in the past[71], but no other comments on mood contrast were mentioned by these participants. The explanations of the participants who selected the imperfect subjunctive option included the most common morphosyntactic and semantic

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[71] This use of the imperfect indicative (i.e. habitual/frequent actions in the past) is introduced to students before mood contrast, concretely, at the beginning of level A2. Furthermore, the contrast and use of the past tenses is a point of grammar which appears much more frequently in the input L2 learners receive than the subjunctive mood, and thus it represents an important part of the language programme at all levels of proficiency.

concepts learned in class: 'emotion/feelings', 'change of subject', 'subjunctive necessary', 'the conditional would be better', etc. This is not surprising considering that most explanations regarding mood choice provided by all participants on all perception tasks employed in this study were heavily based on these morphosyntactic and semantic concepts. However, none of the explanations mentioned the fact that with the subjunctive the speaker could imply that the action hardly ever happened or that its use could denote presupposed information.

Nevertheless, there was a clear tendency to use the subjunctive option among native speakers, and this is probably due to the use of the verb *molestar* (to be bothered) in the matrix, since the concept of 'emotion/feelings' was frequently mentioned by most. It is noteworthy that more than a third (35%) of language teacher participants selected both as adequate depending on the interpretation and other (implied) contextual factors. These included, for instance, that the subjunctive adds emphasis and subjectivity, or that the indicative denotes closeness and the subjunctive distance, which represent traditional accounts that do not correspond with the real cause/s for mood selection. One respondent (1.3 %) said that with the indicative the action is seen as habitual and with the subjunctive it is seen as uncommon, which is the closest explanation to what this situation intended to portray.

In spite of the introduction describing the situation in as much detail as possible, some of these participants mentioned the fact that it all depends on the 'intention' of the speaker and whatever s/he would continue saying after the sentence provided. For instance, one language teacher participant who chose both options as adequate, said that with the indicative the speaker is just reporting the fact that other students used to laughed at him/her, but with the subjunctive there were two possible options: (1) that the speaker wants to highlight that s/he was bothered by it, or, going a bit further in the interpretation, (2) that the speaker could continue uttering the

following sentence: *Por suerte, eso raramente llegó a ocurrir* (Fortunately, that rarely happened).

Nevertheless, no native speaker participants mentioned the concept of 'new or relevant vs. old or presupposed information' when explaining the choice of mood in this situation (or in fact in any others). This was, in some ways, surprising among the language teachers, since this concept is quite relevant to many cases where both moods are possible within the same sentence, depending on the interpretation by the speaker on what the listener already knows or does not know, as discussed by numerous (applied) linguists (e.g. Ahern, 2008; Ahern and Leonetti, 2004; Fábregas, 2009, 2014; Gregory and Lunn, 2012; Guitart, 1990; Mejías-Bikandi, 1994). This seems to suggest that there is a disconnection between the research undertaken by linguists or acquisition experts and the methods and techniques employed by teachers in the language classroom.

Situation 4 related to the different contextual meanings of the verb "*decir*": "to say/report something" vs. "to tell/ask someone to do something", as situation 6 of the comprehension task for Year 3. The most adequate response according to the situation described was the subjunctive mood, since the bossy colleague was 'telling' others what to do. Slightly over half of the student participants (i.e. 51%) selected the subjunctive as the most adequate response. Among these, less than half (42%) specified that it was a command. Other explanations included "hypothetical", "doubt", "two subjects", "right conjugation", "it's a statement", "it's not certain", "things she needs to buy are not specified", etc. Some participants (13.5%) selected both as adequate and one of the respondents added that "*compra*, he is demanding; *compre*, there's a chance that she won't". Another four participants also mentioned that Laura might not do it, which suggests that these students were providing the subjunctive mood with some inferential aspects which might have been mentioned in class at some point or, most

likely, were picked up while these students were doing their year abroad. However, what Laura will do (or will not do) in the end has nothing to do with what the speaker (or subject) is attempting to communicate or infer.

Lastly, it is worth noting that in Situation 7, the different contextual meanings of the verbal pair '*temer/temerse*' (to be afraid/frightened vs. to be afraid that – in the sense of 'to have the impression that') are also connected to the use of mood in the embedded verb. Thus, 'temer' (to be frightened/afraid), according to a traditional approach, is a factive-emotive verb which conveys a feeling or sentiment, and consequently triggers the subjunctive. The most adequate response according to the situation was the sentence in the indicative, since the subject was just informing the hearer that there was nobody else left at the party and thus it was not worth going all the way there. The results, however, show that most student participants were not aware of the contextual meanings of this verbal pair, since 57% selected the subjunctive providing explanations such as "*temo que* with subjunctive", "doubt", "uncertain", "emotion/fear", "regret/emotion", "two subjects", "better syntax", "subjunctive needed – negative", etc. From the nine participants (i.e. 17.6%) who selected the sentence in the indicative, three said that it was because the speaker knew everybody had left, which was the most adequate interpretation. The other six did not leave a comment.

The native speaker groups tended to select the indicative option. However, there were some discrepancies regarding the reasons to favour one over the other. For instance, some mentioned that it was a matter of register, so the use of the subjunctive implied higher formality. Others said that '*temerse*' was a literal translation from the English verbal phrase 'to be afraid of' and it was not used in their country. One respondent claimed that it was not a hypothesis.

4.4.6.1. Key Points: Comprehension Task

In relation to point 1 (i.e. influence and efficacy of the traditional method), the results for the

comprehension task at the highest level (i.e. C1+/C2) show that student participants' explanations for their choice of mood are also heavily influenced by the teaching method employed in the language classroom to introduce this point of grammar, since their accounts were entirely based on the morphosyntactic and semantic (or functional) concepts typical of this approach (e.g. two subjects, not a fact, hypothesis, emotion, fear, etc.). Furthermore, native-speaking participants also showed that they were influenced by these traditional concepts in their explanations, which indicates that the L1 learning of Spanish mood contrast is also widely based on this formalist approach.

If we compare specific structures which were common to this and the previous level (i.e. C1+/C2 and B2, respectively), we can determine some progress in one particular situation. This situation was identical in both tasks and comprised the second contextual meaning of the matrix verb '*decir*' (i.e. to tell/ask someone to do something) and thus the subjunctive form in the embedded verb was the most appropriate choice. Around half of both sets of respondents (i.e. 48.1 % for Year 3 and 51 % for Year 5) selected the subjunctive option, accurately. However, among those, only 10 % of the Year 3 participants explained that the speaker was giving an order/command, which was the correct answer, whereas 42 % of the Year 5 participants mentioned the same reason in their explanations. This suggests that there had been some progress in the learning/comprehension of mood selection in this particular case. However, the remainder of student participants in both levels of proficiency employed accounts characteristic of the traditional approach which were inappropriate or irrelevant (see sections 4.4.5 and 4.4.6 above for further details).

There was another situation which was identical in both tasks and comprised a relative clause in which the indicative was the correct choice because it referred to a specific antecedent. Quite a high percentage of students selected the correct form (i.e. 86 % of the Year 3 participants and

88 % of the Year 5 participants). However, whereas over a third of Year 3 participants (i.e. 36.7 %) provided an appropriate explanation (i.e. specific book), only 21.5 % of the Year 5 participants did. This suggests that over time students might forget the lists of subjunctive structures (and related semantic explanations) they need to memorise from the beginning of their mood contrast learning process and thus, the high percentage of correct answers in this case could have been also affected by the fact that the right choice involved an indicative form.

Therefore, it should be stressed that all participants' (i.e. students and native speakers) responses were clearly influenced by the type of explanations characteristic of the most common traditional approach[72], that is, based on the multiple morphosyntactic and semantic (and/or functional) traits of the subjunctive mood (in contrast with the indicative mood). Furthermore, similarly to both previous levels of proficiency (i.e. B1 and B2), in many cases, the explanations provided by student participants were not accurate or not relevant to their choice of mood.

In relation to the second point (i.e. which other issues were noticeable among student participants), these participants did not seem to have much trouble to distinguish between the different grammatical subjects involved in this task, at least there was no mention of this in their explanations. However, whenever there were some relevant discourse-pragmatic traits involved (e.g. new/old information), no student participants seemed to be aware of these. This is not surprising considering that within the comparison group of native speakers who were also language teachers, the conceptual pair of new/relevant and old/presupposed information was not mentioned by any of them.

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[72] Or formalist approach, in the case of native speakers.

4.4.7. Level C1+/C2 (Year 5): Production Task

Table 28 below shows the results for the Production Task delivered to Year 5 student participants. It had a similar format to the comprehension task, but respondents needed to provide a whole sentence (matrix and proposition) when prompted with a question about how they would respond or react to the situation previously described in English and in great detail. Furthermore, there was one situation in which respondents needed to complete some if-clauses with the protasis and another one in which they needed to translate a short paragraph into Spanish.

Table 28: Production Task Results (Level C1+/C2 – Year 5)

Production Task (level C1+/C2) (n = 38)	CORRECT FORM	INCORRECT FORM	COMPLETE AVOIDANCE (simpler structure)	NO ANSWER
Situation 1: You want your sister to see your new house, but it'll be hard because she's too busy and only comes for a few days. She also needs to see your parents. (use of a volitive or influence verb)	11 (29%)	21 (55%)	6 (16%)	0%
Situation 2: You want your brother to buy a coat you like for you. You describe it very carefully, so he doesn't bring the wrong coat. (use of a relative clause)	2 (5%)	3 (8%)	33 (87%)	0%
Situation 4: You finally found the book you were looking for... *Por fin...* (use of a relative clause)	8 (21%)	0%	27 (71%)	3 (8%)
	ALL CORRECT	**ALL INCORRECT**	**2 CORRECT 1 INCORRECT**	**1 CORRECT 2 INCORRECT**
Situation 5: Complete 3 conditional sentences with the protasis (i.e. *if* clause): 1.- imperfect subjunctive 2.- imperfect subjunctive 3.- pluperfect subjunctive	4 (10.5%)	23 (60.5%)	7 (18.5%)	4 (10.5%)
	CORRECT FORM	**INCORRECT FORM**	**COMPLETE AVOIDANCE (simpler structure)**	**NO ANSWER**

Situation 6: Translation of: "…she would like him to change." *…le gustaría que cambiara*[IMP.SUBJ.]	13 (34.2%)	17 (44.8%)	6 (15.8%)	2 (5.2%)

The results show high optionality among these student participants. For instance, when there was some room for avoidance of a subjunctive structure, such as with situations 2 and 4, most respondents employed coordination or parataxis (i.e. 87% and 71%, respectively), rather than subordinate structures, which would have been more adequate in both situations.

Situation 6 required the participants to translate a paragraph whose last sentence was 'she would like him to change'. This sentence entails the use of the imperfect subjunctive in Spanish (i.e. *(a ella) le gustaría que (él) cambiara*[IMP.SUBJ])[73]. Only about a third (34.2%) of participants translated it appropriately. However, nearly half (44.7%) used the infinitive form of the embedded verb or the indicative mood, resulting in ungrammatical sentences. Some examples include:

(55) … *quiere él a cambiar.** (she wants he* to change – literally)

(56) ... *quiere que cambia.** (she wants that he changes[PRES.IND])

(57) … *y quiere cambiar.* (and she wants to change)

Example (57) shows a case of co-reference, that is, both verbs have the same subject. However, it does not correspond with the original sentence in English.

In Situation 5, student participants were asked to complete three conditional sentences with the protasis or '*if* clause'. Two sentences required the imperfect subjunctive and the third sentence required the pluperfect subjunctive. Nearly two thirds (60.5%) of the participants employed indicative forms instead, such as the imperfect indicative or the conditional, resulting in

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[73] No participants used the alternative form for the Imperfect Subjunctive in *-se.*

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grammatically inadequate sentences. Furthermore, there were other instances where participants used a non-finite construction (typical of their L1) when a subjunctive subordinate construction was required. The following two examples illustrate this:

(58) *... me gustaría <u>ella a ver</u>* mi nueva casa.* (I'd like her to see my new house)

   … me gustaría que (ella) viera^{IMP.SUBJ.} *mi casa nueva.*

(59) *Me gustaría <u>mi hermana a visitarme</u>*.* (I'd like my sister to visit me)

   Me gustaría que mi hermana me visitara^{IMP.SUBJ.}

Situation 1 clearly involved the use of a volitive or influence verb, which represents a case of the obligatory subjunctive commonly introduced in the first stages of the learning process of mood contrast. Less than a third of the respondents (i.e. 29%) employed a relevant matrix and the subjunctive mood in the embedded verb. More than half (i.e. 55%) used this type of matrix with the verb in the indicative inaccurately, and the remainder (i.e. 16%) avoided a subjunctive structure completely.

The results for the production task completed by Year 5 participants show high optionality in the use of subjunctive structures, whichever their level of complexity. An obvious outcome was that whenever there was some room for avoidance, most student participants would take it, since they tended to use coordination and thus indicative structures rather than subordination and subjunctive structures.

4.4.7.1. Key Points: Production Task

In relation to point 1 (i.e. influence and efficacy of the traditional method), the results for the production task at the highest level (i.e. C1+/C2) show that student participants had considerable issues in recognising the 'uses' of the subjunctive which had been introduced to them in the language classroom. The most salient outcome relates to some instances of the

obligatory subjunctive, which are generally introduced in the early stages of the subjunctive learning process and thus teachers might not review these cases at the highest level because they assume students have already acquired them. Only 29 % of the student participants used a subjunctive form in the embedded verb. These results reinforce the idea that the rote learning technique characteristic of the traditional method might not be effective to improve the mood contrast abilities of L2 learners in the long run.

Regarding the second point (i.e. which other issues were noticeable among student participants), learners at this level do not seem to have issues with the fact that the first- and third-person singular forms of all the subjunctive 'tenses' are identical, and were always aware of which subject they were dealing with in all situations. However, these learners, whenever they had a chance, oversimplified their written production in order to avoid using complex subordinate structures and thus subjunctive forms. Furthermore, a few participants used, inaccurately, non-finite constructions typical of their L1 (i.e. English) when attempting to convey subjunctive structures. This type of error is generally expected from pre-intermediate students, but it should have been long amended at this level.

4.4.8. Conclusions

The results for the comprehension and production tasks completed by student participants within the pre-intervention study show that, firstly, students at all levels of proficiency seem to struggle to select between moods and understand the reasons behind each choice, and secondly, that their explanations about their choice of mood are strongly influenced by the instruction they have received, which is drawn from the traditional approach.

It is worth noting that, despite some choosing the most adequate mood for the situation in the comprehension tasks and thus their responses being computed as correct, their explanations for

their selection were frequently inaccurate (e.g. their explanation corresponded to the opposite mood or it could well belonged to both choices, such as in cases of co-reference). Furthermore, within the production tasks, cases in which students mirrored non-finite structures characteristic of their L1 (i.e. English), inaccurately, happened even at the highest level of proficiency (i.e. C1+/C2).

All student participants performed better in the comprehension tasks than in the production tasks, which seems to agree with the literature. However, if we take into account that participants within this pre-intervention study also needed to explain their choice of mood when completing the comprehension tasks and that those explanations were, in many cases, incomplete or inaccurate, it is possible that some of their correct responses within the comprehension tasks were due to chance and therefore not well-informed.

It is also worth noting that a few student participants performed really well in general. Therefore, the learning/memorising of lengthy lists of structures/matrices which trigger the subjunctive mood plus a list of exceptions as a learning strategy might work for some.

Lastly, it should be stressed that, above all in regard to these students' production, their mood contrast abilities seemed to slightly decline over time.

4.5. Final Remarks

This chapter has provided a detailed account of the results for the pre-intervention study which largely answer research question 3 (i.e. How effective is traditional instruction in enabling L2 learners in a UK Higher Education context to learn the subjunctive?).

The pre-intervention study spanned over two academic years and examined UK teachers' views on the teaching of the Spanish subjunctive (in contrast with the indicative) and UK university students' skills at all levels of proficiency in regard to this point of grammar. It gathered

significant evidence to support the claim that the traditional method lacks effectiveness to achieve the L2 learning of Spanish mood contrast within this particular educational setting. This was made evident after analysing the results for both the class observations and the 327 comprehension and production tasks completed by student participants, which both reflected the clear influence of the traditional approach and the difficulties experienced by L2 learners not only during instruction but also, and more importantly, when they completed the tasks.

Consequently, there seems to be a strong link between the type of instruction which student participants of the pre-intervention study had received (i.e. traditional approach) and their low degree of accuracy when selecting or producing the subjunctive mood in the sets of tasks completed by these participants.

Chapter 5 deals with the results for the intervention study, in which a new teaching method to introduce mood contrast to L2 learners based on the COA (cognitive-operative approach) was implemented from the beginning of the mood contrast learning process. The results are described in detail, highlighting the most relevant aspects of the experiment which are significant to this investigation in order to provide an answer to research question 5 (i.e. When the COA is translated into classroom instruction, is there evidence to suggest that this has potential to be more effective than the traditional approach?).

Chapters 6 and 7 will draw this investigation to a close. They are concerned with the interpretation of all the results and how these answer the research questions. Some recommendations for practice and future research are also suggested.

5. RESULTS II: INTERVENTION STUDY TO TEST THE COA

This investigation's main objective focused on gathering evidence on the effectiveness of the cognitive-operative approach (COA) based on the implementation of the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration (Ruiz Campillo, 2004) to introduce Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners from quite an early stage of the learning process (i.e. A2+) and within a university setting.

This was achieved by means of an intervention study which comprised two stages, each carried out in two UK universities. Stage 1 consisted of a 50-minute lecture plus a comprehension activity and the methodological approach was exclusively based on class observation (see sections 3.1.6 and 3.1.7 in chapter 3 for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods). However, Stage 2 was more systematic and comprised the following: (a) nine 50-minute lectures and/or tutorials in which the most relevant concepts regarding mood contrast by means of the COA were introduced to student participants; (b) a reflective diary undertaken by the researcher-teacher in which a detailed account of what happened in each session and some suggestions on how to improve the material or make some adjustments between sessions were recorded; (c) a pre- and post-experiment questionnaire aimed at first-year students in which their views (and knowledge) on the Spanish subjunctive were collected; and (d) two comprehension tasks plus one production task which were delivered to student participants in order to gather evidence on their mood contrast abilities after having received explicit instruction by means of the COA (see sections 3.1.8 to 3.1.10 in chapter 3 for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods).

The following sections in this chapter entail a detailed account of the results for the COA intervention study highlighting the most relevant aspects which provide evidence to answer

research question 5 (i.e. When the COA is translated into classroom instruction, is there evidence to suggest that this has potential to be more effective than the traditional approach?).

5.1. Stage 1 of the Intervention Study

Stage 1 of the COA experiment started as a pilot study and was carried out in the first university[74] in which this investigation began. The main objective was to test an alternative method which could improve the learning of the subjunctive mood by L2 learners. It took place in the lowest levels of proficiency (A2+/B1) when Spanish mood contrast is introduced (i.e. year 1: A2+) or assessed (i.e. year 2: B1) for the first time. However, some of these students had some previous experience learning this mood (i.e. secondary school or first year university courses) with a traditional approach based on the description of the syntactic/semantic connections between the main and the subordinate clauses, as explained on several occasions throughout this investigation (for a comprehensive account see Chapter 2, section 2.3.1).

This alternative method follows a cognitive-operative approach, which often involves the use of graphic aids to conceptualise the relationship between the grammar form and its meaning(s). Some characteristics of this approach include that (1) grammar choices are always selected by the speaker to fulfil her/his communication needs and not the other way round, that (2) grammar is not seen as arbitrary but as logically-based and as an essential part of communication, and, most importantly, that (3) it seeks to reduce grammar decisions to a single operative value or mechanism based on the intrinsic meaning/s of each grammar form (for a detailed account on this approach see Chapter 2, section 2.3.4).

When applying this method to the teaching of the subjunctive, it is based on the single binary opposition of *declaration/non-declaration* by Ruiz Campillo (2004, 2006, 2008, 2012), which

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[74] The COA experiment was carried out in two UK universities due to the change of jobs of the researcher and thus it is comprised of two different stages.

implies the use of a single concept that can be applied to all the cases of mood contrast without exception. This approach greatly distances itself from the more traditional approach, which entails a wide variety of syntactic and semantic concepts that need to be learned (memorised) by L2 learners in order to be able to use mood contrast under controlled situations (for a detailed description of the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration, see Chapter 2, section 2.3.4.1).

This first stage of the COA experiment was carried out during the academic year 2016/2017 with two groups of year 1[75] students (n = 66) and all the year 2 students (n = 78).

The Year 1 student groups were introduced to the new conceptual pair of *declaration/non-declaration* during a 50-minute session at the end of the course. This grammar point is not included in any tests or exams at this level. It is only when students progress to second year when mood contrast becomes an important part of the programme and is assessed. Year 2 students also received the same introduction to mood contrast at the beginning of the first semester, as described in detail in the next section, however, when these students were introduced to other subjunctive structures involving relative clauses and purpose clauses during the second semester, the conceptual pair was not used as a mechanism, according to the teachers involved, due to the lack of adequate class material and training.

5.1.1. A Didactic Proposal to Introduce Spanish Mood Contrast

The didactic proposal comprised a PowerPoint presentation in which the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration by Ruiz Campillo (2004) was introduced to students for the first time, and a 10-minute practice activity which aimed at consolidating the functionality of

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[75] A group of 16 Year 1 Beginner students and a group of 50 Year 1 Non-Beginner students with some previous experience in the learning of the target structure.

the new concept (see Chapter 3, section 3.1.6, for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods).

Ruiz Campillo (2008) defines this concept as "the formal and explicit manifestation of what the subject knows (asserts) or thinks (assumes), that is, of what the subject contributes towards the discourse" (my translation). The indicative is the mood of *declaration,* and the subjunctive is the mood of *non-declaration*. However, a simplified definition was provided to these students, since there were some beginner participants involved, as explained below in more detail.

The PowerPoint presentation[76] was delivered during a grammar lecture. This introduction was delivered in English to avoid possible misunderstandings, since it followed a cognitive-operative approach, which was also new to students. Furthermore, mood contrast entails certain knowledge of syntactic subordination, that is, L2 learners need to start dealing with complex sentences which contain two conjugated verbs and two different subjects. A couple of new terms were also introduced in a simplified manner: (1) the *matrix*, as the word or group of words that introduces (2) the *proposition* or piece of information that is being communicated in the subordinate clause.

Since grammatical moods are the main linguistic form of modality in Spanish, the first concept that is introduced to students is precisely the concept of *modality,* which is common to all languages, and thus, L2 learners can easily identify with it. We need to take into account that L2 learners at this stage (i.e. A2+/B1) might not have enough metalinguistic knowledge to understand formal (explicit) grammar explanations, therefore, teachers should employ basic terminology at the beginning and raise the level of complexity gradually, so that students do not lose their motivation. Hence, the introduction of this concept begins by asking students a

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[76] Appendix J for the updated version delivered during Stage 2 of the intervention study.

straightforward question about human communication: *In what ways can we communicate ideas to others?* The answers include 'speaking', 'writing' / 'typing', 'signing' (i.e. sign language), and even 'body language' or 'facial expressions'.

Following this, it is explained to students how ideas can be expressed in different ways depending on the speaker's attitude or intentions. Thus, when shown the following two examples with the extra aid of images (i.e. facial expressions), students were able to observe the difference in the speaker's attitude from neutral (60) to surprise or disbelief (61), for instance:

> (60) Anna got married last week.

> (61) Anna got married last week!

The speaker might want to express a doubt, a concern, a fear, etc., and s/he will use different linguistic (e.g. grammatical moods, modal verbs, or intonation) and extra-linguistic (e.g. gestures or facial expressions) 'ways' to do this. L2 learners are then told that what we are interested in is how we, as speakers, can linguistically convey ideas manifesting our attitudes and intentions at the same time. And this is, in short and in a simplified manner, what the concept of *modality* consists of, which is defined to students as "the speaker's attitude towards what is said".

When students are introduced to the subjunctive mood, they are not aware that all the verbs and tenses they already 'know' belong to the indicative mood. This is partly why learners find mood contrast so challenging, and perhaps it would be advisable to introduce the concept of modality earlier on, when some modal and volitive verbs are introduced with non-finite constructions (e.g. *¿Puedo ir^{INF} al baño?* - Can I go to the toilet? or *Quiero ir^{INF} al cine mañana* – I want to go to the cinema tomorrow).

For this introduction, it is essential to use cross-linguistic references in order to aid the comprehension of this first concept (i.e. modality). In the case of this study's setting, L2 learners' L1 is mostly English, so it is explained to them how modality is linguistically expressed in their native language, which is mainly done by means of modal verbs. Furthermore, it is also explained to the students that both English and Spanish have grammatical moods to linguistically express modality (i.e. indicative, subjunctive and imperative), and that English has its own subjunctive forms, although these are restricted to specific structures (e.g. volitive verbs) and a formal register. Some examples are provided so students can become aware of these forms as being the subjunctive in English. Then, it is explained to them that in Spanish, these subjunctive forms are more abundant (i.e. specific morphology and tenses) and commonly used (i.e. colloquial register as well).

With the aid of four sentences (illustrated below as examples 59-62) in which the (main or embedded) *proposition* is shared (i.e. John will come tomorrow), students are asked to explain the main differences between (62)/(63) and (64)/(65).

(62) John will come tomorrow.

(63) I assume John will come tomorrow.

(64) John may come tomorrow.

(65) I don't think John will come tomorrow.

Expected answers by students who have previous experience learning the subjunctive are linked to more traditional approaches to teaching/learning the subjunctive, such as, for instance, 'there is more certainty in the first two (62/63)', or 'the first one (62) is a fact'. But the response they receive from the teacher is always the same, that "the speaker is **saying** that *John will come tomorrow* **only** in the first two sentences".

The concept of *declaration* is then introduced to students in order to explain the contrast between the indicative and the subjunctive moods, but, as mentioned above, the original definition was simplified slightly: *"Declaration takes place when the speaker asserts or assumes that a proposition (i.e. piece of information the speaker intends to communicate) is (or will come) true, according to her/his knowledge"*[77].

It is important to stress to students that what is really relevant is the speaker's perspective on the proposition s/he is communicating, and not whether the proposition as such is true or false. In sentences (64) and (65), the speaker is not *saying/declaring* that 'John will come tomorrow'. In sentence (64), the speaker is saying both that John will and will not come tomorrow, and in sentence (65), the speaker is saying the opposite, that the speaker does not believe John will come tomorrow.

With the aid of the following sentence (66) by Ruiz Campillo (2007a), the concept of *declaration* and the idea that it is the speaker's perspective that really matters are reinforced:

(66) In Spanish, when someone says that it's raining, that means that **someone says** that it's raining.

One thing is what the speaker or subject of the matrix (main clause) says/utters (i.e. it's raining), and another thing is what it is really happening. Therefore, even if someone says that it is raining, it might not be raining at all. As a matter of fact, this explanation was supported by some images in order to understand the message: sentence (66) appeared inside a bubble uttered by a character and the next slide showed an image outside in which the sun was shining.

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[77] Extract from the PowerPoint presentation delivered to students.

Other clear-cut sentences are then added to demonstrate the opposite idea, the concept of *non-declaration.* These sentences also share the same *proposition* in order to aid learners' comprehension.

(67) I want it to rain.

(68) I hope it rains.

(69) It's not likely that it will rain.

Learners are asked whether the speaker is *saying/declaring* that 'it rains/is raining' or 'it will/is going to rain' in any of the above sentences. As expected, their answer is always negative. Subsequently, they are told that in Spanish, when the speaker wants to declare a proposition, s/he will use the indicative, but when the speaker does not want to declare a proposition, s/he will use the subjunctive. They are also told that this explanation can be applied to all the cases of mood contrast.

Another slide with three sentences in English was also included, in which the matrix and the embedded clause had been swapped[78], as shown below:

(70) I think John will come tomorrow.

(70)' John will come tomorrow, I think.

(71) I don't think John will come tomorrow.

(71)' John will come tomorrow, I don't think. (?)

(72) I think John won't come tomorrow.

(72)' John won't come tomorrow, I think.

This was intended to aid the understanding of the concept of *declaration* in English as well, since sentence (71)' conflicts with its overall meaning. There exists a discrepancy between the

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[78] The matrix is adjoined to the clause, as a kind of parenthetical, commenting on the clause, functioning like a modal or hearsay particle.

meanings of the subordinate clause (i.e. John will come tomorrow) and the postposed matrix (i.e. I don't think). Some students might believe that when the speaker chooses to say *I don't think John will come tomorrow,* they are declaring that John won't come tomorrow[79]. And this is when the last sentence (72) comes into play: if the speaker wants to declare that John won't come tomorrow, s/he will say instead *I think John won't come tomorrow*. Therefore, sentence (71) is the only sentence out of the three above, which involves *non-declaration*, and for that reason, in Spanish, the subjunctive mood will be used.

Lastly, students are asked to simply answer 'yes' or 'no' to the question 'Is the speaker *declaring* in the following situations?', when they are presented with a series of sentences whose subordinate clauses express the same information, which have been used as examples throughout the presentation, in order to practise this new concept. These sentences are then translated into Spanish by the teacher so that students can see how mood contrast works in Spanish.

It is not necessary to introduce the subjunctive morphology prior to the above presentation, but they must be made aware of the (slightly) different forms that non-declaration involves. Year 1 students who have been studying the target language for just two semesters (i.e. 65-70 hours) at university level, and have no previous experience, have already been introduced to the present indicative. Therefore, they should be able to recognise the new form(s) as the present subjunctive, above all when irregular verbs are present in the examples, since they significantly differ in form from their present indicative counterparts, and thus are more noticeable. This introduction does not require the students to produce the form, only to notice it.

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[79] One beginner student said exactly that (see section 5.1.3.1 within this chapter for further details).

5.1.2. Procedure

Stage 1 of the intervention study consisted of the introduction of mood contrast to L2 learners by means of the COA during the academic year 2016/2017. It was tested with two groups of year 1 students (i.e. 16 beginner students with no previous knowledge of mood contrast and 50 non-beginner students with some previous knowledge) and 78 year 2 students divided into three smaller groups of 23, 28 and 27 students each.

The two groups of year 1 students were presented with both concepts during a 50-minute lesson at the end of the second semester. The three groups of year 2 students received the same introduction half-way through the first semester. This lesson comprised the PowerPoint presentation described above (Appendix J) and a practice comprehension activity/quiz (see Appendix G) in which L2 learners were asked to answer the question: *is the speaker declaring in the following situations?* The exercise was extracted from the textbook employed in the first- and second-year courses titled *Gramática Básica del Estudiante de Español[80], which follows a cognitive-operative approach to explaining grammar and thus employs the concepts of declaration and non-declaration when dealing with mood contrast.

The Year 1 group of 50 non-beginner students had achieved a Higher or an Advanced Higher in Spanish in secondary school, which supposedly correspond to the B1/B1+ and the B2/B2+ levels of the CEFR[81], respectively. This implies that most of these students had previously been introduced, to some extent but perhaps not explicitly, to the subjunctive mood. All the year 2 students had received subjunctive instruction during their first year at the university. Therefore, the only student participants who had not received previous instruction on mood contrast were the 16 year-1 beginner students.

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[80] Alonso R., Castañeda A., Martínez P., Miquel L., Ortega J., Ruiz Campillo J.P. (2011, new edition) Difusión.
[81] Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Since Stage 1 of the intervention study comprised just one 50-minute lecture in which student participants were introduced to mood contrast by means of the COA, the research methods deployed included some class observation (see Chapter 3, section 3.1.7, for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods). It was carried out in order to examine both how this new method was implemented in the classroom and the students' response and (signs of) comprehension of the conceptual pair. Therefore, the analysis of the results was mostly qualitative.

Table 29 below shows the different classes and tutors observed:

Table 29: Class observation II

Academic year	Year 1 (beginners)	Year 1 (non-beginners)	Year 2
2016/2017	Tutor 1 (16 students)	Tutor 2 (50 students)	Tutor 5 (23 students) Tutor 6 (28 students)

5.1.3. Results

By means of class observation (Appendix H), I sought to gather some evidence on the most relevant aspects related to the implementation of the COA to introduce Spanish mood contrast for the first time, considering that this method was new for both teachers and L2 learners. These included:

1. How teachers present the new concepts to their students (e.g. enough clarity, providing sufficient time for students to reflect before answering the questions addressed to them during the presentation, how long the presentation lasts, etc.).

2. How students receive the explanations by their teacher (e.g. level of comprehension, how many answer the questions addressed to them during the presentation and when completing the comprehension exercise at the end of the lesson, how many ask questions, etc.).

3. Regarding the comprehension activity, whether students' explanations for their choices between declaration and non-declaration are related to the recently introduced conceptual pair or rather to the most traditional concepts, since the majority of student participants (i.e. 89 %) had received previous instruction on the subjunctive mood by means of the traditional approach.

5.1.3.1. Tutor 1: Year 1 Beginner Students

The Year 1 Beginner group was smaller (i.e. 16) and hence had more opportunities to participate in the discussion. They mostly provided logical responses and agreed with the clarifications and further explanations presented by the tutor. The tutor in question was familiar with the concepts and provided a very clear explanation to her students.

One student even challenged the concept of non-declaration when presented with one situation in particular (i.e. sentence 65: *I don't think John will come tomorrow*). She asked whether the speaker was really declaring that *John will **not** come tomorrow*. She was provided with the following explanation: if the speaker were to declare that *John will **not** come tomorrow*, s/he would have chosen that proposition and not the one presented in the example, which was in the positive form. In this case (i.e. sentence 65), the speaker is not declaring the proposition *John will come tomorrow,* because s/he cannot or does not want to assert or assume that information. When the speaker chooses to use that particular matrix (i.e. *I don't think*), s/he implies that, according to his/her knowledge, John will do the opposite of coming tomorrow, but this information cannot be asserted (nor even assumed) because the speaker does not have enough confidence (or information) to assert that *John will not come tomorrow*.

Tutor 1 asked for my assistance to explain the above to the student, which entails that further training is needed among the teaching team at the university in which this empirical study was carried out in order to ensure that this new method is properly introduced. This was

corroborated by other tutors involved in this experiment, who communicated their concerns about this change of method. It is worth noting that implementing the COA requires changing completely teachers' ways when it comes to introducing mood contrast to their students, so it was not surprising that the tutors involved had some concerns.

When completing the comprehension activity, in which they were provided with eight sentences and needed to answer the question: *is the speaker declaring in the following situations?* students were required to explain why they had answered yes or no. Their explanations mostly related to the just introduced concepts of declaration/non-declaration and were generally adequate.

5.1.3.2. Tutor 2: Year 1 Non-Beginner Students

The group of Year 1 Non-Beginner students was fairly large (i.e. 50). The tutor who usually teaches this group of students was on leave, so a different tutor took over that day. The latter is also involved in the teaching of second-year students; thus, she had already introduced this conceptual pair to those students[82].

In contrast to the beginner group's responses during the presentation, this group employed explanations characteristic of a more traditional approach to teach the subjunctive mood, as previously mentioned. Their responses comprised explanations such as 'it's a fact', 'possibility', 'not happening for sure', etc. After being introduced the new conceptual pair of *declaration/non-declaration*, only a few students confirmed their understanding. However, it is worth noting that this was a large group of students (i.e. 50) and the tutor delivering the presentation was new to all of them. The above reasons might have prevented some students from providing their responses due to feelings of embarrassment or awkwardness.

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[82] Year 2 students were introduced to the new conceptual pair in the first semester.

The comprehension activity was distributed among these students in a different format. Since Tutor 2 was expecting a large number of students attending, she used a Kahoot quiz so that all the students could participate online and live. Kahoot is a game-based learning platform which allows teachers to create multiple-choice quizzes and distribute them in the classroom promptly. Students need a mobile device and internet connection in order to answer the multiple-choice questions. When the quiz is completed, percentages of the correct and incorrect answers appear on screen. There is also a quiz winner, which is the student who has guessed a greater number of correct responses in less time. This could easily cause students to rush their answers and not give enough thought to their responses. For that reason, the tutor generally makes a pause after each multiple-choice question is answered to ask students why they have chosen that particular answer. By doing so, students have the opportunity to prove that they have understood the concepts of declaration and non-declaration, even if their response was not adequate due to trying to be as quick as possible when selecting their answer.

The results for this quiz showed that 68.5% of students replied to all the situations correctly. However, since there was a 50 % probability to answer correctly accidentally, Tutor 2 asked students to provide an explanation for each choice. The few students who participated employed concepts such as 'possibility', 'fact', '(un)true', etc., so the tutor had to stress that in each and every case, the concepts of declaration and non-declaration could be used to explain all the cases. This suggests that once students have been introduced to the Spanish subjunctive by means of a traditional approach, it might be difficult to change their 'way of thinking'.

5.1.3.3. Tutor 5: Year 2 Students

Tutor 5 experienced some trouble in understanding some of the situations provided in the presentation, as she notified me the day before this presentation took place. During the presentation, this tutor mostly answered herself the questions that were intended to be answered

by students. These questions aimed at the reflection of some essential concepts on the part of the students, which did not happen. Due to this, the delivery of the presentation lasted just 25-30 minutes.

Some students looked slightly perplexed at the end of the presentation. When completing the comprehension activity, only a few students replied. These students were generally accurate in their responses, however, as they were not asked to provide an explanation for their answers, it is possible that they were being guided by the subjunctive morphology of the embedded verb, since all of them had previously been introduced to this point of grammar at the end of year 1.

5.1.3.4. Tutor 6: Year 2 Students

Tutor 6 explained the concepts rather clearly, and most students confirmed their understanding at the end of the lesson. However, this tutor also asked me to confirm a couple of things throughout the presentation, which seems to corroborate the idea that this new method to introduce mood contrast needs to be further entrenched among teachers in order to be effectively taught to L2 learners, as previously mentioned.

Similar to the Year 1 Non-Beginner group, when completing the comprehension task, these students tended to use explanations typical of the traditional approach, instead of the recently introduced conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration. The terminology and concepts characteristic of the traditional method seem to be entrenched in these students' metalanguage. However, it is also true that the introduction to the new conceptual pair by means of the COA was probably too brief and thus not comprehensive enough to adhere to these students' repertoire.

5.1.4. Some remarks

In summary, Stage 1 of the intervention study shows that a proposal to introduce Spanish mood contrast for the first time to L2 learners by means of the COA based on the conceptual pair of *declaration* and *non-declaration* by Ruiz Campillo (2004) has some potential to improve mood selection among L2 learners, above all when these learners have not been previously introduced to this point of grammar by means of the traditional approach.

The main outcome suggests that student participants[83] were generally able to decide whether the speaker was declaring or not declaring in most of the situations presented to them throughout Stage 1 of the intervention study. However, the fact that most students (89%) involved had some previous knowledge of the target language structure via a more traditional approach, proved to be problematic, since those tended to use more syntactic-semantic explanations when accounting for mood contrast, instead of employing the more recently learned conceptual pair of *declaration/non-declaration*.

Nevertheless, there was an obvious limitation, since Stage 1 was comprised, exclusively, of the class observation of a single 45-minute presentation and a 10-minute comprehension task in which participants needed to answer eight yes/no questions orally. This prevented me from producing more conclusive evidence and thus it was necessary to carry out a follow-up main study (i.e. Stage 2) in which not only the comprehension of this conceptual pair but also the production of the subjunctive mood could be tested among L2 learners.

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[83] However, this can only be alleged of the few students who participated (orally) by answering the tutors' questions during and after the presentation.

5.2. Stage 2 of the Intervention Study

Stage 2 of the intervention study was carried out in a different UK university and, for circumstantial reasons, only with complete beginner students as participants. A key aspect of this approach, which was substantiated by the main findings from Stage 1 (section 5.1.4), represented the fact that it could be more effective if it was implemented from the very beginning of the learning process so that L2 learners were not influenced by the most popular traditional approach.

Another important aspect was the testing of L2 learners' production abilities as well as their comprehension skills. Therefore, a total of three tasks were developed, two comprehension tasks and one final production task. Furthermore, the fact that also the production abilities of student participants were examined allowed for a means of comparison with the pre-intervention study (i.e. results in chapter 4) in which students had received instruction by means of the traditional approach.

5.2.1. Procedure

Stage 2 of the COA experiment comprised nine hours of instruction (i.e. sessions) and the completion of three tasks – two comprehension and one production – whose results are presented below (i.e. section 5.2.2). They were completed by 71, 72 and 57 student participants, respectively (see Chapter 3, section 3.1.8, for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods).

Participants were year-1 beginner students. Their L1 was not considered as a variable, since the method tested was not specific for L2 learners with English as L1. The aim of this intervention study was to examine the 'functionality' of the COA approach with L2 learners at

the beginning of their mood contrast learning process, whichever their L1 or number of foreign languages these students had previously learned.

Stage 2 of the intervention study also comprised a reflective diary (Appendix P) and a pre- and post-experiment questionnaire (Appendix Q) addressed to year 1 students, both beginner student participants and non-beginner students who had received instruction by means of the traditional method (see Chapter 3, sections 3.1.9 and 3.1.10, for further details on the participants and data collection and analysis methods).

The reflective diary complemented this study in various ways. For instance, if any of the student participants missed a key lecture, it was possible to make sure they received the relevant reference material in time to catch up before the next session. Even though the material was immediately available on the VLE platform (i.e. Moodle), students who missed any of the nine sessions were also sent an email reminder. It is worth noting that attendance is not compulsory in the university where Stage 2 of the intervention study was carried out, and the (prolonged) lack of attendance of the participants could have adversely affected the outcome of this investigation.

Furthermore, since a new and completely different method was being tested, it was very important to maintain the levels of motivation during the whole process of the intervention study. Thus, keeping a reflected diary allowed me to keep track of any particular students who could be struggling at any stage of the experiment, in that way I could focus on them and make sure they were not falling behind. In fact, constant feedback was gathered from these students, not only at the end of each session but also via email. This helped to make the necessary adjustments between sessions, such as when some students were struggling to classify the non-declarative matrices which convey a value judgement and extra examples were added to the class material.

The first session consisted of the delivery of nearly the exact same PowerPoint presentation as that described in section 5.1.1. (i.e. Stage 1's didactic proposal). Some amendments were made in order to aid the L2 learners' understanding of the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration. For instance, for Stage 1, the slide which included the four sentences about John showed as follows:

(73) John will come tomorrow.

(74) I assume John will come tomorrow.

(75) John may come tomorrow.

(76) I don't think John will come tomorrow.

However, in order to emphasise the idea that mood contrast is characteristic of subordination, the above sentences were changed to the following four examples (i.e. 77-80) when the same PowerPoint presentation was delivered during Stage 2:

(77) I know John will come tomorrow.

(78) I assume John will come tomorrow.

(79) It is possible John will come tomorrow.

(80) I don't think John will come tomorrow.

As a matter of fact, the definition of the concept of declaration presented to student participants during Stage 2 was further simplified to stress the importance of its two sub-contexts. Thus, Stage 1's presentation stated that "*Declaration* takes place when the speaker *asserts* or *assumes* that a proposition (i.e. piece of information the speaker intends to communicate) is (or will come) true, according to her/his knowledge", whereas that for Stage 2 the definition showed as: "**Declaration** is the formal or linguistic representation of what the **speaker** or **subject** of the matrix **knows** (**asserts**) or **thinks** (**assumes**)". Furthermore, an extra slide was added which

explained the technique of substituting the matrix for 'The speaker/subject asserts or assumes that" in order to verify whether it is a declaration or a non-declaration.

Session 5 comprised a PowerPoint presentation which was key in order to develop and entrench the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration. The Mood Map (Ruiz Campillo, 2007a) with the two contexts studied at this level was introduced and explained based on the same single mechanism previously introduced in session 1 (and reinforced in every single session that followed). Thus, this map included two main contexts: declarative and non-declarative. In turn, the declarative context was further divided in strong declarations (i.e. asserting) and weak declarations (i.e. assuming), and the non-declarative context in three different sub-contexts: questioning (i.e. rejection of an idea or contemplation of a possibility), commenting (i.e. value judgement or comment) and wanting (i.e. wish/objective or requirement). Therefore, the map presented to these students was not the complete map described in chapter 2 (i.e. section 2.3.4).

The most important aspect to be highlighted to students was, again, that it is the 'contextual' meaning of the matrix that dictates the above classification. Therefore, the speaker selects a particular matrix to communicate what s/he intends to communicate in a certain manner, within a specific context, and in a particular moment in time.

Most of the practice activities completed during session 5 were structured-input activities taken from the class textbook[84] in which students were required to select, among a range of matrices, which were declarative, and which were non-declarative. The 'proposition' (i.e. embedded clause) was the same in every case and appeared on its own preceded by dashes[85]. However, the mood of the embedded verb was either in indicative (highlighted in bold and red[86] font) or

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[84] Gramática Básica del Estudiante de Español (Alonso *et al*. 2011, Difusión).

[85] E.g. …**habla** con ella. / …**hable** con ella. (…speak to her.) (Alonso *et al.* 2011, p.169, activity 2).

[86] In the textbook, bold letters in black are used for the indicative and bold letters in green for the subjunctive. However, for the PowerPoint presentation delivered to students I used red for the indicative and blue for the subjunctive due to having used this colour contrast every time a new tense/structure had been previously introduced to these students (i.e. red for the old/known structure and blue for the new structure).

in subjunctive (highlighted in bold and blue font). Students were required to start the sentence choosing one of the available matrices, depending on those triggering a declaration or a non-declaration.

There were three types of activity in which students were required to: (1) choose between asserting or assuming matrices and questioning matrices, (2) choose between asserting or assuming matrices and commenting matrices, and (3) choose between asserting or assuming matrices and wanting matrices. Therefore, these activities aimed at achieving the entrenchment of not only the basic operative value of declaration and non-declaration, but also the 'noticing' and comprehension of the different meanings involved in the classification of the various sub-contexts. Furthermore, this type of practice requires students to 'develop' their own classification of matrices into the different sub-contexts, rather than just being told by the teacher what structures represent wishes, facts, realities, emotions, hypotheses, requests, doubts, commands, necessities, objectives, intentions, possibilities, impossibilities, etc., and thus students need to engage in their own learning process.

Lastly, it is worth noting that when the Imperative was introduced to these students (i.e. sessions 3 and 4), it was stressed that this mood has a non-declarative meaning, since 'requests' and 'orders' belong to the 'wanting' sub-context. The only difference between these two moods is their 'linguistic architecture' (Ruiz Campillo, 2008), since the subjunctive mood is characteristic of subordination and the imperative appears in simple sentences.

Table 30 below outlines the main points covered in each session and the practice activities completed by student participants. Alternatively, a thorough account of what happened in each session is provided in the reflective diary (Appendix P).

Table 30: Stage 2 Intervention Study Sessions

SESSION 1 (LR[87])	PowerPoint presentation introducing the conceptual pair of declaration/non-declaration (Appendix J) Comprehension activity (Kahoot) (Appendix G)
SESSION 2 (LS[88])	PowerPoint introducing the subjunctive morphology. PowerPoint including activity in which students are required to substitute the matrix for 'assert' or 'assume' to decide whether they are dealing with a declaration or a non-declaration (Appendix K).
SESSION 3 (LS)	PowerPoint introducing the two forms of the Imperative which do not share the same morphology as the subjunctive (i.e. positive forms of *tú* and *vosotros/as*). Some practice activities.
SESSION 4 (LS)	PowerPoint introducing the remainder of the Imperative forms (i.e. 5 forms) which share the same morphology as the subjunctive. Interactive activity to reinforce morphology and 'uses' of the Imperative/Subjunctive.
SESSION 5 (LR)	PowerPoint presentation introducing the Mood Map and concept of co-reference (Appendix L).
SESSION 6 (LS)	Two activities (in groups): (1) decide whether the speaker/subject is declaring or not by substituting the matrix by 'assert' or 'assume', and (2) translation of sentences from English to Spanish. **Task 1** (comprehension) was completed (Appendix M).
SESSION 7 (LS)	Two activities (in pairs): (1) provide solutions to some problems using the Imperative, and (2) reading comprehension and fill-in-the-gap with the indicative, subjunctive or imperative moods.
SESSION 8 (LS)	Completion of activity (2) from session 7. Comments on responses for Task 1. Homework: watch online presentation created by Ruiz Campillo in his website (*Tercera Gramática*)
SESSION 9 (LR)	Recap/summary of main concepts and morphology. Some feedback from students was gathered. **Task 2** (comprehension) (Appendix N) and **Task 3** (production) (Appendix O) were completed the following week, which was a revision week. They were delivered in different days.

5.2.2. Tasks Results

The next sections describe in detail the results for the three tasks. The analysis was undertaken by quantifying the correct/adequate answers in the form of percentages (shown in tables 31-59) and by examining the possible causes of the inadequate answers.

It should be noted that the reflective diary proved to be a rather useful exercise, since it facilitated the analysis of these tasks. For instance, whenever there was an unexpected result

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[87] Language Reinforcement lecture in which all students were divided in two larger groups of 77 and 45 students, respectively.

[88] Language Skills tutorial in which all students were divided in 7 smaller groups of 15-20 students each.

for one of the tasks, it was possible to check the diary in order to find out what had been covered (or not) prior to completing the task and thus examine the possible reasons that could have triggered that response.

5.2.2.1. Task 1 (Comprehension)

This task (Appendix M) consisted of a series of compound sentences (i.e. matrix and subordinate clause) in Spanish whose embedded verb was in indicative or subjunctive. The subordinate clause was highlighted in bold letters so that participants could distinguish the part of the sentence that comprised the matrix (ending with "que"), which was in the initial position and not highlighted, and the embedded sentence, which contained the verb in indicative or subjunctive and therefore it was key to answer the question. The verb in the embedded clause is placed in middle (or final) position, which, according to VanPatten's (1993) Input Processing, is the last position to be processed by learners. For that reason, it was highlighted so as to draw participants' attention.

Participants needed to answer a yes/no question about each sentence: Is the speaker or subject of the matrix declaring (or not) the information in the **proposition**[89]? Thereafter, they had three options available to explain why that sentence was a declaration or a non-declaration. Option *a* stated that the reason was that the matrix could be replaced by 'The speaker or subject of the matrix asserts…' keeping the same (or similar) meaning. Option *b* stated that the reason was that the matrix could be replaced by 'The speaker or subject of the matrix assumes…' and option *c* stated that the reason was that the matrix could **not** be replaced by 'The speaker or the subject of the matrix asserts or assumes…' Therefore, options *a* and *b* described a declaration and option *c* a non-declaration.

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[89] This word was also highlighted in bold letters so that it could be identified in each sentence.

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The instructions included the following paragraph, which is shown with the exact format:

In the following cases, say whether the speaker (or subject of the matrix) is *'declaring'* (YES) or *'not declaring'* (NO) the information in the **proposition** by <u>ticking the corresponding box</u> and then choose the most appropriate option (***a***, ***b***, or ***c***) to explain <u>why</u>.

Student participants were advised to let their teacher know whether some of the vocabulary was new to them, since knowing the meaning of the message comprised in each sentence was key to the completion of the task.

It was expected that participants would be able to distinguish between a declaration and non-declaration at this point just by 'recognising' the morphology of the embedded verb, for instance. However, it was also expected that not all of them would be able to distinguish between option *a* (assertion) and option *b* (assumption) when referring to declarations, because they needed to know the exact meaning of the matrix and be able to differentiate between the matrices which conveyed an assertion and the matrices which conveyed an assumption.

The results exceeded the above expectations and were very positive, since most participants were not only able to answer the main question accurately, but they were also able to select among the available options with promptness and adequateness. As a matter of fact, most student participants completed this task in just 3-5 minutes.

The following tables (i.e. Tables 31-38) show the sentences[90] presented to participants together with the three options available, plus relevant comments/observations on the results. In the last section comprising the concluding remarks, some comparisons are drawn between this task's results and the results for the 'corresponding' first comprehension task completed by student

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[90] The translation of the sentences appears in brackets here, but it was not available to student participants.

participants within the pre-intervention study at the lowest level of proficiency (i.e. Year 2; B1 level). The main objective of comparing both sets of results is the examination of any noticeable differences between both sets of students' mood contrast abilities, so that some conclusive evidence can be gathered which might help to answer the research questions.

Table 31: Task 1 (comprehension). Question 1

> 1. *Está claro que **Ana tiene dinero suficiente para comprar el coche**.*
>   (It is clear/obvious that Ana has enough money to buy the car.)
>   YES ☐   NO ☐
>   a) Because you can change 'Está claro que' for 'Afirmo que'.
>   b) Because you can change 'Está claro que' for 'Supongo que'.
>   c) Because you can**not** change 'Está claro que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.
>
> **All participants (N = 71)**
> ➢ 98.6 % (70) responded YES accurately, and 1.4 % (1) responded NO.
> ➢ 94.4 % (67) selected *a* (assertion) also accurately, 2.8 % (2) selected *b* (assumption) and 2.8 % (2) selected *c* (non-declaration).

The meaning of this particular matrix (i.e. *Está claro que* – It is clear/obvious that) was well known by the participants, since it was one of the first matrices introduced to them in class. Furthermore, assertions (i.e. strong declarations) are the type of declarations which are more easily recognised by learners. If we add this to the fact that the embedded verb (i.e. tiene – she has[PRES.IND]) was also frequent in the input these students had received throughout their learning process of the target language, it can be concluded that this sentence would not be a challenge for these students.

Table 32: Task 1 (comprehension). Question 2

> 2. No creo que **Renato se divorcie de Inma.** (I don't think Renato will divorce Inma.)
>   YES ☐   NO ☐
>   a) Because you can change 'No creo que' for 'Afirmo que'.
>   b) Because you can change 'No creo que' for 'Supongo que'.
>   c) Because you can**not** change 'No creo que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.
>
> **All Participants (N = 71):**
> ➢ 95.7 % (68) responded NO accurately, and 5.5 % (3) responded YES.
> ➢ 93 % (66) selected *c* (non-declaration) accurately, but five participants (7 %) selected *b* (assumption).

The negative forms of some matrices might cause some issues at the beginning, since they could be a case of 'negative polarity'. This is a phenomenon which is characteristic of some instances of mood contrast in Spanish. Basically, it refers to the change of mood depending on the matrix being in positive form (i.e. indicative) or negative form (i.e. subjunctive). With this particular matrix (i.e. *No creo que* – I don't think that), the positive form (i.e. *Creo que* – I think that) represents an assumption, that is, a weak declaration. The mechanism these participants have learned consists of replacing the matrix by 'The speaker or subject of the matrix asserts or assumes', always in the positive form since that is what 'declaration' conveys. Therefore, even if the matrix comprises a negative form, as in this case, it needs to be replaced by the positive form of 'assert/assume' in order to find out whether it is a declaration.

The results show that the use of a verb in the subjunctive form in the proposition might have aided the decision to answer NO to the question (i.e. the speaker or subject of the matrix is not declaring). However, when selecting the option to explain why, five participants, including two who accurately responded NO to the main question, selected b (i.e. assumption) not taking into account that the matrix was in the negative form, which will represent a non-assumption and hence a non-declaration. It is worth noting, nonetheless, that an overwhelming majority of participants were, again, accurate in their response.

Table 33: Task 1 (comprehension). Question 3

3.   *Me parece que **estás equivocado**. El examen no es mañana.* (I think you are wrong. The exam is not tomorrow.) YES ☐   NO ☐ a)   Because you can change 'Me parece que' for 'Afirmo que'. b)   Because you can change 'Me parece que' for 'Supongo que'. c)   Because you can**not** change 'Me parece que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.

All Participants (N = 71):
- 80.3 % (57) responded YES accurately, and 19.7 % (14) responded NO.
- 69 % (49) selected *b* (assumption) accurately, 18.3 % (13) selected *a* (assertion), which was also a declaration (although strong), and nine participants (12.7 %) selected *c* (non-declaration).

This matrix (i.e. *Me parece que* - It seems to me that) is similar in meaning to *Creo que* (I think that) and *Pienso que* (I reckon that), although it might not appear as frequently in the input students receive at first. It can be inferred that most student participants were able to gather that they were dealing with a declaration (80.3 %), although some believed it was a strong declaration. However, among the participants who selected NO (i.e. non-declaration), five chose options *a* or *b* (i.e. strong/weak declaration) as an explanation, which were in line with the most adequate response (i.e. yes).

This result highlights the fact that the 'meaning' of the matrix is key to use this concept as a mechanism to choose between moods. The 'meaning' of the matrix does not only refer to its lexical meaning, but also to its contextual implications, that is, what it means for the speaker (or subject) at the specific time of use. If learners know what each matrix conveys, they do not seem to have any issues to identify whether the proposition they precede is a declaration or a non-declaration.

Table 34: Task 1 (comprehension). Question 4

> 4. *La profesora nos ha pedido que **trabajemos más fuera de clase**.*
>   (The teacher asked us to work harder outside the classroom.)
>   YES ☐   NO ☐
>   a) Because you can change 'La profesora nos ha pedido que' for 'La profesora afirma que'.
>   b) Because you can change 'La profesora nos ha pedido que' for 'La profesora supone que'.
>   c) Because you can**not** change 'La profesora nos ha pedido que' for either 'La profesora afirma que' nor 'La profesora supone que'.
>
> **All Participants (N = 71):**
> ➢ 83.1 % (59) responded NO accurately, and 17.9 % (12) responded YES.
> ➢ 80.3 % (57) selected *c* (non-declaration) accurately, 14.1 % (10) selected *a* (assertion) and four participants (5.6 %) selected *b* (assumption).

This sentence represented a requirement/demand by the subject of the matrix, thus a non-declaration. Most participants (83.1 %) recognised and understood that they were dealing with a non-declaration. The matrix employed in this example (i.e. *pedir* – ask for/request/order) was relatively well known by the participants. Furthermore, the embedded verb (*trabajemos* –

trabajar - work) appears frequently in the input students receive (in the indicative mood) and most learners at this level of proficiency are aware that this is an -AR verb, so the change of vowel (i.e. A>E) may aid to the noticing of the subjunctive form.

The fact that most participants were able to decide whether the proposition was a declaration or a non-declaration by means of replacing the matrix for 'assert' or 'assume' draws the conclusion that this mechanism to choose between moods seems to work and may be highly operational.

Table 35: Task 1 (comprehension). Question 5

5. *No es verdad que **estemos cansados**. Solo hemos caminado cinco kilómetros.*
 (It is not true (that) we are tired. We've only walked 5 km.)
 YES ☐   NO ☐
   a) Because you can change 'No es verdad que' for 'Afirmamos que'.
   b) Because you can change 'No es verdad que' for 'Suponemos que'.
   c) Because you can**not** change 'No es verdad que' for either 'Afirmamos que' nor 'Suponemos que'.

All Participants (N = 71):   ➢ 78.9 % (56) responded NO accurately, and 21.1 % (15) responded YES.   ➢ 81.7 % (58) selected *c* (non-declaration) accurately, 14.1 % (10) selected *a* (assertion) and three participants (4.2 %) selected *b* (assumption).

This example includes another matrix in the negative form, which could be an issue for some when deciding between a declaration or a non-declaration. However, again, a high number of student participants were able to recognise this matrix as conveying a non-declaration. Furthermore, two participants who answered 'yes' to the main question (i.e. is this a declaration?) selected 'c', accurately, as an explanation, that is, the matrix cannot be replaced by either 'assert' or 'assume', and this indicates that it is a non-declaration.

Table 36: Task 1 (comprehension). Question 6

> 6. *Quiero que **vuelvas pronto a casa**.* (I want you to come (back) home early.)
>   YES ☐   NO ☐
>   a)   Because you can change 'Quiero que' for 'Afirmo que'.
>   b)   Because you can change 'Quiero que' for 'Supongo que'.
>   c)   Because you can**not** change 'Quiero que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.
>
> **All Participants (N = 71):**
> ➢ 88.7 % (63) responded NO accurately, and 11.3 % (8) responded YES.
> ➢ 83.1 % (59) selected *c* (non-declaration) accurately, 12.7 % (9) selected *b* (assumption) and three participants (4.2 %) selected *a* (assertion).

This matrix is one of the first 'volitive' verbs students learn. Before the subjunctive was introduced, they were already able to use this verb followed by an infinitive (e.g. *Quiero jugar al fútbol este sábado* – I want to play football this Saturday). At this point, they were re-introduced this verb as one conveying a non-declaration, and thus followed by a subjunctive structure when there is no co-reference of subjects (e.g. *Quiero que **juegues** al fútbol este sábado* – I want you to play football this Saturday). Nearly 90 % of the participants replied accurately.

Table 37: Task 1 (comprehension). Question 7

> 7. *Asumimos que **habrá suficiente comida para todos**.*
>   (We assume (that) there will be enough food for everybody.)
>   YES ☐   NO ☐
>   a)   Because you can change 'Asumimos que' for 'Afirmamos que'.
>   b)   Because you can change 'Asumimos que' for 'Suponemos que'.
>   c)   Because you can**not** change 'Asumimos que' for either 'Afirmamos que' nor 'Suponemos que'.
>
> **All Participants (N = 71):**
> ➢ 83.1 % (59) responded YES accurately, and 16.9 % (12) responded NO.
> ➢ 83.1 % (59) selected *b* (assumption) accurately, 11.3 % (8) selected *c* (non-declaration) and four participants (5.6 %) selected *a* (assertion).

It was expected that this matrix (i.e. *asumir* – assume), which is a cognate of the English verb, would not represent an obstacle when identifying it with option *b*, since this was precisely the verb used in the instruction in English (i.e. assert or assume). Although quite a high percentage (83.1 %) of participants accurately responded 'yes' to the main question, there were a few who believed this was a non-declaration. A possible explanation is that the embedded verb was in

the (irregular) future form rather than the present indicative. This might have misled these participants to recognise it as belonging to the indicative mood, since up until this moment, the majority of examples of mood contrast seen in class had been provided in the present (i.e. present indicative vs. present subjunctive), so introducing other indicative tenses within this context (i.e. testing) may be confusing.

Nonetheless, it is worth noting that over four fifths of the participants responded adequately to both parts, which may undoubtedly be considered a highly corroborative result.

Table 38: Task 1 (comprehension). Question 8

8. *Sé que **ya no me quieres**. No me importa porque yo tampoco te quiero a ti.*
    (I know you no longer love me. I don't mind, because I no longer love you either.)
    YES ☐   NO ☐
    a) Because you can change 'Sé que' for 'Afirmo que'.
    b) Because you can change 'Sé que' for 'Supongo que'.
    c) Because you can**not** change 'Sé que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.

All Participants (N = 71): ➢ 87.3 % (62) responded YES accurately, and 12.7 % (9) responded NO. ➢ 85.9 % (61) selected *a* (assertion) accurately, and 14.1 % (10) selected *c* (non-declaration).

The last situation comprised a matrix that was also (well-) known by the participants. The vast majority (i.e. between 85.9 % and 87.3 %) selected the most adequate options. No participants selected option *b*, which referred to an assumption (i.e. weak declaration), but a few (14.1 %) selected *c*, which referred to a non-declaration. A possible explanation could be related to the fact that the proposition (in bold letters) was in the negative form. For instance, with matrices such as "*creer*", "*pensar*", "*suponer*", etc., there is a change of mood depending on whether the same matrix is in the positive or negative forms. Most learners seem to have some issues to understand that whether the proposition (i.e. embedded clause) is in the positive or negative form is not relevant for the choice of mood. It is always the matrix what triggers this change of mood. The following examples might help to understand this contrast:

(81) *Creo que me quieres.* (I think you love[IND] me)

(82) *No creo que me quieras.* (I don't think you love^SUB me)

(83) *Creo que no me quieres.* (I think you don't love^IND me)

(84) *No creo que no me quieras*. (I don't think you don't love^SUB me)

The fact that the embedded verb is in the negative form does not trigger the subjunctive form, since sentence (83) is in the indicative. What triggers the subjunctive in sentence (84), as well as in sentence (82), is that the matrix (i.e. *No creo que* – I don't think) is in the negative form.

5.2.2.1.1. Concluding Remarks

In sum, this first comprehension task produced very encouraging results which broadly demonstrate the 'operationality' of this conceptual pair. The fact that around four fifths of the participants responded accurately to all the situations presented to them supports the idea that this method is highly operative and can help in the acquisition of mood contrast in Spanish. Furthermore, these students showed that they could further distinguish between strong declarations (i.e. assertions) and weak declarations (i.e. assumptions), since 83.1 % of them made the distinction accurately. The fact that they completed the task quickly (i.e. 3-5 minutes) also indicates a high level of confidence. We need to consider that these student participants were 'beginners' and had had just 70 hours of previous instruction in the target language and only 5 hours of mood contrast instruction. Indeed, one factor which may have contributed to these positive outcomes is that these participants did not have previous experience learning the Spanish subjunctive by means of any other method/s (e.g. traditional), which might have worked in their favour.

A relevant point concerning the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration is the fact that it includes important discourse-pragmatic aspects, such as the speaker's intentions (i.e. both what s/he wants to communicative and 'how' s/he wants to deliver the message are equally important) and other contextual considerations which might also affect the choice of mood.

This is in line with what some previous studies have suggested: that L2 pragmatic development should happen from the beginning of the target language instruction (e.g. Kasper & Rose, 2001; Pearson, 2006). This rarely happens when this instruction is carried out by means of the traditional method.

Table 39 below shows the ranking of this task's responses according to accuracy when responding to the question (i.e. Is the speaker or the subject declaring in the following situations?) and when selecting between the three options: two for declaration (*a* for assertion and *b* for assumption) and just one for non-declaration (i.e. *c*).

Table 39: Ranking of task 1's questions according to degree of accuracy (from highest to lowest)

Ranking in order of correct responses	Q1	Q2	Q6	Q8	Q7	Q4	Q3	Q5
Correct answer: YES/NO	98.6 %	95.7 %	88.7 %	87.3 %	83.1 %	83.1 %	80.3 %	78.9 %
Correct type: Assertion/Assumption or Non-declaration	94.4 %	93 %	83.1 %	85.9 %	83.1 %	80.3 %	69 %	81. 7 %

It is worth pointing out that Question 1[91], for which student participants achieved the best results, was a case of 'assertion', that is, a strong declaration, and the matrix was well-known by most students. This is probably the most distinct occurrence of declaration, so it did not come as a surprise that nearly all student participants did not hesitate to classify it as such. Furthermore, the embedded verb (i.e. *tiene* – she has[IND]) is frequent in the input these student participants receive and its morphology is irregular in the present subjunctive (i.e. *tenga* – she has[SUB]) and stands out when used, thus being more noticeable.

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[91] *Está claro que Ana tiene dinero suficiente para comprar el coche.* (It is clear/obvious that Ana has enough money to buy the car).

Question 5[92] had the lowest rate of accuracy, although, even so, students achieved a considerable percentage of correct responses (i.e. 78.9 %) as well. This was a case of non-declaration, and the fact that it was a case of negative polarity might have affected this result. Negative polarity, as mentioned above, refers to the change of mood depending on the matrix being in positive form (i.e. indicative) or negative form (i.e. subjunctive). This concept was introduced to students directly after the concepts of modality, mood, declaration/non-declaration and co-reference[93], thus, at the end of the first week of the experiment. This means that when these student participants completed comprehension task 1, at the beginning of week 2, they had just been introduced to the concept and did not have the opportunity to get much practice before completing the task. Furthermore, this concept was introduced with one specific matrix: '*No creo que…*' (I don't think/believe that…), so this was the first instance in which a different matrix was used in the negative form with a change of mood. If we add the fact that the embedded verb in present subjunctive was very similar in form to its indicative counterpart (i.e. *estemos* vs. *estamos*), it is possible that this hindered the noticing of this sentence as a non-declaration.

The comprehension of the concepts of declaration and non-declaration by these student participants at such an early stage of the learning process is impressive. Only when negative sentences are involved (both in the matrix or in the embedded proposition), might some of these students experience some uncertainty in processing what the speaker or subject of the matrix is really 'saying'.

Furthermore, we could compare these results with the results for the first comprehension task completed by the Year 2 group (i.e. lowest level of proficiency examined) within the pre-

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[92] *No es verdad que estemos cansados. Solo hemos caminado cinco kilómetros.* (It is not true that we are tired. We only walked 5 km.).

[93] The first three concepts were introduced on the first day, but the concepts of co-reference and negative polarity were both introduced at the end of the first week of the experiment.

intervention study in which mood contrast instruction had been carried out by means of the traditional approach (see Chapter 4, section 4.4.1, for further details). These students had a slightly higher level of proficiency (i.e. B1/B1+) and thus the first comprehension task also included subjunctive structures belonging to Context 3[94] of the Mood Map.

Participants within the intervention study (i.e. COA) selected between both moods with an average accuracy of 87 %, whereas year 2 participants within the pre-intervention study (i.e. traditional) did the same with an average accuracy of 73 %. However, what is more striking is the fact that when the correct choice was the subjunctive, the COA participants selected it with an average accuracy of 86.6 % but the pre-intervention participants selected it accurately only in 59.5 % of the cases. Therefore, we can further conclude that participants within the intervention study, despite having had just 5 hours of subjunctive instruction by means of the COA, show an increased ability to select between moods compared to the year 2 participants' results within the pre-intervention study.

5.2.2.2. Task 2 (Comprehension)

This second comprehension task (Appendix N) was completed a week after the first task, during which student participants received four extra hours of instruction on mood selection and morphology (see Table 30 in section 5.2.1 above and Appendix P for further details on these sessions). It consisted of a series of compound sentences (i.e. matrix and proposition) in Spanish whose embedded verb was in indicative or subjunctive. In contrast to Task 1, it was the matrix what was highlighted in bold letters. This was mostly due to the fact that student participants needed to focus on that part of the sentence in order to classify these matrices according to the different sub-contexts involved in mood contrast:

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[94] Relative and temporal clauses are 'specifying' matrices and thus the related conceptual pair of 'identification' and 'non-identification is employed within the COA, which represents the 'radiality' of the basic operational value (or prototype), that is, the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration.

- Declaration: 'asserting' or 'assuming'.

- Non-declaration: 'questioning' (i.e. speaker/subject rejects an idea or contemplates a possibility), 'commenting' (i.e. speaker/subject offers a value judgement or comment) and 'wanting' (i.e. speaker/subject introduces a wish or an objective).

This classification is characteristic of an intermediate level of proficiency (i.e. B1 approximately) and thus relatively advanced for these students. However, it was important to introduce it at this stage in order to find out whether the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration was in some way established in these students' knowledge. What this means is that only if this conceptual pair was understood by these students and they were able to use it as a mechanism to choose between moods, they could attempt to further classify the sentences into the five relevant sub-contexts (i.e. asserting, assuming, questioning, commenting and wanting). Therefore, the main objective of this specific task was the corroboration that these students were able to use the conceptual pair as a mechanism for mood selection (as with Task 1), and thus the further classification into the sub-contexts (i.e. two for declaration and three for non-declaration) served as an extra validation.

The embedded verb in the indicative or subjunctive was not highlighted in any way, since it was the meaning of the matrix which was relevant to complete the task. However, after two weeks of instruction on mood contrast and the subjunctive morphology, it was expected that these students would take into account the form of the embedded verb in order to decide whether they were dealing with a declaration or a non-declaration.

For each sentence/situation, there was a box available in which students needed to write one of the five choices/contexts (i.e. asserting, assuming, questioning, commenting or wanting).

The instructions included the following paragraph, which is shown with the exact format:

Choose whether the speaker (or subject of the matrix) is declaring or not declaring in the following combinations of '**matrix** + proposition'.

If the speaker (or subject) is declaring, write ***asserting*** (afirmar) or ***assuming*** (asumir) in the gaps provided, as appropriate. If the speaker is not declaring, choose from ***questioning*** (cuestionar), ***commenting*** (comentar) or ***wanting*** (querer/desear) to fill the gap.

It was expected that this task would require longer to complete than the previous task, since students not only needed to select whether the matrices were triggering a declaration or a non-declaration, but also needed to further classify them into five different sub-contexts and this required extra consideration. In fact, this happened to be true, inasmuch as students completed this task in 10-15 minutes, compared to the 3-5 minutes the same students took to complete the first task.

It was most important at this stage that participants were able to distinguish between declarative and non-declarative contexts, and not so much that they were highly accurate in further classifying them into the different sub-contexts involved, as mentioned above. Hence, if these students identified the embedded proposition as a non-declaration accurately, the fact that they could select the wrong sub-context (e.g. commenting instead of questioning) was secondary since it was not expected that these students had yet achieved that level of proficiency.

It was stressed again that they could ask for the meaning of the vocabulary they did not know because the completion of the tasks depended on the understanding of the message.

As with the first task, the results for each sentence appear in individual tables below and some comparisons with the results for the second comprehension task completed by year 2 participants within the pre-intervention study are drawn in the concluding remarks section.

> 1. ***Está claro que*** *no están en casa. El perro está ladrando.* (_____)
>   (It is clear/obvious that they're not home. Their dog is barking.)
>
> The most adequate answer was 'asserting' (strong declaration).
>
> **All Participants (N = 72):**
>
> 91.7 % (66) wrote 'asserting' adequately. One participant wrote 'commenting' (non-declarative context) and five participants (6.9 %) wrote 'assuming', which refers to a weak declaration.
>
> 98.6 % selected a declarative sub-context.

As with Task 1, the first sentence comprised a matrix which was frequent in the input (i.e. *Está claro que* – It is clear/obvious that) and thus well known by students. The vast majority (i.e. 91.7 %) adequately classified this matrix as conveying an assertion, that is, a strong declaration. Five participants (6.9 %) also classified this matrix as a declaration, although they selected 'assumption', which is a weak declaration. This could be due to the fact that the proposition was in the negative form (i.e. *…no están en casa* – they're not home), and thus might have looked less of an assertion for some. As previously mentioned, negative sentences may lead to some misconceptions about what represents a declaration and a non-declaration.

Table 41: Task 2 (comprehension). Sentence 2

> 2. ***Es lógico que*** *tengáis problemas con estos ejercicios.* (_____)
>   (It is logical/understandable that you have problems with these exercises.)
>
> The most adequate answer was 'commenting' (non-declaration).
>
> **All Participants (N = 72):**
>
> 50 % (36) wrote 'commenting' adequately. However, 26 participants (36.1 %) wrote 'assuming' (weak declaration) and nine (12.5 %) wrote 'asserting' (strong declaration). One participant (1.4 %) wrote 'questioning'.
>
> 51.4 % selected a non-declarative sub-context.

This matrix (i.e. *Es lógico que* – It is understandable/logical/natural that) represented a non-declaration, specifically, a comment or value judgement. Exactly half of the participants (i.e. 36) selected the right sub-context (i.e. commenting) and one selected 'questioning', which is also a non-declarative sub-context. However, nearly half of the participants (i.e. 48.6 %)

believed this was a declaration by the subject. A possible explanation for this could be related to the fact that a common contextual meaning of the English word 'logical' (its cognate) is 'obvious' and this adjective constitutes a declarative matrix (i.e. It is obvious that).

It should be noted that the irregular subjunctive form of the embedded verb (i.e. *tengáis* -you have[SUB]) did not help the latter students to identify the proposition as a non-declaration, despite being noticeably different in form to its indicative counterpart, that is, *tenéis* (you have[IND]). Incidentally, the fact that only the matrix was highlighted in bold letters might have deflected attention from noticing the subjunctive morphology in the embedded verb.

When commenting on this task's results with the other teachers involved, both mentioned that they themselves experienced some issues when classifying the non-declarative matrices into 'questioning', 'commenting' and 'wanting'. Specifically, one said she was having some difficulty distinguishing between 'commenting' and the other two sub-contexts. The other mentioned that comments or value judgements could be interpreted as declarations. Her explanation made clear that she was focusing on the matrix rather than the proposition or embedded clause. The conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration is characteristic of the embedded proposition only, and not the matrix (main clause). For instance, the example she used is the following:

(85) *Me encanta que me regalen flores*. (I love being given flowers)

This teacher mentioned that what the speaker was declaring was that "s/he loves" being given flowers. It was then clarified that what the subject declares or not is the information comprised in the embedded proposition (i.e. being given flowers[95]) and not the information in the matrix or main clause (i.e. I love), since the latter is always a declaration and that is why it always

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[95] Is the speaker asserting or assuming that s/he is given flowers? The answer is 'no'.

goes in indicative[96]. This teacher immediately realised her mistake and confirmed her understanding.

Table 42: Task 2 (comprehension). Sentence 3

> 3. ***Esperamos que*** *nuestra profesora sea generosa con las notas.* (_____)
>   (We hope that our teacher will be/is generous with the results/marks.)
>
> The most adequate answer was 'wanting' (non-declaration).
>
> **All Participants (N = 72):**
>
> 87.5 % (63) wrote 'wanting' adequately. Four participants (5.5 %) wrote 'commenting', four (5.5 %) wrote 'assuming' (weak declaration) and one participant wrote 'asserting' (strong declaration).
>
> 93 % selected a non-declarative sub-context.

This particular sentence included a matrix which was relatively frequent in the input students had received since the experiment began. It represented a non-declaration, and specifically, it belonged to the context titled 'wanting' (i.e. wishes, objectives, demands). The vast majority of the participants (i.e. 87.5 %) were able to identify it without much trouble. It should be noted that the irregular subjunctive form of the embedded verb (i.e. *sea* – is^{SUB}) differs greatly from its indicative counterpart, that is, *es* (is^{IND}), and thus it might have helped some participants to select a non-declarative context.

It should be pointed out that it came as a very positive surprise that most students participating in this experiment were not only able to distinguish between a declaration and a non-declaration, which was the main objective of this study, but also went beyond expectation by proving deeper understanding of this conceptual pair. This was shown by the fact that these participants were able to further classify these matrices into the different sub-contexts with reasonable accuracy.

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[96] This was the case in all the examples comprising these tasks, since there were no cases of double subordination.

Table 43: Task 2 (comprehension). Sentence 4

4. ***Es evidente que*** *están cansados de tanto trabajo.* (_____)   (It is obvious/evident that they are tired of working so hard.)
The most adequate answer was 'asserting' (strong declaration).
All Participants (N = 72):
91.6 % (66) wrote 'asserting' adequately. One participant wrote 'commenting' (non-declarative context) and five participants (7 %) wrote 'assuming', which refers to a weak declaration.
98.6 % selected a declarative sub-context.

Nearly all the participants (71 out of 72; 98.6 %) correctly said that this matrix (i.e. *Es evidente que* – It is clear/obvious that) was a declaration. The vast majority (91.6 %) also selected the most adequate sub-context, that is, a strong declaration or 'asserting'. It can be concluded that both the meaning of this matrix and the fact that it triggers an 'assertion' were widely understood by the participants.

Table 44: Task 2 (comprehension). Sentence 5

5. ***Supongo que*** *dicen la verdad.* (_____)   (I guess they are telling the truth.)
The most adequate answer was 'assuming' (weak declaration).
All Participants (N = 72):
88.8 % (64) wrote 'assuming' adequately. Four participants (5.6 %) wrote 'asserting', which refers to a strong declaration. Two participants wrote 'questioning', one 'commenting' and another one 'wanting', which all correspond to non-declarations.
94.4 % selected a declarative sub-context.

Again, student participants did not seem to have any issues when identifying a declarative matrix (i.e. 94.4 %). Furthermore, they were also able to distinguish with ease between weak and strong declarations (i.e. asserting and assuming). In this particular case, they were dealing with an assumption (*Supongo que* – I presume/suppose/guess…), and the vast majority (88.8 %) identified it as such.

Table 45: Task 2 (comprehension). Sentence 6

6. ***No es necesario que*** *vengáis mañana a clase.* (_____) 　　(It is not necessary for you to come to class tomorrow.) The most adequate answer was 'wanting' (non-declaration). **All Participants (N = 72):** Only 4.2 % (3) wrote 'wanting' adequately. More than two thirds (68.1 %: 49) of the participants wrote 'commenting'.　Seven participants (9.7 %) wrote 'questioning', and 13 (18 %) wrote 'asserting' (strong declaration). 82 % selected a non-declarative sub-context.

This specific matrix (i.e. *No es necesario que* – It is not necessary that) was not particularly frequent in the input students had received. It conveyed a non-declaration, specifically, a requirement or demand (i.e. 'wanting'). However, only three participants (4.2 %) recognised it as such. The fact that it was in the negative form, and thus it conveyed the opposite, a non-requirement, seemed to have misled student participants to believe it was a value judgement instead, since more than two thirds (i.e. 68.1%) wrote 'commenting'. The 'commenting' sub-context refers to value judgements on the part of the subject. Some clear-cut examples include '*gustar*-type'[97] verbs or impersonal expressions such as '*Está muy bien/mal que…*' (it is great/bad that…). However, the sub-context 'wanting' refers to 'required actions'. When a subject uses the matrix '*Es necesario que…*' (It is necessary that…), the embedded proposition will comprise a required/needed action. Similarly, when the same matrix is used in the negative form, it still refers to a required action, although it is one that does not need to be fulfilled (at least not at that point in time).

This result was not surprising, because even the native-speaking teachers involved in this course questioned the fact that this matrix belonged to the 'wanting' sub-context. However, it

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[97] 'Gustar' (like) is a pronominal verb which does not follow the normal sentence order SVO. Other similar verbs include *'encantar'* (love), *'fascinar'* (fascinate), *'dar asco'* (disgust), etc. These verbs denote a comment or value judgement from the subject and are the perfect example to illustrate the sub-context of 'commenting'.

should be noted that, within the traditional approach, this type of matrix is frequently classified as a value judgement (Llopis-García *et al*., 2012: 91-92).

Nevertheless, the fact that over four fifths (i.e. 82 %) of the participants selected a non-declarative sub-context corroborates the idea that these students were able to use the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration as a mechanism to choose between moods, which was the main objective of this investigation.

Table 46: Task 2 (comprehension). Sentence 7

7. ***Es posible que*** *mi hermana haga un máster en la universidad.* (_____)   (It is possible that my sister will do a university Masters.)
The most adequate answer was 'questioning' (non-declaration).
All Participants (N = 72):
50 % (36) wrote 'questioning' adequately. A third (33.3 %: 24) of the participants wrote 'commenting' and 12 (16.7 %) participants wrote 'assuming' (weak declaration).
83.3 % selected a non-declarative sub-context.

This matrix (i.e. *Es posible que* – It is possible that) was one of the first non-declarative matrices that these students encountered in the input. A third of the participants chose 'commenting' instead of 'questioning', which is also a non-declarative sub-context. As with the previous example (i.e. Sentence 6), 'commenting' seems to be the preferred choice when the meaning of the matrix is not completely clear.

The sub-context 'questioning' refers to both a rejection and the contemplation of a possibility, although students seem to identify it with the former rather than with the latter. A possible explanation for this lies in the fact that the chosen name for this sub-context, that is, 'questioning', is closer to a rejection (denying or rejecting an assertion or assumption; doubting) than to a possibility, where two options (or more) are offered as valid.

It is worth noting, however, that more than four fifths (83.3 %) selected a non-declarative context, adequately.

Table 47: Task 2 (comprehension). Sentence 8

> 8. ***Imagino que*** *la fiesta será en casa de Mario. Sus padres están fuera.* (_____)
>   (I imagine the party will be at Mario's. His parents are away.)
>
> The most adequate answer was 'assuming' (weak declaration).
>
> **All Participants (N = 72):**
>
> Over two thirds (66.7 %: 48) wrote 'assuming' adequately. However, a third (33.3 %) of the participants believed this was a non-declaration: 15.3 % (11) wrote 'commenting', seven participants (9.7 %) wrote 'questioning' and six (8.3 %) wrote 'wanting'.

This particular matrix was new to most students, but the fact that it is a cognate of the English verb (i.e. *Imagino que* – I imagine that) was expected to aid the participants to identify it adequately as an assumption. However, in both languages, this verb has two meanings: (1) to think/believe, which corresponds to an assumption, and (2) to fantasise, which might have misled some participants to believe that it was a non-declaration. Nevertheless, in Spanish, fantasies and dreams still belong to declarative contexts, and this is the perfect demonstration that the traditional concepts of 'reality' and 'non-reality' are seldom adequate to explain mood contrast in Spanish.

Despite this, slightly over two thirds of the participants (i.e. 66.7 %) wrote 'assuming' adequately, regardless of the use of the future tense in the embedded verb, which might be an obstacle for some since they might fail to identify it as belonging to the indicative mood. However, the other third chose a non-declarative context, with 'commenting' the most popular, as with previous sentences.

Table 48: Task 2 (comprehension). Sentence 9

> 9. ***Me parece muy mal que*** *compréis un coche tan caro.* (_____)
>   (I don't like at all (the fact) that you are buying such an expensive car.)
>
> The most adequate answer was 'commenting' (non-declaration).
>
> **All Participants (N = 72):**
>
> 73.6 % (53) wrote 'commenting' adequately. Two participants wrote 'questioning' and one wrote 'wanting'. Nine participants (12.5 %) wrote 'assuming' (weak declaration) and seven participants (9.7 %) wrote 'asserting' (strong declaration).
>
> 77.8 % selected a non-declarative sub-context.

This matrix (i.e. *Me parece muy mal que* – It seems very wrong to me that) belonged to the non-declarative sub-context 'commenting', and nearly three quarters (73.6 %) of the participants chose adequately. However, approximately a fourth of the participants (22.2 %) believed it was a declaration by the speaker. This could be interpreted by the fact that the same verb without the adverb (i.e. *muy mal* – very wrong), that is, *Me parece que* (I think/believe), is a declarative matrix.

It can be concluded that quite a high percentage of participants (i.e. 77.8 %) was able to identify this example as a non-declaration. Furthermore, from that group, 94.6 % were also able to understand the meaning conveyed by this matrix and, more importantly, to sub-classify it as a comment or value judgement.

Table 49: Task 2 (comprehension). Sentence 10

10. ***Dice que*** *te calles y termines de lavar los platos.* (_____)   (S/he's telling you to shut up and to finish washing the dishes.)
The most adequate answer was 'wanting' (non-declaration).
All Participants (N = 72):
37.5 % (27) wrote 'wanting' adequately. Nearly a fifth (19.4 %: 14) of the participants wrote 'commenting' and three participants wrote 'questioning'. However, 28 participants (38.9 %) believed this was a declaration: 22 wrote 'asserting' (strong declarations) and six wrote 'assuming' (weak declaration).
61.1 % selected a non-declarative sub-context.

The last sentence comprised a matrix whose main verb (i.e. *decir* – say/tell) has two different contextual meanings[98]. It might be translated in English as 'say' or 'report' or as 'tell/ask someone to do something', according to the communicative situation in which they might occur. The first meaning would convey a declaration (i.e. reporting what the speaker or

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[98] The term 'contextual meaning' seemed more appropriate, since it refers to the different interpretations of this verb according to the communicative context in which it might appear. For instance, the word '*gato*' is polysemic because it means both 'cat' and 'jack', but this verb's different meanings are better equated to the contextual implications that the verb '*irse*' (to leave), for instance, could have, since it could mean both 'drive off' and 'walk away', depending on the situation. (Ruiz Campillo, 2008).

somebody else has uttered) and the second meaning would convey a non-declaration, specifically, a requirement or demand (i.e. 'wanting'). The formal difference between them is only reflected in the mood of the embedded verb. So, if the embedded verb is in indicative, it refers to 'say' or 'report', and if it is in subjunctive, it refers to 'tell or ask someone to do something'. It was expected that students would find it challenging to determine which meaning they were dealing with in this case, since the only characteristic which differed was the mood of the embedded verbs. These verbs were in subjunctive, so the meaning of the matrix corresponded to the second one (i.e. to tell/ask someone to do something). However, both embedded verbs were regular and only one vowel was different from their indicative counterpart (i.e. A > E), consequently, the contrast in form was not too noticeable and thus some participants might have believed they were dealing with the most popular meaning for *decir*, that is, to say/report something.

It is noteworthy that nearly two thirds (61.1 %) of the participants were still able to decide that this was a non-declaration by the subject.

5.2.2.2.1. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the second task's results broadly corroborate the first task's results, which is that the conceptual pair of declaration/non-declaration is widely understood by student participants. Furthermore, the contrast between strong/weak declarations (i.e. asserting vs. assuming) seems to be deeply engrained in these participants' knowledge, since the vast majority were able to distinguish between both sub-contexts with ease (i.e. average accuracy of 84.7 % in distinguishing between assertions and assumptions).

When non-declarative sub-contexts were involved, student participants were also able to identify them as non-declarative with ease (i.e. average accuracy of 74.7 %), which was the main objective at this level of proficiency. However, the fact that these students were asked to

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sub-classify at the same time both main contexts into five sub-contexts was probably quite demanding at this stage, since this mechanism requires to 'know'/'comprehend' fully the contextual meaning of each matrix in order to describe them as value judgements, requirements or rejection of ideas/possibilities. We need to take into consideration that these student participants had received a total of 9 hours of previous instruction on mood contrast before completing this second task. This is not much considering the amount of new vocabulary and verb morphology they needed to 'learn' prior to the completion of the tasks without the use of notes whatsoever.

Table 50 below shows the ranking of this task's responses according to accuracy when selecting among the five relevant sub-contexts (i.e. asserting, assuming, questioning, commenting and wanting), and also the percentage of accuracy when selecting between a declaration and a non-declaration.

Table 50: Ranking of task 2's questions according to degree of accuracy (from highest to lowest)

Ranking in order of correct responses	Q1 (1)	Q4 (1)	Q5 (2)	Q3 (5)	Q9 (4)	Q8 (2)	Q2 (4)	Q7 (3)	Q10 (5)	Q6 (5)
(1) Asserting (2) Assuming (3) Questioning (4) Commenting (5) Wanting	91.6 %	91.6 %	88.8 %	87.5 %	73.6 %	66.6 %	50 %	50 %	37.5 %	4.16%
Declaration vs. Non-declaration	98.6 %	98.6 %	94.3 %	93 %	77.8 %	66.6 %	51.4 %	83.3 %	61.1 %	81.5 %

There was a tendency to select 'commenting' when participants were choosing among the three non-declarative sub-contexts. For instance, Sentence 6 belonged to the 'wanting' sub-context, but more than two thirds (68 %) thought it was a comment or value judgement. As mentioned above, this was probably due to the fact that it was in the negative[99] form (*No es necesario que*

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[99] Negative sentences proved to be confusing for some, above all when the negation is in the matrix, since this may change (or not) the declarative status of the proposition (i.e. polarity). However, a negative proposition (i.e. embedded verb) could affect the participants' view of the 'strength' of a declaration, for instance, as with

– It is not necessary that), so rather than conveying a requirement it conveyed the opposite idea, a non-requirement. However, it is worth noting that over four fifths of the participants (i.e. 81.5 %) were still able to classify this sentence as a non-declaration.

Since some native-speaking teachers also experienced some issues when identifying the 'commenting' matrices, it is not surprising that these learners had some trouble with this specific sub-context. However, as previously mentioned, at this stage of proficiency what was most relevant was to examine whether the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration was understood by these participants and thus be used as a mechanism to choose between moods.

Overall, this task's results show that students participating in this investigation not only were able to use this conceptual pair as a mechanism for mood selection, but also performed beyond expectations by further classifying the relevant matrices into the different sub-contexts involved with quite a high level of accuracy in many cases.

If we compare this second comprehension task with the second comprehension task completed by the pre-intervention study participants who had received instruction by means of the traditional approach (see section 4.4.2 in previous chapter for further details), the differences are even more obvious than with the first comprehension task. The format of the tasks was quite different, for obvious reasons[100], but what students were required to do was the same, that is, to choose between the indicative and the subjunctive moods. The average accuracy of the pre-intervention study participants was 57.7 %, whereas for the COA participants, the

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sentence 1 (*Está claro que no están en casa.* / It is clear/obvious that they're not at home).

[100] The pre-intervention study task was a text in which the verbs had been removed and, in brackets, both forms (i.e. present indicative and present subjunctive) were provided from which students needed to select one. The format was very similar to the activities completed in class. However, the task completed by the intervention study participants involved the concepts of declaration and non-declaration and the different sub-contexts introduced by means of the Mood Map.

corresponding percentage was 80.6 %. If we consider that the latter had to further distinguish among five sub-contexts within the same task (i.e. two declarative and three non-declarative), ability which corresponds to a more advanced level of proficiency to that reached by these participants, the average level of accuracy was still higher (64.1 %) than the one achieved by the pre-intervention study participants. Consequently, Task 2 provides further evidence that the intervention study participants' ability to select between moods is already quite high after just nine hours of mood contrast instruction by means of the COA, which further supports the idea that this method might be more effective than the traditional approach and thus offers extra evidence in order to answer research question 5.

5.2.2.3. Task 3 (Production)

The third and last task delivered to student participants was a production task (Appendix O). It was distributed among students in the same week as Task 2. It consisted of a series of compound sentences (i.e. matrix and proposition) in which the whole embedded clause, and not just the embedded verb, was in bold letters. The embedded verb was in either indicative or subjunctive. A box with a number of matrices was also provided. This box contained 19 matrices, ten of which had the adverb "no" in brackets so they could be used either in the positive form or the negative form. However, some of these matrices, when used in the negative form, involved a change of mood and some others did not involve a change of mood. In total, there were 9 matrices which triggered indicative and 20 which triggered subjunctive, including all the possible combinations (i.e. positive and negative).

Participants were instructed to change the sentences in which the speaker or subject was declaring the proposition into sentences in which the speaker or subject was not declaring the same proposition, and vice versa. Therefore, they needed to choose a relevant matrix from the box and change the embedded verb's mood, accordingly.

The instructions included the following paragraph, which is shown here with the exact format:

> Change the following *'declarations'* into *'non-declarations'* and vice versa. Keep the same proposition (in **bold letters**) but be aware that the **mood** will change depending on whether the speaker (i.e. I) or subject (i.e. you, s/he, they, everybody, …) declares it or not.
>
> You can use any of the matrices in the box below. The sentence you write does not need to mean exactly the opposite of the one provided (as illustrated in example 0), you just need to make sure that 'declarations' change to 'non-declarations' and vice versa.

Special emphasis was made when specifying that the sentence produced did not need to mean exactly the opposite of the original. This aimed at achieving more variety in their responses. So, if the original sentence was an assertion (i.e. strong declaration), as in sentence (86) below, rather than changing it into a 'non-assertion', that is, the same matrix in the negative form (as in (86)' below), they could use any type of matrix which conveyed a non-declaration (i.e. questioning, commenting or wishing).

(86) *Está claro que sabe^{IND} mucho de coches.*

　(It's clear/obvious that s/he knows a lot about cars)

(86)' *No está claro que sepa^{SUB} mucho de coches.*

　(It's not clear/obvious that s/he knows a lot about cars)

What was expected from students was a broader variety in their responses. So, rather than sentence (86)', students could produce a wide range of options (sentences 87-90 below), so long as they transformed the declaration into a non-declaration.

(87) *Es posible que sepa^{SUB} mucho de coches.*

　(It's possible that s/he knows a lot about cars)

(88) *Dudo que sepa^{SUB} mucho de coches.*

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(I doubt that s/he knows a lot about cars)

(89) *Está genial que sepa*[SUB] *mucho de coches.*

(It's great that s/he knows a lot about cars)

(90) *Es importante que sepa*[SUB] *mucho de coches.*

(It's important that s/he knows a lot about cars)

It was expected that this task would require longer to complete than the comprehension tasks, since students not only needed to reflect on whether the matrices in the box triggered a declaration or a non-declaration, but also needed to recognise the subjunctive morphology in each of the situations presented and produce eight sentences themselves. In fact, most students completed this task in 20-30 minutes.

It was stressed again that they could ask for the meaning of the vocabulary they did not know because the completion of the tasks depended on the understanding of the message.

Only when participants used an adequate matrix and the appropriate mood in the embedded verb, were their responses computed as 'correct'[101]. If they used an adequate matrix but the embedded verb did not have the correct mood, or if they used a non-adequate matrix (even if the embedded verb had the appropriate mood), then their responses were computed as 'not correct'.

As with the previous tasks, the results for each sentence appear in individual tables below and the translation in brackets was not provided to student participants.

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[101] Their responses were also computed as correct if there was a conscious attempt to use the subjunctive mood in the embedded verb but there were some issues with the morphology (e.g. use of a regular form when the verb is irregular).

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1. *Está claro que **está con él por su dinero***.
    (It is clear/obvious that s/he is with him for his money.)

This is a declaration (i.e. assertion). Student participants needed to change it to a non-declaration and select one of the various matrices available in the box.

All Participants (N = 57):

94.7 % (54) participants produced an adequate sentence which comprised a non-declaration.

14 different matrices were used.

From the participants who produced an adequate sentence (94.7 %), that is, a relevant matrix and the correct subjunctive form of the embedded verb (i.e. *esté*), only nine (i.e. 15.8 %) used the same matrix in the negative form (i.e. *No está claro que esté…*). The rest employed a wide range of different matrices, from which the most popular was "*Es posible que esté…*" (It is possible that s/he is…). It was used by 22 participants (38.6 %). This outcome was not surprising because this particular matrix appeared frequently in the input these students had received. However, a total of 14 different matrices were used, which shows that these students were quite knowledgeable about the various matrices which trigger the subjunctive mood.

Table 52: Task 3 (production). Sentence 2

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2. *Supongo que **vendrás a la fiesta de Rafa**. Después de todo, es tu mejor amigo.*
    (I guess you will come to Rafa's party. After all, he's your best friend.)

This is a declaration (i.e. assumption). Student participants needed to change it to a non-declaration and select one of the various matrices available in the box.

All Participants (N = 57):

75.5 % (43) participants produced an adequate sentence which comprised a non-declaration.

12 different matrices were used.

This sentence was also a declaration, although the embedded verb was not in the present indicative (i.e. *vienes* – you come) but in the future indicative (i.e. *vendrás* – you will come). The use of the future in the embedded clause had not appeared as frequently in the input these students had received and thus it was expected that some of them would experience some issues when recognising this form as part of the indicative mood verbal system.

Slightly over three quarters of the participants (i.e. 75.5 %) used an adequate matrix and the subjunctive for the embedded verb. However, ten of those (i.e. 23 %), although making a conscious attempt to use a subjunctive form, made the vowel change taking as a reference the future morphology instead of that of the present indicative. Therefore, they wrote '*vendres' and not the present subjunctive 'vengas'[102]. Another six participants (i.e. 14 %) also had problems with this verb's morphology in the subjunctive, using 'vienas' (twice), 'vendreis', 'vinieres' (twice), and 'vea'[103]. Since there was a conscious attempt to use a subjunctive form, these responses were computed as 'correct'. It is worth noting, however, that 63% of those who got it right used the appropriate form of the present subjunctive: *vengas* (you come[SUB]).

These participants also employed a wide variety of matrices. The most frequent was '*Dudo que…*' (I doubt that…), which was used 13 times (i.e. 30 %). Another 11 different matrices were used, which supports the idea that these students were aware of how this conceptual pair operates and how to further classify the different matrices as declarative and non-declarative.

Table 53: Task 3 (production). Sentence 3

3. *No creo que **vaya al mercado esta tarde**. Me siento mal.*   (I don't think I'll go to the market this afternoon. I don't feel well.)
This is a non-declaration. Student participants needed to change it to a declaration and select one of the various matrices available in the box.
All Participants (N = 57):
80.7 % (46) participants produced an adequate sentence which comprised a declaration and one (1.8 %) did not answer.
8 different matrices were used.

Over four fifths of the participants (i.e. 80.7 %) produced an adequate sentence. From those, over a third (i.e. 39 %) used the positive form, '*Creo que…*' (I think that…). However, another

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[102] The infinitive form of this particular verb is '*venir*', thus the vowel change from present indicative to present subjunctive is $e > a$. However, because the second person singular of the future indicative ends in '*-ás*', these participants made the opposite change of vowel, that is, $a > e$.

[103] '*vienas*' would be the correct form if the 1st person singular of the present indicative was regular; '*vendreis*' is just the second person plural form of the future indicative (without the graphic accent on the second 'e'); '*vinieres*' is the future subjunctive, which is no longer part of the Spanish verbal system; and '*vea*' is the present subjunctive of '*ver*' (see).

7 different matrices were used, which represent nearly all the matrices (i.e. 8 out of 9) in the box which triggered the indicative mood.

Interestingly, these participants not only used the present indicative in the embedded clause, but also the future indicative (i.e. *iré* – I will go) and a verbal periphrasis (i.e. *voy a ir* – I am going to go), adequately in both cases. However, some (i.e. 8 participants) used the third person singular instead of the first person. This is due to the fact that both the first person singular and the third person singular of the present subjunctive are identical in form, which seems to suggest that these eight participants did not take into consideration the second sentence available (i.e. *Me siento mal* – I feel ill/I don't feel well) which was in the first person singular.

This result further supports the idea that most of these student participants were aware of the different matrices used to declare or not declare the information contained in the embedded proposition, as well as which mood to use in each case. Furthermore, it also supports the idea that Spanish verbal morphology is challenging to acquire (e.g. mixed-up of the first- and third-person singular forms), although these student participants did not seem to have many issues with the morphology of these two moods in the present. We need to consider, however, that these students had only received 75 hours of previous instruction on the target language and just nine hours of subjunctive instruction at the time of completing this task.

Table 54: Task 3 (production). Sentence 4

4. *Tu novia piensa que **comes mucha carne y pocas verduras**.*   (Your girlfriend reckons you eat too much meat and not enough vegetables.)
This is a declaration. Student participants needed to change it to a non-declaration and select one of the various matrices available in the box.
All Participants (N = 57):
79 % (45) participants produced an adequate sentence which comprised a non-declaration and 7 % (4) did not answer.
20 different matrices were used (including changes of the grammatical subject and negative forms).

From the participants who produced an adequate sentence (i.e. 79 %), 11 (24 %) employed the negative form, that is, '*Tu novia no piensa que comas…*' (Your girlfriend does not think that you eat[SUB]…). However, 19 other combinations were used as well, including two different subjects in the matrix, 'your girlfriend' and 'I', some impersonal expressions (e.g. '*Está fatal que comas…*' It is very bad/wrong that you eat[SUB] …), and even some matrices used in the positive and negative forms (e.g. '*Tu novia quiere/no quiere que comas…*' Your girlfriend wants/doesn't want you to eat…).

This suggests that these participants could understand quite well the meaning of the matrices used in this task, and thus they were able to slightly modify their form depending on the subjects involved or the context but always keeping their intrinsic meaning whenever they conveyed a declaration or a non-declaration. It might also indicate that, instead of having memorised the matrices as vocabulary 'chunks', and thus always use them in the same form, they were able to create alternative forms which complied with the characteristics of the exemplar and still be adequate to the situation.

Table 55: Task 3 (production). Sentence 5

5. *Es verdad que **sus hijos son encantadores**. Están muy bien educados.*   (It's true that their/his/her children are lovely. They are very well-behaved.)
This is a declaration. Student participants needed to change it to a non-declaration and select one of the various matrices available in the box.
All Participants (N = 57):
80.7 % (46) participants produced an adequate sentence which comprised a non-declaration and one (1.8 %) did not answer.
17 different matrices were used.

Over four fifths (i.e. 80.7 %) of the participants, again, produced adequate sentences which comprised a non-declaration. Nine of these participants (i.e. 19.5 %) used the negative form of the matrix, that is, '*No es verdad que sus hijos sean…*' (It's not true that their/his/her children are…), although one participant used the present subjunctive for 'estar' (i.e. *estén*) instead of

'ser' (i.e. *sean*). The rest of the participants (i.e. 80.5 %) used a range of 16 different matrices, which further supports the idea that these students were able to be creative in their responses and this could only be achieved if they had a good understanding of the meaning of all the matrices available in this task.

The irregular present subjunctive form of the verb 'ser' (to be) in the third person plural (i.e. *sean*) was employed correctly by all the participants who produced an adequate sentence, with the exception of the participant who used the verb 'estar' instead (i.e. *estén*[104]), perhaps influenced by the following sentence (i.e. sentence 6).

Table 56: Task 3 (production). Sentence 6

6. *Me alegro de que **Bea y Sergio estén juntos**. Hacen muy buena pareja.* (I'm glad Bea and Sergio are together. They make a really nice couple.)
This is a non-declaration. Student participants needed to change it to a declaration and select one of the various matrices available in the box.
All Participants (N = 57):
80.7 % (46) participants produced an adequate sentence which comprised a declaration. Four (7 %) did not answer.
9 different matrices were used.

Again, over four fifths (80.7 %) of these participants produced an adequate sentence. They also employed all the declarative matrices available (i.e. 9), which provides extra evidence on the creativity and grasp of this conceptual pair from these students.

Table 57: Task 3 (production). Sentence 7

7. *Mi madre dice que **salga de casa con abrigo**.* (My mother tells me to go out with my coat.)
This is a non-declaration. Student participants needed to change it to a declaration and select one of the various matrices available in the box.
All Participants (N = 57):
75.5 % (43) participants produced an adequate sentence which comprised a declaration. Four (7 %) did not answer.
15 different matrices were used, including different grammatical subjects and even double subordination.

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[104] This was, however, the correct form for the third person plural in the present subjunctive of that verb.

This sentence and the next one comprised the same matrix verb, '*decir*' (say/report/tell) which has two different 'contextual' meanings: to say or report or to tell/ask someone to do something. The first is a declaration (i.e. asserting) and thus the embedded verb will go in indicative, and the second is a non-declaration (i.e. wanting) with the embedded verb in subjunctive. In this case, since the embedded verb was in subjunctive, the sentence produced by participants should have included a declarative matrix and a change of mood in the embedded verb.

Over three quarters (i.e. 75.5 %) of the participants produced an adequate sentence and 15 different matrices were used by these students[105]. Some combinations even comprised two subordinate clauses, such as the following instances taken from the participants' responses:

(91) *Sé que mi madre dice que salgo…*

    (I know that my mum says that I go^IND out…)

(92) *Mi madre dice que es verdad que sale…*

    (My mum says that it's true that s/he goes^IND out…)

Since the first and third person singular in present subjunctive are identical in form, both indicative forms, '*salgo*' (I go out) and '*sale*' (s/he goes out), were used by these participants. Furthermore, whenever the matrix changed subjects (e.g. my mum or I), these participants were able to make the necessary changes to the matrices in the box, which were provided in the first person singular (i.e. I). Some examples from the participants' responses are shown below:

(93) *Mi madre está segura de que salgo…* (My mum is sure/certain that I go^IND out…)

(94) *Mi madre sabe que salgo…* (My mum knows that I go^IND out…)

(95) *Mi madre no dice que sale…* (My mum is not saying that s/he goes^IND out…)

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[105] These 15 combinations comprised, for instance, different subjects (e.g. my mum or I) for the same matrix or double subordination, such as examples (91-92).

(96) *Mi madre supone que salgo…[106]* (My mum presumes that I go out…)

Considering that this was the only 'matrix verb' studied at this point which could go with both moods, these results showed that these students had an excellent grasp not only of the concepts of declaration and non-declaration but also of the different matrices used for each concept. Furthermore, some were even able to use 'double subordination', which came as a surprise, since these were beginner students.

Table 58: Task 3 (production). Sentence 8

8. *Todo el mundo dice que **siempre llegas tarde a clase**.*   (Everyone says that you are always late to class.)
This is a declaration. Student participants needed to change it to a non-declaration and select one of the various matrices available in the box.
All Participants (N = 57):
58 % (33) participants produced an adequate sentence which comprised a non-declaration. Five (9 %) did not answer.
14 different matrices were used.

The final sentence comprised the other contextual meaning of the matrix verb '*decir*' (say/report). However, the results were not as positive as with the last sentence (7). Possible reasons for this result might include the facts that this was the last sentence and some participants could have thought they had run out of time[107], or that the subject of the matrix was '*todo el mundo*' (everybody), which had not appeared in the input these students had received as frequently as the first person singular, for instance.

Nevertheless, 58 % of the participants (i.e. 33) produced an adequate sentence and used 14 different matrices in their responses. From these responses, ten (i.e. 30 %) wrote a non-adequate form for the present subjunctive of '*llegar*' (to arrive). The third person singular in

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[106] This matrix was not in the available box but appeared in one of the sentences these participants needed to change, although in the first person singular (i.e. *Supongo que…*).

[107] Students completed this task at different paces, thus while some students were still completing the task others were waiting for them to finish and continue with the lesson.

present indicative is '*llegas*' (you arrive[IND]) and this is a regular -AR verb, thus the corresponding change of vowel is a > e. The correct form for the present subjunctive needs an added 'u' after the letter 'g' to maintain the same phonetic traits as the infinitive (i.e. /g/), thus '*llegues*' (you arrive[SUB]) was the adequate form these students needed to use in their response. Nine participants used '**lleges*'[108] and one participant wrote '**lluegues*'. It is worth noting, however, that 70% of the participants who produced an adequate sentence wrote the correct form of the verb (i.e. *llegues*).

5.2.2.3.1. Concluding Remarks

This last task was important because it was the first time throughout the process of this investigation that the production abilities of student participants with regard to the conceptual pair of declaration/non-declaration were tested.

As with the previous two tasks, Table 59 below shows the ranking of this task's responses according to accuracy when selecting an appropriate matrix and the correct morphology of the embedded verb.

Table 59: Ranking of task 3's questions according to degree of accuracy (from highest to lowest)

Ranking in order of correct responses	Q1	Q3	Q5	Q6	Q4	Q2	Q7	Q8
% of correct responses	94.7 %	80.7 %	80.7 %	80.7 %	79 %	75.5 %	75.5 %	58 %
Range of matrices used	14/20	8/9	16/20	9/9	19/20	11/20	*15/9[109]	14/20

The results were in any case more positive than expected. These participants not only showed that they had a good grasp of the single binary opposition (i.e. declaration and non-declaration)

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[108] This choice (i.e. 'lleges') would generate a change in the pronunciation of the letter 'g' from /g/ to /χ/. In order to avoid this, the spelling is modified by adding a 'u' between the 'g' and the 'e'.
[109] These also include the use of different subjects in the matrix verb and cases of double subordination.

in selecting between moods, but also showed high awareness of the 'meaning' of the different matrices involved (i.e. 29) and creativity in their use. Furthermore, these participants were also able to manipulate/adapt these matrices according to specific communicative needs. Consequently, rather than using the same subject as in the exemplars in the box, that is, the first person singular, these participants employed different subjects hence having to make the necessary changes to the verb endings, for instance.

Regarding the change of mood of the embedded verb, all the participants who produced adequate sentences also produced accurate verb morphology both in indicative and in subjunctive, with the exception of two sentences. Sentence 2 comprised the future indicative instead of the present indicative, which caused some participants to make the vowel change characteristic of the present indicative to the present subjunctive taking the future form as a reference and not the present form. This resulted in the production of an inaccurate form (i.e. *vendres*). The issues in sentence 8 were phonetically-based and not morphologically-based. These are explained in detail at the end of the previous section (i.e. 5.2.2.3.).

Nevertheless, it is important to underline the fact that, on a whole, these students proved that they were knowledgeable of the present subjunctive morphology. They used both regular and irregular forms with adequacy. Furthermore, when changing from subjunctive to indicative and in order to better adapt to their communicative needs, these participants not only used the present tense but also the future and a verbal periphrasis.

This outcome contrasts with what previous studies have concluded regarding the issues with morphology in early stages of proficiency. For instance, Collentine (1995) claimed that problems with morphology could affect the acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive. However, student participants within this intervention study proved to be quite knowledgeable of the morphology of both moods, especially when completing the production task. Furthermore,

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other studies (e.g. Pereira, 1996) suggested that, since the subjunctive mood is characteristic of subordination, if introduced at early stages, L2 learners tend to use coordination and parataxis because their syntactical knowledge is not developed enough. Nevertheless, these student participants even used double subordination in the production task, which seems to contradict some of the outcomes of previous studies.

If we compare the results of this production task with the results of the two production tasks completed by participants within the pre-intervention study at the lowest level (i.e. Year 2: B1/B1+), the contrast between the production abilities of these two groups of students is clear. Pre-intervention study participants reached an average accuracy of 50 % in the first production task and just 37.3 % in the second production task (see Chapter 4, sections 4.4.3 and 4.4.4, for further details), whereas the average percentage of accuracy reached by the COA student participants was 78 %. Furthermore, regarding the use of subjunctive morphology, students within the pre-intervention study produced inaccurate forms more often. This was more obvious when using, inaccurately, irregular forms with regular verbs, for instance, which seems to support the idea that irregular morphology is more noticeable for learners and thus it is more easily remembered, as claimed by previous studies (e.g. Gudmestad, 2006). Furthermore, some of these student participants used non-finite structures typical of their L1 (i.e. English) instead of the corresponding subordinate subjunctive structures, also inaccurately. None of the participants within the intervention study made the same mistakes.

This result, again, provides extra support to the claim that this new method based on a single conceptual pair to teach Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners is more effective than the traditional approach, at least within the first stages of the learning of this point of grammar.

5.2.2.4. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the tasks employed in Stage 2 of the intervention study provide additional and more substantial evidence of the operationality of the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration to introduce Spanish mood contrast for the first time to L2 learners.

The results for both comprehension tasks (i.e. Task 1 and Task 2) show that the student participants had achieved an excellent grasp of the conceptual pair, since over four fifths of them (in some cases this percentage was closer to 100%) could select between moods and decide between the two declarative sub-contexts (i.e. assertion and assumption) without hesitation.

The results for the production task (i.e. Task 3) exceeded expectations. The majority of student participants were not only able to understand the 'contextual' meaning of the 29 matrices available (and whether these would trigger a declaration or a non-declaration), but also to produce a correct form in the subjunctive or indicative for the embedded verb. Furthermore, these participants demonstrated considerable creativity when manipulating these matrices in order to adapt to particular communicative needs, such as when the subject was different from the speaker. Some even employed double subordination.

As means of comparison, Table 60 below shows the degree of accuracy of all student participants within both the pre-intervention study, in which students had received instruction by means of the traditional approach, and the intervention study, in which students were introduced to mood contrast by means of the COA. The percentages show the degree of accuracy when selecting from both moods (i.e. comprehension tasks) and when producing the adequate form/s and combinations of matrix and proposition (i.e. production tasks).

Table 60: Degree of accuracy of student participants from both sets of tasks

Level of Proficiency	TRADITIONAL APPROACH			COGNITIVE-OPERATIVE APPROACH
	B1	B2	C1+/C2	A2+/B1-
Comprehension	Task 1 (n = 71): 73.2% Task 2 (n = 22): 53%	Task 1 (n = 79): 55%	Task 1 (n = 51): 42.4%	Task 1 (n = 71): 87% Task 2 (n = 72): 80%
Production	Task 1 (n = 46): 50% Task 2 (n = 20): 37.3%	N/A	Task 1 (n = 38): 20%[110]	Task 3 (n = 57): 78%

At each level of proficiency, only the structures covered in the language classroom were included in the tasks. The results showed that, in spite of the early stage of proficiency in which mood contrast was introduced for the COA participants, these outperformed the other participants who had received mood contrast instruction by means of a traditional approach.

If we just take into consideration the indicative and subjunctive structures comprised in the intervention study testing the COA, that is, structures belonging to the two declarative sub-contexts (i.e. asserting and assuming) and the three non-declarative sub-contexts (i.e. questioning, commenting and wanting[111]), we can compare the results of both sets of tasks and identify some differences (as shown in Table 61 next):

Table 61: Degree of accuracy of student participants from both sets of tasks regarding common structures

B1 (TRAD.)	B2 (TRAD.)	C1+/C2 (TRAD.)	A2+/B1- (COA)
Comprehension: Creo que (I) 68%	Comprehension:	Comprehension:	Comprehension: Me parece que (I) 80.3% Asumimos que (I) 83.1% Supongo que (I) 94.4%

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[110] The production task for the highest level allowed for the avoidance of the subjunctive structure (between 71% and 87% in some cases) and hence student participants used other indicative structures instead, although not often adequately.

[111] The experimental study testing the COA included beginner students (i.e. A2+/B1-) and the comprehension and perception tasks delivered to students who had received an instruction based on a traditional approach included all levels of proficiency, from B1 to C1+/C2. Therefore, as means of comparison, only the structures covered in both studies could be considered.

Es posible que (S) 87% Espero que (S) 54.5% Me encanta que (S) 4.5% Me aconseja que (S) 22.5%			Es posible que (S) 83.3% Esperamos que (S) 93% Me parece muy mal que (S) 77.7%
	Dice que (S) 48% No está claro que (S) 74.7%	Dice que (S) 51%	Dice que (S) 61% No creo que (S) 95.7%
Production: Supongo que (I) 56.5% Creo que (I) 57% Es muy posible que (S) 30% Te recomiendo que (S) 41.3% Espero que (S) 30% Me encanta que (S) 5% Me aconseja que (S) 5%	**Production:** N/A	**Production:** Use of volitive verbs (S) 29%	**Production:** An average 78% of accurate production of both indicative and subjunctive structures (i.e. combination of matrix and proposition).

These results show that, in the case of the student participants within the pre-intervention study, mood contrast abilities concerning structures of the 'obligatory' subjunctive seem to decline as the level of proficiency increases. This suggests that the rote learning of lengthy lists of structures in either mood, which is characteristic of the traditional method, is not a good recourse to learn this point of grammar in the long term.

Finally, the intervention study tasks results show that the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration based on the COA may be rather effective as a single mechanism for L2 learners to choose between moods. This method highlights the importance of understanding the logic of mood contrast in Spanish, that is, it aims at understanding the reasons behind every mood choice taken by the speaker (or subject) in order to express what s/he intends to express in a manner which is appropriate to the situation. The fact that all cases of mood contrast can be explained by using the same conceptual pair without exception means that learners can always search for (or receive) a satisfactory explanation for mood choice in Spanish.

5.2.3. Some remarks

In summary, Stage 2 of the COA provides further and more conclusive evidence that this teaching method to introduce Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners may improve its 'learning',

since student participants showed that they not only achieved an excellent grasp of the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration to select between both moods (i.e. comprehension tasks) but also were able to produce subjunctive structures and the correct morphology of the present subjunctive with ease (i.e. production task).

A pre- and post-instruction questionnaire (Appendix Q) was delivered to year 1 students and aimed at examining their attitudes towards this (supposedly challenging) point of grammar. It was completed by 20 student participants within the intervention study and 43 year-1 non-beginner students who had received subjunctive instruction by means of the traditional approach. The results show that the COA participants were more confident when claiming that, after instruction, they were aware of the 'meaning' of both moods and why they are studied together and in contrast. Table 62 below shows the results for the pre-instruction survey and Table 63 shows the results for the post-instruction survey.

Table 62: Results of the pre-instruction questionnaire

STATEMENTS SCALE (1-10) 1 = Strongly Disagree / 10 = Strongly Agree	BEGINNER STUDENTS N = 20		NON-BEGINNER STUDENTS N = 43	
	(scale: 8-10) 👍	(scale: 1-3) 👎	(scale: 8-10) 👍	(scale: 1-3) 👎
1.- I know what the indicative mood is.	30 % (6)	40 % (8)	53 % (23)	23 % (10)
2.- I know what the subjunctive mood is.	20 % (4)	50 % (10)	49 % (21)	7 % (3)
3.- I understand the difference between indicative and subjunctive and why they are studied together and in contrast.	10 % (2)	55 % (11)	28 % (12)	28 % (12)
4.- I am able to use the subjunctive in Spanish.	0 %	80 % (16)	14 % (6)[112]	23 % (10)
5.- I believe the subjunctive is very difficult to learn.	15 % (3)	10 % (2)[113]	25.5 % (11)	16 % (7)
6.- The subjunctive does not exist in English.	5 % (1)	40 % (8)[114]	14 % (6)	56 % (24)
7.- I believe that using the Spanish subjunctive is not necessary to communicate effectively.	10 % (2)	30 % (6)[115]	9 % (4)	56 % (24)

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[112] 10 participants (23 %) selected option 7 in a scale of 1-10.
[113] 4 participants (20 %) answered 'I don't know'.
[114] 9 participants (45 %) answered 'I don't know'.
[115] 4 participants (20 %) answered 'I don't know'.

Table 63: Results of the post-instruction questionnaire

STATEMENTS SCALE (1-10) 1 = Strongly Disagree / 10 = Strongly Agree	BEGINNER STUDENTS N = 5		NON-BEGINNER STUDENTS N = 18	
	(scale: 8-10) 👍	(scale: 1-3) 👎	(scale: 8-10) 👍	(scale: 1-3) 👎
1.- I know what the indicative mood is.	100 % (5)	0 %	66 % (12)	0 %
2.- I know what the subjunctive mood is.	100 % (5)	0 %	72 % (13)	5 % (1)
3.- I understand the difference between indicative and subjunctive and why they are studied together and in contrast.	100 % (5)	0 %	50 % (9)	5 % (1)
4.- I am able to use the subjunctive in Spanish.	60 % (3)	0 %	39 % (7)	5 % (1)
5.- I believe the subjunctive is very difficult to learn.	0 %	40 % (2)	11 % (2)	17 % (3)
6.- The subjunctive does not exist in English.	0 %	80 % (4)	33 % (6)	39 % (7)
7.- I believe that using the Spanish subjunctive is not necessary to communicate effectively.	0 %	60 % (3)	17 % (3)	61 % (11)

Despite the lower number of students from both sets of participants who completed the post-instruction questionnaire, the results show that beginner students, who received instruction by means of the COA, were more confident with their claims. For the first three items, all the participants maintained that they knew the difference between indicative and subjunctive and what they both meant. Furthermore, they were also positive they could use it in Spanish, and none believed the subjunctive was very difficult to learn. However, non-beginner students were still somewhat hesitant about their abilities to select between moods and thus use the subjunctive confidently after instruction.

Regarding the open-ended question added to the post-instruction questionnaire, all the beginner student participants except one employed the concept of non-declaration to define or explain the meaning of the subjunctive mood. On the other hand, the explanations provided by the non-beginner student participants comprised notions characteristic of the traditional approach. Table 64 below shows the descriptions provided by these students.

Table 64: Definitions for the subjunctive mood provided by non-beginner students

1.- It allows the expression of impersonal sentences and rejecting opinions in an effective way.

2.- It is used to express uncertainty.

3.- It expresses wish/desire, uncertainty, hypothetical or futuristic situations.

4.- It is used to express a hypothetical situation, such as a wish/desire which has not yet materialised.

5.- It is a mood used to convey a situation which is hypothetical or that is not indicative of the real world, i.e. hopes, wishes, doubts, hypotheticals, if clauses in the past.

6.- It is used to express wishes, desires, doubts, etc.

7.- It allows for the expression of uncertainty and unknowns, which differs from the precision of the indicative.

8.- It is used to convey uncertainty or possibility, when something is not reality.

9.- It is a type of conjugation used mostly to express the indefinite or impersonal expressions.

10.- It talks about uncertainty and possible situations, also expresses wishes and expectations.

11.- A mood to describe hypothetical situations, such as hopes and wishes.

12.- The subjunctive is used to express uncertainty in a sentence.

13.- It is used to describe a desire, wish or a hypothetical situation.

14.- To talk about something that is hypothetical, not real or is yet to happen.

15.- Is it used when presenting a mood or hope for something in the future?

16.- It defines the mood of the speaker – his position towards a topic – e.g. if he desires something.

17.- It is what you use if a wish, hope or feeling is being expressed.

18.- It concerns wishes, possibilities and opinion. It describes that which is not based in fact.

These results corroborate that the traditional method is still widely used at university level. I discussed this with the other lecturers involved in the teaching of language and content at the university where Stage 2 of the intervention study was carried out and all of them confirmed that they implement a traditional approach to introduce the target language grammar to students at all levels. I was also granted access to the PowerPoint presentations used in the grammar lectures and the activities students are required to complete and it became obvious that this approach is still heavily entrenched in the way grammar is taught at university level.

It may be said that the results for Stage 2 of the intervention study indicate that mood contrast instruction by means of the COA not only improves the comprehension and production abilities of this point of grammar by L2 learners, but also increases their confidence when selecting between both moods since they understand the reasons behind each choice.

5.3. Final Remarks

The results for the intervention study testing the COA to introduce Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners within a UK university setting provide enough substantial evidence to positively answer research question 5 (i.e. When the COA is translated into classroom instruction, is there evidence to suggest that this has potential to be more effective than the traditional approach?).

These results show that the COA can improve students' comprehension and production abilities of mood contrast in a rather short period of time (i.e. 9 contact hours).

This could be explained by the fact that this method facilitates what students need to do in order to be able to select between moods, since a single conceptual pair can be used as a mechanism in all cases, without exception. Furthermore, the COA does not require students to memorise lengthy lists of structures and the multiple semantic (or functional) concepts connected to them, which in some cases do not apply (i.e. exceptions to the rule) and which may create more confusion than clarity.

Instead, L2 learners are required to reflect and understand the speaker's perspective and intentions when declaring (or not) what they say by using the indicative or the subjunctive in the embedded clause and by choosing an appropriate matrix to do so. This requirement did not seem to be an obstacle for the participants when completing the tasks, since these proved to be quite skilled in that regard throughout the entire process of the intervention study.

The above was reflected in the high levels of accuracy achieved by the student participants, not only when selecting between both moods (or classifying the multiple matrices presented to them into the five relevant sub-contexts) but also when producing subjunctive subordinate structures, accurately (and with the correct morphology of the embedded verb).

Chapter 6 is concerned with the discussion and interpretation of the main findings for both empirical studies carried out as part of this PhD investigation, the pre-intervention study (results in chapter 4) and the intervention study (results in this chapter). Thus, it brings together all the evidence gathered throughout this investigation in order to answer the main research question (i.e. RQ 1: Is the cognitive-operative single mechanism approach more effective than the traditional approach to learn the subjunctive?).

6. DISCUSSION

6.1. Answering the Research Questions: Summarising the Findings

This chapter brings together the findings of Chapters 4 and 5 in order to answer the main research question: "Is the cognitive-operative single mechanism approach more effective than the traditional approach to learn the subjunctive?

Put simply, the answer to this question is "Yes". Previous studies have demonstrated that the traditional approach is not sufficiently effective to achieve the L2 learning of the Spanish subjunctive, especially for L2 learners whose L1 does not have a productive subjunctive system (e.g. English). Conversely, proponents of the COA claim that a single mechanism to select between moods is everything the learner needs to know in order to know why and when to use the Spanish subjunctive. Consequently, this method has great potential to facilitate its learning. More importantly, the findings of the two empirical studies carried out as part of this investigation provided enough evidence that, within a UK university setting, both of the above claims concerning the COA are true. This picture is summed up in Table 65 below:

Table 65: Thesis Summary

RQ1: Is the cognitive-operative single mechanism approach more effective than the traditional approach to learn the subjunctive?			
SUB-QUESTIONS	**METHODS**	**ANALYSIS**	**MAIN FINDINGS**
RQ2: From a theoretical perspective, why do L2 learners of Spanish find it difficult to learn the subjunctive by means of the traditional approach?	Literature Review	Critical analysis	Traditional approach lacks effectiveness in the learning of Spanish mood contrast by L2 learners. One of the main reasons is the need for the memorisation of lengthy lists of structures based on the multiple linguistic characteristics of both moods. It is widely recognised that this is not an effective learning strategy.

RQ3: How effective is traditional instruction in enabling L2 learners in a UK Higher Education context to learn the subjunctive?	Pre-Intervention Study including: • Teacher and student surveys • Focus group discussion • Student tasks • Classroom observation	Simple frequencies and cross tabulations (surveys) <u>Quantitative:</u> • grading of responses (correct/incorrect) <u>Qualitative:</u> • error analysis • evaluation of teaching methods' effectiveness	The majority of teachers use the traditional approach to introduce mood contrast to their students. Most believe this instruction is not effective enough to achieve its learning. Students' mood contrast abilities after receiving instruction by means of the traditional approach proved to be low (at all levels).
RQ4: On what theoretical basis do proponents of the COA consider that this could be a more effective approach?	Literature Review	Critical analysis	COA's potential to facilitate the learning of the Spanish subjunctive: Use of a single operative value as a mechanism to select between moods, without exception.
RQ5: When the COA is translated into classroom instruction, is there evidence to suggest that this has potential to be more effective than the traditional approach?	Intervention Study including: • Experimental teaching programme • Classroom observation • Reflective diary • Pre- and post-attitudinal surveys	<u>Quantitative:</u> • grading of responses (correct/incorrect) <u>Qualitative:</u> • evaluation of effectiveness (students' performance and explanations for choices) • teachers' ease and clarity in explaining the concept • error analysis	Implementation of the COA substantially improved L2 learners' comprehension and production abilities of Spanish mood contrast at a very early stage in the learning process. Teachers agreed with this method's potential but expressed their concern regarding the need of relevant training and resources.

This PhD investigation comprises the first empirical study which examines the 'functionality' of the COA to introduce Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners by means of the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration from the early stages of proficiency (i.e. A2+/B1-), and the successful demonstration represents its main contribution. The fact that it achieved highly positive results provides extra validation to the conclusion that the COA constitutes an improvement in the L2 learning of Spanish mood contrast.

A comparison is illustrated below with Table 66, which shows the average percentage of mood contrast accuracy achieved by both sets of student participants, those from the pre-intervention study who received instruction by means of the traditional approach and those from the

intervention study who received instruction by means of the COA. The difference is clear: students who received COA instruction on mood contrast were distinctively more accurate when selecting and using both moods in Spanish.

Table 66: Average percentage of mood contrast accuracy by both sets of student participants

	TRADITIONAL APPROACH			COA
Level of Proficiency	B1	B2	C1+/C2	A2+/B1-
Comprehension	63.1 %	55%	42.4%	83.5 %
Production	43.6 %	N/A	20%	78%

The next section and sub-sections within this chapter discuss the implications of these findings, in terms of further research in the field and current and future practice.

6.2. Research Findings and Future Directions

This section considers what the research has already established in relation to (1) students' ability to explain their mood choices, (2) their ability to use mood in an appropriate way, confidently and spontaneously and (3) classroom practice. It considers what further research is needed to establish whether teaching and learning based on the COA rather than on the traditional approach is more effective at every level. Some recommendations for practice are also provided.

6.2.1. Students' Ability to Explain Mood Choices

First of all, it is important to point out why the ability to explain mood choices is essential in order to be able to use mood contrast in Spanish. For instance, the COA claims that there is always one explanation for the choice of mood by the speaker or subject: either they declare the information contained in the embedded clause and use the indicative or they do not declare that information and use the subjunctive. If the learner understands the reasons/causes behind

the choice of mood, then s/he will be able to provide an appropriate explanation and thus be able to select between moods when required. On the other hand, the traditional approach focuses on the effects, that is, the listing of these two moods' multifarious uses linked to their multiple linguistic traits. Thus, the explanations for the choice of mood are based on numerous reasons which do not always apply, since they often include another list with the exceptions. Therefore, L2 learners who have received mood contrast instruction by means of the traditional approach are often unable to offer an appropriate explanation for the choice of mood. In fact, most student participants in the pre-intervention study, who had received mood contrast instruction via the traditional method, encountered difficulties in providing an adequate explanation for their choices of mood (see Chapter 4, section 4.4 for further details).

In regard to whether L2 learners will be able to explain all the cases of mood contrast they will encounter throughout their learning process by means of a single mechanism we need to consider what the next steps of the implementation of the COA would entail. The first steps of that implementation have been established in this investigation; therefore, this section connects those findings with what future research/practice is needed.

This investigation has provided clear evidence that L2 learners at the lower levels of proficiency (i.e. A2+/B1-) are able to easily explain the cases of mood contrast belonging to the first two contexts of the Mood Map (see Figure 3 in Chapter 2, section 2.5.2) by using the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration as a mechanism. These are mostly cases of the obligatory subjunctive and thus more straightforward to identify. The remaining context L2 learners need to be introduced to is Context 3, which is the third and last context of the Mood Map. This should ideally happen once L2 learners have reached the next level of proficiency (i.e. B1+/B2).

Context 3 includes cases of the so-called optional subjunctive with relative and temporal clauses, and thus the same sentence can alternate between moods with a slight change of meaning. These instances of mood contrast are explained by means of the conceptual pair of 'identification' and 'non-identification', which represents the radiality – or extension of the prototype, in the terminology used in Cognitive Grammar – of the conceptual pair of 'declaration' and 'non-declaration', which is the basic operative value that L2 learners already know and use as a mechanism to choose between moods. In short, in relative clauses, the concept of 'identification' (i.e. declaration) refers to the identification of the antecedent by the speaker or subject, as the term suggests, and the concept of 'non-identification' (i.e. non-declaration) refers to the non-identification of the antecedent. In regard to temporal clauses, the same concept refers to the identification or non-identification of the moment (for further details and examples of the radiality of the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration see Chapter 2, section 2.5.2).

In the pre-intervention study, student participants experienced more difficulties with this type of sentence (i.e. relative and temporal clauses), which could be partly explained by the way these new structures are introduced via the traditional method. For instance, with regard to relative clauses, the explanation is largely based on the (lack of) 'specificity' or 'existence' of the antecedent. However, there are cases in which this explanation does not completely apply, such as in the following example:

(97) *Los estudiantes que vayan a hacer la presentación pueden empezar ya.*

(The students who are[SUBJ.] going to deliver the presentation can start now.)

In sentence (97), the speaker is using the subjunctive in the relative clause, but it is obvious that the students who are going to deliver the presentation exist and are also specific to the teacher because they are present in the classroom.

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The COA maintains that the use of either mood is always governed by the speaker's (or subject's) perspective and intentions. Therefore, in sentence (97) above, the speaker decides not to 'identify' the antecedent (i.e. the students who are going to deliver the presentation) even though they are specific to him/her and obviously exist, and thus uses the subjunctive in the relative clause. This decision could depend on various reasons, and this is when L2 learners should be asked their views and reflect on the possible reasons for which the speaker decided to use the subjunctive and not identify the antecedent. These could include, for instance, that the presentation is not compulsory and some groups (of students) might decide not to do it, that several groups (of students) intend to deliver their presentation that day but they have yet to decide the order of the presentations, etc.

By the time students were to be introduced to the conceptual pair of 'identification' and 'non-identification' (i.e. Context 3) by means of the COA, they would already be used to having this type of discussion with the teacher and among themselves, since the basic operative value (i.e. declaration and non-declaration) employed with Contexts 1 and 2, involves the same routine. Furthermore, it is worth noting that student participants within the intervention study were introduced to a particular case of the optional subjunctive which entailed the use of the matrix verb *decir* (say/report or tell/ask for) with its two contextual meanings. As a matter of fact, these student participants were more accurate in identifying the two contextual meanings of this particular verb and thus select the indicative or subjunctive appropriately than student participants in the pre-intervention study who had received instruction via the traditional method and had a more advanced level of proficiency (i.e. B2 and C1+/C2).

In regard to temporal clauses, the explanation provided by the traditional method is largely based on the 'action' or 'event' having been taken place or not. If the temporal clause refers to a past event or habitual/repetitive action then the indicative is used (i.e. preterit/imperfect or

present), but if it refers to an action or event in the future, which has not taken place yet, then the subjunctive is used. However, as with relative clauses, this explanation might not apply in some cases. Sentences (98) and (99) below illustrate this:

(98) *El sábado 12 iremos, cuando Sara llegue de Italia.*

(We will go on Saturday 12th, when Sara will arrive[SUBJ.] from Italy)

(99) *El sábado 12 iremos, que es cuando Sara llegará de Italia.*

(We will go on Saturday 12th, which is when Sara will arrive[IND.] from Italy)

In sentences (98) and (99), the temporal clause refers to a future event which has not taken place yet, but in sentence (99) the speaker uses the indicative. The traditional method would probably categorise this case as an exception. However, this case could easily be explained by means of the conceptual pair of 'identification' and 'non-identification'. In sentence (98), the speaker refers to the moment/time of the day (i.e. Saturday 12th) in which Sara will arrive from Italy and uses the subjunctive because s/he cannot (or does not want to) identify that specific moment. In sentence (99) the speaker is identifying the exact date in which Sara will arrive from Italy (i.e. the 12th) and thus uses the indicative in the temporal clause.

What the COA seeks is to reduce all mood choices in Spanish to the same operative value so that the explanation is always based on the same two options: the speaker (or subject) uses the indicative when s/he decides to declare the information contained in the proposition (or identify the antecedent or moment in the relative/temporal clause) and the subjunctive when s/he decides to not declare the information contained in the proposition (or not identify the antecedent or moment in the relative/temporal clause). This investigation provides enough evidence of the COA's high effectiveness in regard to Contexts 1 and 2 of the Mood Map. This suggests that its implementation at the next level of proficiency, in which the third and last context would be introduced (i.e. Context 3), could also represent a significant improvement.

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However, in order to demonstrate that the COA represents an improvement it is necessary that its implementation occurs at all levels of proficiency.

6.2.2. Students' Ability to Use Mood in an Appropriate Way, Confidently and Spontaneously

The findings of this investigation show that student participants who received mood contrast instruction via the COA were highly accurate when selecting between moods and explaining the reasons behind each choice. Furthermore, these students also showed a great deal of confidence when completing the activities and tasks throughout the intervention process. This was reflected in how quickly they completed the comprehension tasks, in the mostly positive answers when asked to confirm their understanding of the different concepts presented to them, and in the post-instruction questionnaire results.

On the other hand, student participants within the pre-intervention study, who received mood contrast instruction via the traditional approach, not only struggled more often to select between moods accurately when completing the tasks, but also showed certain lack of understanding when providing an explanation for their choice of mood within the comprehension tasks and during instruction. For instance, class observation showed that, even at the higher levels of proficiency, some students replied with "I don't know" when asked about which mood would be more adequate with some instances of the obligatory subjunctive. Overall, the findings of the pre-intervention study indicate that these students were less confident when using Spanish mood contrast than student participants within the intervention study. Moreover, they were also less spontaneous in their production, since whenever there was some leeway to do so, these students avoided the use of subordinate subjunctive structures by using coordination or parataxis instead. This result shows that the use of the subjunctive was not a natural choice for most of these students.

In regard to whether the COA could achieve an improvement in this area, this is more difficult to answer. This refers to whether L2 learners at higher levels of proficiency would maintain the same levels of confidence as the student participants of the intervention study when selecting between moods after having received instruction via the COA all the way through. Moreover, it poses the related question of whether advanced learners' subjunctive production might become more spontaneous as their competence (or capacity, in words of Larsen-Freeman (2014)) in the target language improves.

The high levels of confidence of student participants within the intervention study may simply be due to the fact that they had learned that mood selection is always induced by the same conceptual pair and thus the same yes/no explanation applies every single time. Students were advised to always swap the matrix for "the speaker or subject asserts or assumes that…" in order to confirm whether the speaker or subject was declaring or not the information provided in the embedded clause. If the meaning of the resulting sentence was the same or very similar, then the embedded verb would take the indicative mood, if not, the embedded verb would take the subjunctive mood. This strategy was well understood by the vast majority of these students, which resulted in both greater speed when completing this type of activity (see Appendix K for further details) and higher assertiveness when confirming their understanding of the different situations and choices presented to them.

Maintaining the same mechanism[116] for mood selection during the next levels of proficiency could definitely help L2 learners entrench it. This would probably result in similar (high) levels of confidence at advanced levels of proficiency when selecting between moods. However, whether this mechanism may become an 'automatised' process so that L2 learners may produce the subjunctive mood in their output in a more spontaneous manner is something that could

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[116] The conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration or, when regarding Context 3, the conceptual pair of identification and non-identification.

only be examined if the COA were to be implemented throughout the entire L2 learning process. This consistency would only be possible if most teachers were willing to embrace this new method to introduce this point of grammar to their students. This thus takes us to the next section, which is probably the easiest to answer but the most challenging to fulfil.

6.2.3. Effective Classroom Practice

Findings gathered in this investigation indicate that the majority of teachers employ the traditional approach to introduce mood contrast to their students. Teacher participants believed this method is not sufficiently effective in achieving the L2 learning of this point of grammar, a claim which is also supported by the literature (e.g. Varela Navarro, 2005; Martín Sánchez & Nevado Fuentes, 2007; Rovira Gili, 2009; Priego Casanova, 2018). This outcome was not only reflected in the teacher questionnaire results but also in the class observations carried out as part of the pre-intervention study. Conversely, teacher participants within the intervention study mostly agreed with the high potential of the COA to improve the learning of the Spanish subjunctive, since this method facilitates what learners need to do in order to use mood contrast in the target language.

In order to successfully implement the COA in the language classroom, some changes would be needed in terms of (1) the need for continuity across the entire learning process (e.g. 5-year degree), (2) the need for relevant resources and (3) the need for teachers' professional development.

Regarding the need for continuity, some of the teacher participants mentioned that this shift should happen at every level of proficiency, thus all language teachers within the same institution would have to get on board and commit to implement the COA. The lack of this requirement would cause more confusion than clarification amongst students. In fact, some

student participants of the intervention study, who continued studying the target language at the next level (i.e. second year: B1+/B2), contacted me and advised that the way mood contrast was being introduced in class was rather confusing because the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration was not being used. These students asked me to explain the new subjunctive structures recently studied in class, that is, relative and temporal clauses, using the conceptual pair instead[117].

In order to achieve this continuity, it would be essential that institutions be supportive of this change. However, there seems to be a lack of support from most institutions within university settings. This is probably related to the fact that undergraduate language programmes are generally developed by experts in Cultural and Literary Studies and not by language or language acquisition experts (VanPatten, 2015). VanPatten (2015) argues that this can result in the perpetuation of myths about how language should be learned. This author suggests that such myths include that language is a list of rules which need to be learned/memorised, and this particular myth is reflected in the way language programmes merely follow the contents and structure of the chosen textbook/s or in the way most teachers (or devisers of programmes) would introduce grammar to students in a similar manner as they themselves were taught. Furthermore, that myth is also reflected in the way L2 learners' knowledge is assessed and, more importantly, the type of knowledge which is assessed. VanPatten (2015) maintains that tests usually examine explicit knowledge of learned textbook rules and paradigms, and not underlying linguistic knowledge, that is, linguistic knowledge which has been internalised by the learner and therefore s/he is able to produce spontaneously.

Regarding the need for relevant resources, there is actually a lack of resources which embrace this methodology, since most do not have the time to develop their own class material or lack

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[117] Both structures belong to Context 3 of the Mood Map, which had not been covered the previous year in class.

support from their institutions in order to receive the necessary training. For instance, there is only one grammar textbook[118] that follows this approach which covers the first levels of proficiency (i.e. A1-B1) and which recommends starting with the subjunctive instruction at A2 level. The morphology of the present subjunctive is introduced at A2 level and the remainder of the subjunctive 'tenses'[119] at B1 level. The reason for this is probably related to the fact that once the L2 learner is able to use the conceptual pair as a mechanism to select between both moods and has been introduced to the Mood Map, s/he will be ready to make the necessary connections in order to use the same subordinate structures in the past or when referring to 'completed' actions, for example.

In addition to the above grammar textbook, there are only two other publications[120] which follow the COA in their grammar sections and cover the next two levels of proficiency (i.e. B2 and C1), but neither is a grammar book[121] as such. For instance, the textbook which covers the B2 level employs the concepts of 'identification' and 'non-identification' (i.e. radiality or extension of the prototype; Context 3 of the Mood Map) when re-introducing relative clauses, not only with the present subjunctive but also with the imperfect and perfect subjunctive. However, the Mood Map, with its contexts, is not mentioned whatsoever. Furthermore, when temporal clauses are introduced, the conceptual pair of identification and non-identification is not employed either, and when purpose clauses are introduced (for the first time), there is no mention of the conceptual pair or the fact that these belong to Context 1 of the Mood Map. What this means is that there is a lack of consistency in the presentation of this method when dealing with Spanish mood contrast at all levels of proficiency.

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[118] Gramática Básica del Estudiante de Español (Alonso *et al.* 2005. Difusión)
[119] Imperfect, perfect and pluperfect.
[120] Abanico (Chamorro *et al.* 2010. Difusión), which covers the B2 level, and El Ventilador (Chamorro *et al.* 2008. Difusión), which covers the C1 level.
[121] Both textbooks have been devised to be used at all times in the language classroom, and not just to introduce grammar to students.

Future publications should focus on the practical aspects of the implementation of the COA. At the moment, only one textbook deals with how to explain grammar to L2 learners by means of the COA, as mentioned above, but this textbook comprises just the first three levels of proficiency (i.e. A1, A2 and B1) and all the activities have a similar format: written structured-input activities which are largely fill-in-the-gap or multiple-choice. What this means is that future textbooks should also include the higher levels of proficiency and a wider variety of activities which encourage the development of all the skills involved in the L2 learning process: listening/reading comprehension, written/oral production, and, more importantly, interaction.

The last point concerned the need for teachers' professional development. It is worth noting that most language teachers already use an approximate version of the COA in their classroom. For instance, a common practice is the use of images to explain grammar and vocabulary (e.g. metaphors, expression of movement, etc.). Furthermore, there has recently been an increase in the number of dedicated conferences and online courses which focus on the implementation of Cognitive Grammar in the L2 classroom. What this suggests is that switching from the traditional method to the COA should not involve too much effort.

It is also important to point out that using the COA for grammar instruction would necessarily imply abandoning the traditional approach, since mixing both approaches could cause more confusion than clarification for L2 learners, as shown in the results of the class observations carried out within the pre-intervention study (for further details see Chapter 4, section 4.3.1). A publication that would help language teachers with this transition is the handbook by Llopis-García, Real Espinosa and Ruiz Campillo titled *Qué gramática enseñar, qué gramática aprender*[122] (Edinumen, 2012). In this handbook, concrete guidelines on how to deal with the (widely considered) most challenging points of grammar in Spanish by means of the COA are

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[122] What grammar should we teach, what grammar should we/they learn (my translation).

provided. Furthermore, as a means of comparison, a description of the way/s the same points of grammar have been introduced in the language classroom via the traditional approach is also provided. Special emphasis is given to the various (formalist, prescriptive, descriptive and functional) aspects characteristic of the traditional approach which make it often 'ineffective' in achieving the learning of grammar. In addition, further extra online material is provided which is addressed to teachers of SFL in order to reflect on this method's typology and how to implement it in class, plus a series of actual classroom activities and exercises to be used with students.

Informal training for language teachers is also provided on the website *Tercera Gramática*[123], hosted by Ruiz Campillo, the author of the theory examined in this investigation (i.e. the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration). Interested teachers can find numerous presentations which explain the different grammatical structures characteristic of the Spanish language by means of the COA, such as the contrast between imperfect and preterit (i.e. aspect), the use (or omission) of articles, mood contrast, prepositions *por* and *para*, copulas *ser* and *estar*, etc. These presentations are aimed at teachers, but they always include a strong didactical (and ludic) component in order to use them (or adapt them to be used) with students. Moreover, the author himself offers to answer any questions teachers might have and will publish the answer on the website so that everybody else can benefit from the response.

Finally, future dedicated conferences and training courses should focus on the practical aspects of the implementation of the COA in the language classroom, as well as on the theoretical aspects.

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[123] www.terceragramatica.com

6.3. Final Remarks

This chapter has discussed some of the implications drawn from this investigation's findings regarding the implementation of the cognitive-operative approach in the L2 Spanish classroom, specifically when dealing with mood contrast but also highlighting this method's potential to improve the learning of grammar in general.

First, this investigation's findings show that L2 learners' mood contrast abilities at the lower levels of proficiency were quite high after just nine hours of instruction by means of the COA. The fact that these students could already explain and use the conceptual pair as a mechanism with the first two contexts of the Mood Map suggests that learning the third and last context during the next level of proficiency should not suppose a major challenge. This contrasts with the findings from the pre-intervention study, which showed that students taught in the traditional way struggled – at every level – both to explain mood choices and to use the subjunctive confidently and spontaneously.

Secondly, the study shows that, with appropriate resources and professional development, teachers can deliver the COA effectively in the early stages of an undergraduate Spanish language course. Consistency in the implementation of the COA throughout the entire learning process would probably help maintain similar levels of confidence when selecting between moods at the higher levels, and this could possibly lead to a more spontaneous production of this point of grammar by L2 learners.

The next and final chapter offers a general view of the main conclusion/s of this investigation and considers the limitations and makes specific suggestions for future research.

7. CONCLUSION

The final chapter summarises the main conclusions drawn from this investigation. It also provides both details of its limitations and suggestions on what future research should be undertaken.

7.1. Summary of the Research Findings

Evidence gathered in this investigation shows that, at a relatively early stage of the learning process (i.e. A2+/B1-), and with a relatively brief period of instruction in Spanish mood contrast based on the COA (i.e. 9 contact hours), student participants were able to: (a) distinguish between declaration and non-declaration with ease and thus select between the two moods (i.e. indicative and subjunctive) correctly, and (b) use accurate morphology.

This evidence was gathered by means of a two-staged intervention study, which was carried out in order to examine both the effectiveness[124] of the cognitive-operative approach to introduce Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners within a UK university setting and the student participants' comprehension and production abilities when completing a series of tasks.

The tasks developed to test learners' mood contrast abilities resembled in format those used in previous studies and largely aimed at examining the participants' accuracy[125] when selecting and producing both moods in their output. Furthermore, the tasks also resembled those completed in class, in order to avoid any distractions which could have affected the results. On the other hand, the tasks differed to those in previous studies in one important factor: the need to use the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration as a mechanism in every single

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[124] The term 'effectiveness' is defined by De Graff and Housen (2009) as "the extent to which the actual outcomes of instruction match the intended or desired effects". The term 'effect' refers to any observable change in the L2 learner outcome that can be attributed to an instructional intervention.

[125] The term 'accuracy' refers to the ability to produce target-like and error-free language, as described in the CAF (Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency) framework for the testing of L2 learning (Skehan, 1989).

task, either to explain the choice of mood or to produce an adequate sentence. Consequently, it was not possible to have a control group in the intervention study, since the other students[126] who had received instruction via the traditional approach had not been introduced to the conceptual pair and thus would not have been able to complete the same tasks.

The main findings include that (1) the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration was understood by student participants without major difficulty and these were also highly knowledgeable when identifying the two declarative sub-contexts[127], (2) student participants' production abilities excelled and nearly reached the same average percentage of accuracy as their comprehension abilities (78 % and 83.5 %, respectively), and (3) student participants' morphosyntactic knowledge was fairly high considering their low level of proficiency. These participants were not only highly accurate with both the indicative and the subjunctive morphology, but they even used double subordination, which was completely unexpected at this level.

There are two aspects of the COA which might have helped achieved such positive results. Firstly, the COA takes into consideration essential discourse-pragmatic aspects of mood contrast in Spanish, unlike the traditional approach. These pragmatic aspects are common to all languages and learners can easily identify with them. In fact, other previous studies have highlighted the importance of introducing the pragmatics of the subjunctive mood from the beginning of its learning process (e.g. Pearson, 2006). The second aspect relates to the use of structured-input activities, which represent an important component of Processing Instruction (VanPatten, 1993, 1996, 2002, 2004). These activities require the learner to process the form (i.e. morphosyntactic and phonological features of a linguistic structure), which has been manipulated to increase its frequency and saliency, in order to obtain meaning and thus be able

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[126] Year 1 Non-Beginner.
[127] 83 % accuracy for the first comprehension task and 85% accuracy for the second comprehension task.

to complete the task (Cameron, 2011). Other previous studies have established that Processing Instruction may facilitate the acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive morphology (e.g. Collentine, 1998; Farley, 2001).

These results lead to the conclusion that Spanish mood contrast by means of the COA may be introduced from the early stages, contrary to both practice and theory regarding the introduction of this grammar point by means of the traditional approach, according to previous studies (e.g. Bruhn de Garavito, 1997; Collentine, 1995; Pereira, 1996). These studies mostly suggest that L2 learners are not ready to learn mood contrast until later on, when they have gained some knowledge of more complex morphosyntax in the target language.

Furthermore, the fact that the COA relies on the use of a single conceptual pair as the only mechanism to select between moods and thus learners do not need to memorise lengthy lists of subjunctive (and indicative) structures plus another list with the exceptions, seems to be key to the successful results achieved in this investigation.

Prior to the intervention study, a longitudinal empirical study (i.e. pre-intervention study) was carried out in order to examine how this point of grammar was being introduced in the L2 classroom within a UK university setting and to examine the teaching method's effectiveness in the learning of the Spanish subjunctive by the student participants. It included some class observations and a series of comprehension and production tasks[128] which were completed at all levels of proficiency in order to gather relevant data on the student participants' abilities to select and produce both moods in their output. Furthermore, a teacher questionnaire was also delivered to collect teachers' views.

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[128] The use of comprehension and production tasks in both empirical studies allowed to draw relevant comparisons between both sets of student participants' mood contrast abilities and between both teaching methods' effectiveness to achieve the L2 learning of this point of grammar.

The main findings include that (1) the traditional approach was being implemented by the vast majority of teacher participants (i.e. teacher questionnaire and class observation) to introduce mood contrast to their students, that (2) most teachers believed the traditional method lacks effectiveness to achieve the learning of this point of grammar by their students, that (3) student participants were clearly influenced by the traditional approach when completing the tasks, since their explanations of their choice of mood were exclusively based on the multiple morphosyntactic, semantic (and/or functional) traits characteristic of both moods, and that (4) student participants' degree of accuracy was low, even at the higher levels of proficiency.

The last point was key in reaching the conclusion that the traditional approach lacks effectiveness to achieve the L2 learning of Spanish mood contrast. For instance, student participants at all levels made morphosyntactic errors, that is, they used the indicative when the subjunctive was required or struggled to produce accurate subjunctive morphology. In addition, student participants at the highest level of proficiency (i.e. year 5; C1+/C2) avoided subordination by using simpler structures (e.g. coordination or parataxis) when there was sufficient leeway to do so. This contrasts starkly with the intervention study participants, who even used double subordination in the production task. None of the 84 participants who completed the production task in the pre-intervention study used double subordination. These issues represent clear evidence of the failure to fully learn appropriate subjunctive morphology and syntax using the traditional method.

Most importantly, since student participants were asked to explain their mood choices in the comprehension tasks, it was possible to examine the strong influence of the traditional approach in their explanations. All of them repetitively employed terms describing the multiple linguistic characteristics linked to both moods, such as 'same subjects', 'a fact', 'a wish', 'an emotion', 'not true', 'doubt', etc. However, in many cases, these explanations were not

completely adequate or did not correspond to the choice of mood. Furthermore, class observation undertaken at all levels confirmed that students struggled to understand and internalise the complex explanations with which they were presented and thus recognise or use the subjunctive appropriately. This issue probably represents the most conclusive evidence for the traditional approach's lack of effectiveness when dealing with this point of grammar.

It may be concluded that this investigation's findings provide a positive answer to the main research question: Is the cognitive-operative single mechanism approach more effective than the traditional approach to learn the Spanish subjunctive?

On the other hand, it is evident that more studies like the present investigation are needed in order to gather further evidence of the effectiveness of the COA regarding the teaching of Spanish mood contrast to L2 learners. This investigation showed that, contrary to assumptions made in the literature on the learning of the subjunctive by means of the most widely used traditional approach, even beginner students whose L1 does not have a productive subjunctive system were able to understand and use both moods with ability only after nine hours of instruction. But this represents just the beginning.

7.2. Limitations of the Research and a Future Research Agenda

A limitation of this investigation is that it was restricted to the lowest level of proficiency in which mood contrast is introduced for the first time (i.e. A2+/B1-), and thus only instances of the obligatory subjunctive were included. This means that an important question about the functionality of the COA arises, that is, whether L2 learners will be able to explain all the cases of mood contrast they will encounter throughout their entire learning process by means of the same mechanism (i.e. the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration), even those

instances of the 'optional' subjunctive which are farther from the basic operative value, as discussed in the previous chapter (i.e. section 6.2.2).

Therefore, future research should also include the next level of proficiency (i.e. B1+/B2) and the introduction of the most straightforward cases illustrating all the contexts of the 'Mood Map' (Ruiz Campillo, 2007a). Within this investigation, which concerned L2 learners at the lowest level of proficiency in which mood contrast is taught (i.e. A2+/B1-), two contexts were introduced: one declarative (i.e. asserting/assuming) and one non-declarative (i.e. questioning, commenting and wanting), which correspond to instances in which the use of the indicative or subjunctive in the embedded verb is 'obligatory'. However, the third and final context (i.e. Context 3) corresponds to instances of the 'optional' subjunctive and hence both moods can be used with a slight change of meaning. These are cases in which the 'radiality' (i.e. extension of the prototype) of the conceptual pair comes into play, that is, the concepts of 'identification' and 'non-identification' (for further details see Chapter 2, sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2, and Chapter 6, section 6.2.1).

In fact, the students who participated in the intervention study and continued studying the target language at the next level (i.e. year 2 – B2) in the university in which this study was carried out, received mood contrast instruction via the traditional approach. Therefore, it was not possible to examine whether the COA would have such a positive effect on the L2 learners' mood contrast abilities at the next level of proficiency in which the third and final context of the Mood Map should be introduced.

Empirical studies should be carried out from the language classroom, by teachers who are no longer satisfied with the way their students struggle to understand how and when to use the Spanish subjunctive mood. Rather than hoping for good results when completing and submitting assessment items that do not actually prove their students' mood selection (and

production) skills, but their ability to memorise a list of structures and the subjunctive morphology, these teachers could adopt the COA, which does not require extensive training for them and simplifies widely the explanations provided to L2 learners.

These studies should be longitudinal, that is, they should be carried out at all levels of proficiency in which mood contrast is taught. However, they should ideally start with beginner students and continue at the same pace as these students progress towards the higher levels of proficiency. Moreover, other types of task should also be included at higher levels, such as those which aim to test oral production and interaction.

Corpus-based studies could represent a good starting point. Using real data (from native speakers or learners) which have already been collected and categorised could facilitate the research process. This would allow, for instance, to dispense with a comparison group of native speakers or to draw relevant comparisons with other learners with different L1s.

Lastly, future studies should also examine teachers' views on the implementation of the COA. We need to consider that such a change of methods does not happen overnight and thus requires training and trial-and-error experimentation. The gathering of teachers' views and reflections could be achieved by keeping a reflective diary and/or by being observed by other teachers or researchers, for instance.

It is clear that the cognitive-operative approach has great potential to improve the L2 learning of the Spanish subjunctive, as shown in this investigation, but it is also clear that much still remains to be done to demonstrate its effectiveness throughout the entire learning process. That is where future research should be headed.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Teacher Questionnaire (First Iteration)

This questionnaire is composed of 3 sections and 34 questions in total.

The first section (Q1-Q11) relates to the teaching of the subjunctive mood: type of students, hours of instruction, possible issues, preferred textbooks, etc.
The second section (Q12-Q29) relates to you as a teacher: years of experience, some personal background, methodologies, training, etc.
The last section (Q30-Q34) is intended to collect some feedback on the questionnaire: any irrelevant questions (or lack of relevant ones), whether it takes longer to complete than expected, etc.
This questionnaire should take no longer than 15/20 minutes to complete.

SECTION 1: TEACHING THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

1) How many students do you normally teach in total over an academic year?
- 20-
- 20>40
- 40>60
- 60>80
- 80>100
- 100+

2) Select the approximate percentage of your students in each level and sector (0 if none)
_____ Primary School
_____ Secondary School (National 4 - GSCE Higher - B1)
_____ Secondary School (National 5 - A level - B2)
_____ Secondary School (National 6 - Higher / Advanced Higher- C1/ C2)
_____ Higher Education (beginners level - A1/A2)
_____ Higher Education (intermediate/upper intermediate level - B1/B2)
_____ Higher Education (advanced level - C1/C2)
_____ Further Education/Adults/Teenagers (beginners level - A1/A2)
_____ Further Education/Adults/Teenagers (intermediate/upper intermediate level – B1/B2
_____ Further Education/Adults/Teenagers (advanced level - C1/C2)
_____ Other

3) What is your students' L1 (mother tongue)? Indicate the approximate percentage of students for each option.
_____ English
_____ Other
Answer If 3) What is your students' L1 (mother tongue)? Indicate the approximate percentage of students for each option. Other Is Greater Than or Equal to 5
If you have also selected other: which are the 3 most widely spoken L1s in your classroom?

4) On average, how many hours of instruction in Spanish do you think students need before they are introduced to the subjunctive mood?
- 40+
- 80+
- 120+
- 160+

5) When introducing the subjunctive, which structure do you introduce first?
1. Imperative/Commands
2. Verbs of influence (e.g. advise, ask, want)
3. Verbs of emotion (e.g. fear, be sorry/happy)
4. Verbs of doubt or denial (e.g. doubt, deny)
5. Impersonal expressions (e.g. Es posible que)

6. Other _____

6) How much time do you spend introducing the present subjunctive? (i.e. introduction and immediate practice)
- 2+ hours
- 4+ hours
- I don't dedicate a whole lesson to it, I introduce it with a communicative approach and don't
- provide them with a grammar explanation
- Other (Specify below) _____

7) According to your teaching experience and the feedback you receive from your students, how would you rate the difficulty to understand the subjunctive mood (and start using it in their output) compared to other challenging grammar points? (1 for the easiest and 6 for the most difficult)
_____ Modo subjuntivo
_____ Indefinido/Imperfecto
_____ Ser/Estar
_____ Por/Para
_____ Concordancia de género
_____ Concordancia de número

8) Here are some explanations for the reasons why your students might have trouble acquiring the subjunctive mood. How much do you agree with them?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Lack of a subjunctive 'system' or distinctive forms in their L1					
The fact that the subjunctive is mostly communicatively redundant (i.e. the lack of its use does not affect comprehension					
Lack of formal grammar instruction in their L1					
The similarity in the form between the present subjunctive and the present indicative (e.g. regular verbs)					
The fact that in some cases the student needs to pick up on the speaker's implications / connotations and this is very difficult to achieve					
Syntactical structure required by the subjunctive in Spanish is very different in English (e.g. Quiero que vengas > I want you to come)					
The fact that students need to remember all the different categories which require subjunctive (e.g. imperative, verbs of emotion, verbs of influence, etc.)					

If you think there are other reasons why your students might have trouble acquiring the subjunctive, please specify here:

9) At what stage do your students start using (with some sort of accuracy) the subjunctive in their written output?
- After 5+ hours of instruction (in total but not at once) ( )
- After 10+ hours of instruction (in total but not at once) ( )
- After repeating the instruction on numerous occasions ( )
- After having spent some time in a Spanish speaking country ( )
- Most students never learn to use it appropriately ( )

- Some students never learn to use it appropriately ( )
- A few students never learn to use it appropriately ( )

10) At what stage do your students start using (with some sort of accuracy) the subjunctive in their oral output?
- After 5+ hours of instruction (in total but not at once) ( )
- After 10+ hours of instruction (in total but not at once) ( )
- After repeating the instruction on numerous occasions ( )
- After having spent some time in a Spanish speaking country ( )
- Most students never learn to use it appropriately ( )
- Some students never learn to use it appropriately ( )
- A few students never learn to use it appropriately ( )

11) Is there a text book or website you prefer to use when teaching the subjunctive mood?
- Yes ( )
- No ( )

Answer If 11) Is there a text book or website you prefer to use when teaching the subjunctive mood? Yes Is Selected
If you answered yes; to question 11, please specify title and publisher or website address:

SECTION 2: YOU AS A TEACHER
12) What is your gender?
- Female
- Male

13) What is your age?
- 25 or under
- 26-40
- 41-55
- 56 or older

14) How long have you been working as a teacher of SFL?
- Less than one year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 20+ years

15) How would you briefly describe your methodology in the language classroom? (e.g. content-centred, communicative approach, prefer to teach grammar inductively or deductively, correct students' errors directly or indirectly, etc.)

16) And what kinds of teaching approaches you think are most effective when teaching the subjunctive?

17) Is Spanish your first language (L1)?
- Yes
- No

Answer If 17) Is Spanish your first language (L1)? No Is Selected
If your answer to question 17 was no, please specify which language below:

18) What other languages do you speak and how well? (indicate CEFR levels of proficiency A1-C2 or use another classification)
Answer If 17) Is Spanish your first language (L1)? No Is Selected
If you did not grow up speaking Spanish, describe when, where, and how you learned Spanish:

19) As a language teacher, how confident do you feel about your own competence with the subjunctive? You can select a number on a scale of one to five, where one means not (at all) confident and five means very confident.
- 1 Not at all confident
- 2

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- 3
- 4
- 5 Very confident

20) What training/education do you have in teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language?
1. Occasional seminars, workshops, etc. ( )
2. Certificate course(s) ( )
3. Related Bachelor's degree (4 years post-secondary) ( )
4. Master's degree ( )
5. No specific education/training in teaching SFL ( )
6. Other ( ) _____

21) How often do you participate in teacher training courses or sessions?
- Never ( )
- Seldom ( )
- Once every 2/3 years ( )
- Once/Twice a year ( )
- Several times a year ( )

22) How do you encourage students to use the target language outside the classroom?
1. By providing relevant internet links (e.g. songs, youtube videos, news, TV programmes, etc.) ( )
2. By organising trips to the cinema ( )
3. By organising language exchange programmes ( )
4. Other ( ) _____

23) Do you expose your students to different varieties of the target language? (e.g. differences in vocabulary depending on the country: coche / carro / auto)
- Yes ( )
- No ( )

24) Do you integrate computer-aided instruction (e.g. computer-based exercises, you-tube videos, digital board, etc.) into your teaching?
- Yes ( )
- No ( )

Answer If 24) Do you integrate computer-aided instruction (e.g. computer-based exercises, you-tube videos, digital board, etc.) into your teaching? Yes Is Selected
If the answer to question 24 is yes, please give some examples of computer-aided instruction you use in your classes:

25) Do you more usually use the target language or English when doing the following activities?

	Spanish	English	
To explain grammar ( )			●
To do oral and aural exercises ( )			●
To give instructions for the classroom tasks ( )			●
Outside the classroom environment ( )			●
To communicate via email with your students ( )			●

26) What type of exercises do you prefer when teaching the subjunctive? Rate them using the following scale according to your preferences and the frequency with which you use them in your classes.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Contextualised (e.g. a text rather than loose sentences or a role-play) ( )					
Gap filling ( )					

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Production (e.g. giving advice to other students in order to do well at school or university) ( )					
Comprehension (e.g. understanding the directions you are given in a new city and drawing the route on a map) ( )					
Comparison of pairs (e.g. a sentence with the subordinate verb in the indicative or the subjunctive and students need to provide an explanation of the different interpretations) ( )					

If there are other types of exercises you use to teach the subjunctive, please specify here:

27) Do you get to create your own material (e.g. gap-filling exercises, audio texts, role-plays, etc.)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I need to strictly follow a programme and cannot create my own material ( )					
I would like to have some more flexibility (or time) to create my own material ( )					
I decide what materials to use in my classes and normally create my own ( )					

You can add another option that describes better your situation (e.g. I have several jobs and I have more flexibility in some of them):

28) How often do you ask your students for feedback in your classes?
- Never ( )
- Rarely ( )
- Sometimes ( )
- Often ( )
- Always ( )

29) What means do you normally use to ask your students for feedback?
7. In-class feedback forms ( )
8. Online surveys ( )
9. Orally and informally ( )
10. Other ( ) _____

SECTION 3: SOME FEEDBACK

30) Did you find this questionnaire too long to complete?

- Yes
- No

31) Is there anything you would add in the first section (teaching the subjunctive)?
32) Is there anything you would add in the second section (you as a teacher)?
33) Is there anything you found irrelevant in the questionnaire?
34) Is there anything you found intrusive?
We would like to thank you for your contribution to this study

APPENDIX B: Teacher Questionnaire (Second Iteration)

Teachers questionnaire - FINAL

This questionnaire is composed of 3 sections and 17 questions in total.

The first section (Q1-Q7) relates to the teaching of the subjunctive mood.

The second section (Q8-Q15) relates to you as a teacher and your preferences when teaching the subjunctive.

The last section (Q16-Q17) is intended to collect some more feedback you find relevant to add

This questionnaire should take no longer than 10/15 minutes to complete.

SECTION 1: TEACHING THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

1) On average, how many hours of instruction in Spanish do you think students need before they are introduced to the subjunctive mood?
- ○ 40+
- ○ 80+
- ○ 120+
- ○ 160+

2) When introducing the subjunctive, which structure/s do you introduce first?
- ❑ Imperative/Commands
- ❑ Verbs of influence (e.g. advise, ask, want, desire)
- ❑ Verbs of emotion (e.g. fear, be sorry/happy)
- ❑ Verbs of doubt or denial (e.g. doubt, deny)
- ❑ Impersonal expressions (e.g. Es posible que)
- ❑ Other

Answer If 2) When introducing the subjunctive, which structure/s do you introduce first? Other Is Selected

If you have chosen the option 'other' in question 2, please specify which structure/s below:

3) How would you rate the difficulty to acquire the same structures by your students? (from 1 for the easiest to 5 for the most difficult)
- _____ Imperative/Commands
- _____ Verbs of influences (e.g. advise, ask, want, desire)
- _____ Verbs of emotion (e.g. fear, be sorry/happy)
- _____ Verbs of doubt or denial (e.g. doubt, deny)
- _____ Impersonal expressions (e.g. Es posible que)

4) According to your teaching experience and the feedback you receive from your students, how would you rate the difficulty to understand the subjunctive mood (and start using it in their output) compared to other

challenging grammar points? (1 for the easiest and 6 for the most difficult)*Please be aware that you cannot select the same number for more than one grammar point

_____ Modo subjuntivo
_____ Indefinido/Imperfecto
_____ Ser/Estar
_____ Por/Para
_____ Concordancia de género
_____ Concordancia de número

5) Here are some explanations for the reasons why your students might have trouble acquiring the subjunctive mood. How much do you agree with them?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Lack of a subjunctive 'system' or distinctive forms in their L1					
The fact that the subjunctive is mostly communicatively redundant (i.e. the lack of its use does not affect comprehension)					
Lack of formal grammar instruction in their L1					
The similarity in the form between the present subjunctive and the present indicative (e.g. regular verbs)					
The fact that in some cases the student needs to pick up on the speaker's implications / connotations and this is very difficult to achieve					
Syntactical structure required by the subjunctive in Spanish is very different in English (e.g. Quiero que vengas > I want you to come)					
The fact that students need to remember all the different categories which require subjunctive (e.g. imperative, verbs of emotion, verbs of influence, etc.)					
The fact that the tense conveyed by the subjunctive does not always correspond with the actual chronology of the events (e.g. me gustaría que te vinieras mañana conmigo > I would like you to come with me tomorrow)					

6) At what stage do your students start using (with some sort of accuracy) the subjunctive in their written output?
- ⭕ After 5+ hours of instruction (in total but not at once)
- ⭕ After 10+ hours of instruction (in total but not at once)
- ⭕ After repeating the instruction on numerous occasions
- ⭕ After having spent some time in a Spanish speaking country
- ⭕ Most students never learn to use it appropriately
- ⭕ Some students never learn to use it appropriately
- ⭕ A few students never learn to use it appropriately

7) At what stage do your students start using (with some sort of accuracy) the subjunctive in their oral output?
- ⭕ After 5+ hours of instruction (in total but not at once)
- ⭕ After 10+ hours of instruction (in total but not at once)
- ⭕ After repeating the instruction on numerous occasions
- ⭕ After having spent some time in a Spanish speaking country
- ⭕ Most students never learn to use it appropriately
- ⭕ Some students never learn to use it appropriately
- ⭕ A few students never learn to use it appropriately

SECTION 2: YOU AS A TEACHER

8) Is Spanish your first language (L1)?
- ⭕ Yes
- ⭕ No

If Spanish is your first language, how long have you been working in the UK?
- ❑ less than a year
- ❑ 1-5 years
- ❑ 6-10 years
- ❑ 11-20 years
- ❑ 20+ years

9) Do you mainly work as a:
- ⭕ secondary school teacher
- ⭕ university teacher
- ⭕ college or continuous/further education teacher
- ⭕ private language school teacher
- ⭕ private tutor

Answer If 9) Do you mainly work as a: Other Is Selected
If you chose 'Other' for question 9 (Do you mainly work as a:), please specify here:

10) How long have you been a teacher of Spanish as a Foreign/Second Language?
- ⭕ less than 1 year
- ⭕ 1-5 years
- ⭕ 6-10 years
- ⭕ 11-20 years
- ⭕ 20 + years

11) How would you briefly describe your methodology in the language classroom? Use the following scale

according to your preferences.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I mainly use a communicative (or functional) approach I mainly use a formalist (or grammar-based) approach I prefer to teach grammar deductively I prefer to teach grammar inductively I use a cognitive approach I normally correct errors directly I normally correct errors indirectly I always correct errors indirectly and when strictly necessary I mainly use a task-based approach My approach is content-centred					

12) And what kinds of teaching approaches you think are most effective when teaching the subjunctive? Use the same scale according to your preferences

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I prefer to use a communicative approach I prefer to use a grammar-based approach Practice is crucial and I always provide plenty of drill and elicitation exercises Contextualised practice is very important I prefer to introduce the subjunctive mood deductively I prefer to introduce the subjunctive mood inductively I use a cognitive approach The subjunctive mood should be introduced implicitly and without providing any formal grammar instruction at the beginning					

13) As a language teacher, how confident do you feel about your own competence with the subjunctive? You can select a number on a scale of one to five, where one means not (at all) confident and five means very confident.
- ○ 1 Not at all confident
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5 Very confident

14) Do you more usually use Spanish, English, or another language when doing the following activities?

	Spanish (1)	English (2)	Other (3)
To explain grammar	○	○	○
To do oral and aural exercises	○	○	○
To give instructions for the classroom tasks	○	○	○
Outside the classroom environment	○	○	○
To communicate via email with your students	○	○	○

15) What type of exercises do you prefer when teaching the subjunctive? Rate them using the following scale according to your preferences and the frequency with which you use them in your classes.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Contextualised (e.g. a text rather than loose sentences or a role-play)					
Gap filling					
Production (e.g. giving advice to other students in order to do well at school or university)					
Comprehension (e.g. understanding the directions you are given in a new city and drawing the route on a map)					
Comparison of pairs (e.g. a sentence with the subordinate verb in the indicative or the subjunctive and students need to provide an explanation of the different interpretations)					
Game-based exercises					

SECTION 3: SOME FEEDBACK

16) Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience teaching the subjunctive mood?

17) Is there anything else you would like to add about your students' experience learning the subjunctive mood?

We would like to thank you for your contribution to this study.

APPENDIX C: Focus Group Instructions

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR THE DISCUSSION:

1.- ¿Estáis de acuerdo con los siguientes resultados? (Do you agree with the following results?)

> **Principales dificultades para los aprendientes de español en el Reino Unido a la hora de adquirir el modo subjuntivo:**
> 86% falta de conjugación propia del subjuntivo en L1.
> 82% necesidad de memorizar las diferentes estructuras que requieren subjuntivo.
> 74% estructura sintáctica en español es muy diferente a la del inglés.
> 63% falta de instrucción gramatical en L1.
> 39% el subjuntivo es comunicativamente redundante.
> 32% la similitud de la forma entre los dos modos con verbos regulares.

2.- Con respecto a las metodologías, ¿estáis de acuerdo con la afirmación de que cuando se trata del subjuntivo se necesita un enfoque más gramatical (centrado en la forma)? ¿Qué características tendría un enfoque exclusivamente comunicativo? ¿Debería utilizarse una combinación de los dos enfoques?

(Regarding the teaching methods employed, do you agree with the claim that when teaching the subjunctive mood, we need to use a more formalist approach? How would the communicative approach deal with this point of grammar? Should we use a combination of both approaches?)

3.- ¿Cuándo se les debería introducir a los estudiantes el modo subjuntivo?
En mi universidad se introduce al final del segundo semestre del primer año (nivel A2). ¿Es demasiado pronto?

(When should we start teaching the subjunctive to our students? In my university, students are introduced to the subjunctive mood at the end of their first year (level A2). Do you think this is too early?)

4.- ¿Estáis de acuerdo con la clasificación obtenida en este cuestionario del nivel de dificultad del modo subjuntivo con respecto a otros puntos gramaticales considerados de gran dificultad?
De más difícil a más fácil: (1) subjuntivo, (2) indefinido/imperfecto, (3) ser/estar, (4) por/para, (5) concordancia de género, (6) concordancia de número.

(Do you agree with the classification below in which the subjunctive mood was chosen as the most challenging point of grammar, among other points also considered quite challenging for L2 learners, according to teacher participants? From the most difficult to the easiest: (1) subjunctive, (2) preterit/imperfect, (3) ser/estar (to be), (4) por/para (for), (5) gender agreement (6) number agreement.

5.- ¿Qué funciona mejor para vosotros? ¿Habéis tenido alguna experiencia en la que os haya funcionado con algún grupo de estudiantes en particular o no habéis enseñado al mismo grupo de estudiantes durante el suficiente tiempo para apreciar ese progreso en su adquisición?
¿Qué tipo de estudiante consigue adquirir este contraste entre los modos indicativo y subjuntivo? ¿Cuándo llega a ocurrir esto?
¿Cuáles son las principales motivaciones de los estudiantes para aprender español? ¿Pensáis que les interesa utilizar con precisión el modo subjuntivo o simplemente lo consideran una utopía y se resignan a no usarlo nunca como un nativo?

(What works for you? Have you had an experience with some type of student in which this introduction worked? Or perhaps you have not had the same group of students during several levels of proficiency to track this progress? Is there a type of student who achieves the 'learning' of Spanish mood contrast? When does this happen? What are your students' motivations to learn Spanish? Do you think they are interested in learning how to use the subjunctive mood accurately or they just resign themselves to never use it like a native speaker?)

APPENDIX D: Student Background Questionnaire

What is your gender? (optional)
Which is your age group? (optional)
      18-25   26-35   36-45
What is your occupation?
Where were you born?
Have you always lived in the UK?
      yes   no
What is your current highest level of formal education?
      O-level/NVQ 1or2/SVQ 2
      NVQ 3/SVQ 3/Highers/Advanced Highers
      Diploma of Higher/Further Education/SVQ 4
      Masters Degree/Doctorate/SCQ 5
When did you start learning Spanish?
Since primary school
Since secondary school
Since my first year at university
I started as an adult: 24-35   36-45   Later
What is your current level of Spanish?
beginners/first year
intermediate/second year
upper-intermediate
advanced/year abroad
native-like/Honours

Why did you choose to study Spanish at university level?	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
I studied it at school and seemed like the obvious decision					
I love learning languages and Spanish is widely spoken					
I have friends/relatives living in a Spanish-speaking country					
I go on holidays to Spain frequently and enjoy chatting with the locals					
Learning Spanish is easy for me					
I need the credits for my university degree					

How do you intend to use Spanish in the future?	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
To live in Spain or in a Latin American country in the future					
To be bilingual in a language that is widely spoken around the world					
Just to be able to get by when I go on holidays					
To have a job in an international company					
To be a language teacher					
To be a translator					
To be an interpreter					

What is more important for you when using Spanish?	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
Don't like making mistakes when I write.					
Don't like making mistakes when I speak.					

Priority = to get high marks in the class tests, exams, etc.					
Don't feel comfortable using it because my level is lower than my classmates.					
I feel comfortable using it anywhere, I don't mind making mistakes.					
Priority = to be able to communicate with native speakers.					

Is English your first language?
       yes   no
If the answer is no to the previous question, what's your L1?
Did you grow up speaking another language?
       yes   no
What language/s (and since when) if the answer is yes.
Have you or are you studying a different language that is not Spanish?
       yes   no
Which one?
And a third language?
       yes   no
Which one?
How well you feel you can speak Spanish? (Choose one only)
       I only know some words and expressions
       I feel confident in basic conversations
       I feel fairly confident in extended conversations
       I feel confident in extended conversations

How confident do you feel when using Spanish in the following situations?	NN	N	Just	C	VC
I understand when I read newspapers, magazines and books.					
I am able to maintain a conversation with a native speaker.					
I am able to maintain a conversation with another student.					
I am able to translate a text into English.					
I am able to translate a text into Spanish.					
I understand when I listen to music or watch a film with subtitles.					
I understand when I listen a conversation among native speakers.					
I am able to write a letter or a short essay.					
I am able to write a report, summary or complex essay.					

Through which language were you predominantly taught at primary school?
And in secondary school?
Please feel free to add any information you might think is relevant and that has not been asked in previous questions.

APPENDIX E: Classroom Observation I (Pre-Intervention Study)

QUESTIONS ANSWERED DURING THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS:

1. How is the teacher greeting the students? (e.g. language, register, etc.)

2. What language is used as a medium? (English or Spanish?)

3. If both, when (or what for) is English used? When (or what for) is Spanish used?

4. What teaching approach/es is the teacher using to introduce the Spanish subjunctive?

5. What type of class material is being used? (e.g. audio-visual, handouts, etc.)

6. What structures of the Spanish subjunctive are being introduced? Do they correspond to what is expected at this level of proficiency?

7. Are (all) students engaging when asked questions by the teacher?

8. Do students confirm in any way that they understand (or not) the explanations provided by the teacher?

9. When completing the exercises, do all students participate? And, are they accurate in their responses?

10. What type of practice is carried out in the classroom? (e.g. drills, fill-in-the-blank, role-plays, etc.)

11. What type of practice is sent for homework (if any)?

COMPREHENSION TASK 1: LEVEL B1:

This task should be anonymous, so please do NOT write your name on the handout.
Please answer the following question before completing this task:
What is your native/first language (L1)? _____

In the following situations, which option is more adequate, in your opinion? Please explain your response in one or two lines inside the boxes. You can write the explanations in English or Spanish. Thank you.

SITUATION 1
I'm in a coffee shop with my best friend. We are talking about a common friend of ours, whom we haven't seen for a while. Rumour has it that she is going out with the best-looking boy in the University, David Santamaría. Suddenly, we see the pair of them walking along holding hands. My best friend says:
a) Está claro que Ana **está** saliendo con David.
b) Está claro que Ana **esté** saliendo con David.

Options:
□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 2
I'm in a coffee shop with my best friend. We are talking about a common friend of ours, whom we haven't seen for a while. Rumour has it that she is going out with the best-looking boy in the University, David Santamaría. Suddenly, we see the pair of them walking along but they are not showing any signs of being together. My best friend says:
a) Es posible que Ana **está** saliendo con David.
b) Es posible que Ana **esté** saliendo con David.

Options:
□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 3
There is a Latin American film we need to see as part of the course programme, but after having given it a lot of thought, I don't think I have the time or money to go (or the will). I know that you are free this evening and you owe me a big favour. I say:
a) Quiero **ir** al cine a ver la película.
b) Quiero **que vayas** al cine a ver la película.

Options:
□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

[ ]

SITUATION 4

I'm studying for the final exam. The date is really close and I'm still struggling to understand some important concepts. I need my friend, who is really good at Physics, so I phone her to ask her for help. I would like to meet this afternoon, but she seems to have plans. She says:

a) Tengo que ir a ver a mi abuela, pero cuando **regreso** me pasaré por tu casa, si no es muy tarde.

b) Tengo que ir a ver a mi abuela, pero cuando **regrese** me pasaré por tu casa, si no es muy tarde.

Options:

□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

[ ]

SITUATION 5

My friend and I are having dinner with my father, who is visiting for Christmas. He's treating us to a nice restaurant and my friend is a bit nervous because he's never met my dad and he can be quite intimidating. When we arrive at the restaurant it's really busy, so my friend asks who my dad is among all those people. I say:

a) Es ese señor que **lleva** barba y gafas.

b) Es ese señor que **lleve** barba y gafas.

Options:

□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

[ ]

SITUATION 6

I've recently bought a huge load of plant pots (*las macetas*). I don't even have a garden. My friends think I'm going crazy, they don't see the purpose of my purchase, so they are asking me what all those pots are for. This is my reply:

a) Las quiero para **cultivar** especias y hierbas medicinales.

b) Las quiero para **que cultive** especias y hierbas medicinales.

Options:

□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

[ ]

SITUATION 7

My mum says that I would eat anything that is placed in front of me on a plate. I really like food, any type, and sometimes I eat too much and end up with an upset stomach. I never learn.
Today my mum had enough of me, and shouted:

a) ¡No **comes** más! Vas a enfermarte.

b) ¡No **comas** más! Vas a enfermarte.

Options:

☐ a) is better for this situation.
☐ b) is better for this situation.
☐ Both are adequate for this situation.
☐ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 8

Earlier this week I had a meeting with my adviser of studies. I'm not sure I can keep up with all the subjects I picked when I enrolled for my first year at uni. He said I should give it a go for a few more weeks before I drop any courses. I'm telling one of my friends:

a) A principios de esta semana **he tenido** una reunión con mi asesor de estudios.
b) A principios de esta semana **tuve** una reunión con mi asesor de estudios.

Options:

☐ a) is better for this situation.
☐ b) is better for this situation.
☐ Both are adequate for this situation.
☐ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

COMPREHENSION TASK 2: LEVEL B1:

This task should be anonymous, so please do NOT write your name on the handout.
Please answer the following question before completing this task:
What is your native/first language (L1)? _____

The following text has some verbs missing. Choose the best option for each gap writing the letter *a* or the letter *b*:

Glossary:	
estar acostumbrado/a: to be used to	salir de marcha: to go out (drinking/dancing/etc.)
compartir: to share	ratos libres: spare time
estar alojado/a: to stay (i.e. accommodation)	acostumbrarse: to get used to
instalarse: to move (i.e. house)	aprovechar al máximo: to make the most of it
mudanza: move (i.e. house)	pasar: spend (time)
majo/a: nice, pleasant	así (que): so, hence
	ya que: since, because

Este es mi primer año de Erasmus. La verdad es que estoy un poco nervioso porque acabo de llegar a Escocia. Hace mucho frío y no estoy acostumbrado. Creo que _____ (**a – tengo / b – tenga**) reservada una habitación en un piso compartiendo con otros estudiantes, pero no _____ (**a – esté / b – estoy**) seguro. Mi madre alquiló la habitación y todavía no me ha enviado la dirección, así que estoy alojado con unos amigos durante un par de días. Espero que mi madre me _____ (**a – envía / b – envíe**) la dirección hoy para poder instalarme antes del lunes próximo, y así no estar preocupado por la mudanza cuando _____ (**a – empiecen / b – empiezan**) las clases. LLa universidad que me ha tocado se llama Strathclyde y _____ (**a – está / b – esté**) en el centro de Glasgow. He conocido ya a algunos compañeros de curso y la verdad es que _____ (**a – sean / b – son**) todos muy majos. Me encanta la idea de tener solo tres días de clase a la semana, así _____ (**a – tendré / b – tenga**) tiempo libre para visitar algunos lugares interesantes en Glasgow y fuera de Glasgow. Me encanta que los edificios de la universidad _____ (**a – estén / b – están**) todos tan cerca del centro, ya que _____ (**a – es / b – sea**) perfecto para salir de marcha o de compras en los ratos libres. La gente de Glasgow tiene un acento muy fuerte, no sé si

_____ (**a – vaya / b – voy**) a entender a mis profesores en la universidad. Espero no _____ (**a – tener / b – tenga**) muchos problemas con el idioma, necesito hacer amigos escoceses cuanto antes para acostumbrarme al acento. Todo el mundo me aconseja que _____ (**a – organice / b – organizo**) un intercambio de inglés/español para aprovechar al máximo el tiempo que _____ (**a – pasaré / b – pase**) en este país.

PRODUCTION TASK 1: LEVEL B1:

This task should be anonymous, so please do NOT write your name on the handout. Please answer the following question before completing this task: What is your native/first language (L1)? _____

Finish the following sentences in Spanish, depending on the situation explained immediately above. You may use a second line if you need to.

SITUATION 1
We are sitting at the table in one of the conference rooms. We are waiting for Sara to arrive. I was talking to her yesterday evening and she wasn't feeling too well. My boss asks if any of us has talked to her this morning. I answer:
- No he hablado con ella hoy, pero es muy posible que _____

_____ .

(estar enferma = to be ill // venir = to come // estar en cama = to be in bed // etc.)

SITUATION 2
There are 45 students in the class. The teacher is trying to explain the instructions for a group activity, but everybody is chatting and not paying much attention to what he's trying to say. He's now getting annoyed and raises his voice:
- ¡Un momento, por favor! Necesito silencio para _____

_____ .

(poder = to be able to // entender o comprender = to understand // explicar = to explain // etc.)

SITUATION 3
I am finishing a painting. I had to rush it and I'm not too sure I should include it for next week's exhibition. You are my best friend and you're always honest with me. I ask for your opinion and you say:
- Sandra, yo no me preocuparía, creo que _____

_____ .

(incluir = to include // tener suficientes = to have enough // etc.)

SITUATION 4
My mum wants me to buy some stuff for dinner. She wants to roast a chicken and has asked me to buy a big one because we have some guests coming. I go to the local shop and grab some vegetables and fruit. All the red meat and poultry are behind the counter. I ask the shopkeeper:
- Buenos días, ¿me pone un pollo que _____

_____ ?

(ser = to be // estar = to be // etc.)

SITUATION 5
Alejandro said he would come to today's lecture, but he's not here. Luis and I are trying to guess why Alejandro's not arrived yet. We know he's a bit forgetful and loves his bed, but at the same time he's very punctual and committed to his classes, so we're a bit puzzled. Luis says:
- Supongo que Alejandro_____

_____ .

(haberse dormido = to have slept in // tener otras cosas que hacer = to have other things to do // etc.)

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SITUATION 6

The final exam is in two weeks. I'm quite nervous because I haven't had time to properly prepare due to my work commitments. My adviser of studies suggested that I should give priority to my studies and give up my job, but I need to work to pay the rent. It's like a vicious circle.

One of my friends told me:

- Si realmente quieres mi opinión, yo te recomiendo que _____

_____ .

(concentrarse en = to focus on / dejar = to give up / presentarse a = to sit (an exam) / etc.)

SITUATION 7

As a course coordinator, sometimes I need to discuss issues regarding classes or assessment with other colleagues. I'm one of a few with an individual office, most colleagues have their desks in the open-plan area. I want to talk with one of my colleagues, but he is quite busy. I ask him:

- Javier, ¿puedes venir a mi oficina cuando _____

_____ ?

(poder = to be able to // tener un rato = to have some time // haber terminado con eso = to have finished with that // etc.)

SITUATION 8

I'm so nervous for the oral presentation next week, I'm not sure I will be able to handle it. I haven't prepared as much as I wanted to, and I don't like this type of activities, I'm not good at talking in public. But as usual, you are so level-headed that you openly say:

- Seguro que lo haces muy bien, pero sólo si _____

_____ .

(prepararse = to prepare // tomarse una tila = to take a lime blossom tea // esforzarse = to put some effort // etc.)

Thank you very much for participating in this study.

PRODUCTION TASK 2: LEVEL B1:

This task should be anonymous, so please do NOT write your name on the handout.
Please answer the following question before completing this task:
What is your native/first language (L1)? _____

The following text has some verbs missing. Write the most appropriate form of the verb in brackets:

Glossary: estar acostumbrado/a: to be used to compartir: to share estar alojado/a: to stay (i.e. accommodation) instalarse: to move (i.e. house) mudanza: move (i.e. house) majo/a: nice, pleasant	salir de marcha: to go out (drinking/dancing/etc.) ratos libres: spare time acostumbrarse: to get used to aprovechar al máximo: to make the most of it pasar: spend (time) así (que): so, hence. ya que: since, because

Este es mi primer año de Erasmus. La verdad es que estoy un poco nervioso porque acabo de llegar a Escocia. Hace mucho frío y no estoy acostumbrado. Creo que _____ (**tener/yo**) reservada una habitación en un piso compartiendo con otros estudiantes, pero no _____ (**estar/yo**) seguro. Mi madre alquiló la habitación y todavía no me ha enviado la dirección, así que estoy alojado con unos amigos durante un par de días. Espero que mi madre me _____ (**enviar/ella**) la dirección hoy para poder instalarme antes del lunes próximo, y así no estar preocupado por la mudanza cuando _____ (**empezar/ellas**) las clases.

La universidad que me ha tocado se llama Strathclyde y _____ (**estar/ella**) en el centro de Glasgow. He conocido ya a algunos compañeros de curso y la verdad es que _____ (**ser/ellos**) todos muy majos. Me encanta la idea de

tener solo tres días de clase a la semana, así _____ (**tener/yo**) tiempo libre para visitar algunos lugares interesantes en Glasgow y fuera de Glasgow. Me encanta que los edificios de la universidad _____ (**estar/ellos**) todos tan cerca del centro, ya que _____ (**ser/ello**) perfecto para salir de marcha o de compras en los ratos libres. La gente de Glasgow tiene un acento muy fuerte, no sé si _____ (**ir/yo**) a entender a mis profesores en la universidad. Espero no ____ (**tener/yo**) muchos problemas con el idioma, necesito hacer amigos escoceses cuanto antes para acostumbrarme al acento. Todo el mundo me aconseja que _____ (**organizar/yo**) un intercambio de inglés/español para aprovechar al máximo el tiempo que _____ (**pasar/yo**) en este país.

COMPREHENSION TASK: LEVEL B2:

This task should be anonymous, so please do NOT write your name on the handout.
Please answer the following question before completing this task:
What is your native/first language (L1)? _____

In the following situations, which option is more adequate, in your opinion? Please explain your response in one or two lines inside the boxes. You can write the explanations in English or Spanish. Thank you.

SITUATION 1:
I go into the University bookshop. I'm looking to buy a book for my Psychology class that is available now. I don't have time to look for it on the shelves. I approach the assistant and ask her:
a) ¿Tienen un libro que se **llama** *El Poder del Ahora*?
b) ¿Tienen un libro que se **llame** *El Poder del Ahora*?
  Options:
□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 2:
During my last holidays in Spain (June 2015), I spent 9 days on the Mediterranean coast and 5 days in Madrid. During my stay on the coast I had a really nice routine: every day I woke up late, had breakfast on the balcony, went to the swimming-pool, had lunch in a restaurant with friends, had a siesta until 5pm, went to the beach with friends and then, after a shower, we all went out for dinner and drinks until 3 or 4 in the morning.
a) En agosto pasé nueve días de vacaciones en la costa e **iba** a la playa todos los días.
b) En agosto pasé nueve días de vacaciones en la costa y **fui** a la playa todos los días.
 Options:
□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 3:
My best friend is preparing for an exam in order to get a job as a Councillor. He's really worried because there are more than two thousand people applying for the very same job, so it is very difficult to pass that exam. This is what he said to me:
a) Aprobar este examen sería como si me **tocara** la lotería.
b) Aprobar este examen sería como si me **tocaba** la lotería.
Options:
□ a) is better for this situation.

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□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 4:

I'm studying for the final exam. The date is really close and I'm still struggling to understand some important concepts. I need my friend, who is really good at Physics, so I phone her to ask her for help. I would like to meet this afternoon, but she seems to have plans. She says:

a) Tengo que ir a ver a mi abuela, pero cuando **regreso** me pasaré por tu casa, si no es muy tarde.

b) Tengo que ir a ver a mi abuela, pero cuando **regrese** me pasaré por tu casa, si no es muy tarde.

Options:

□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 5:

I've recently bought a huge load of plant pots (*macetas*). My friends think I'm going crazy, because they know I'm not into gardening, so they are asking me what all those pots are for. I live with my partner, who loves gardening, and it's her birthday soon. This is my reply:

a) Las quiero para **cultivar** especias y hierbas medicinales.

b) Las quiero para **que cultive** especias y hierbas medicinales.

Options:

□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 6:

Ernesto is organising a farewell party for one of our colleagues. He's quite bossy, so he's decided who's doing what, even if nobody else agrees with this arrangement. He's asked Laura to buy balloons, and plastic glasses and plates. I have to make a cake, and Alberto is in charge of the music.

a) Ernesto dice que Laura **compra** globos, vasos y platos.

b) Ernesto dice que Laura **compre** globos, vasos y platos.

Options:

□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 7:

I've been to a Halloween party and it's been a great success. Nearly everybody from my university course was there, and we drank and ate a lot. Music was fantastic too. It's four in the morning and everybody's left, so I'm leaving too. I'm on my way home and a friend phones me because he wants to come to the party. I say:

a) **Me temo** que no **queda** nadie en la fiesta.

b) **Temo** que no **quede** nadie en la fiesta.

Options:
□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

SITUATION 8

I'm in a coffee shop with my best friend. We are talking about a common friend of ours, whom we haven't seen for a while. Rumour has it that she is going out with the best-looking boy in the University, David Santamaría. Suddenly, we see the pair of them walking along but they are not showing any signs of being together. My best friend says:

a) No está claro que Ana **está** saliendo con David.
b) No está claro que Ana **esté** saliendo con David.

Options:
□ a) is better for this situation.
□ b) is better for this situation.
□ Both are adequate for this situation.
□ Neither is adequate for this situation.

Please explain your choice in one or two lines below:

COMPREHENSION TASK: LEVEL C1+/C2:

This is an anonymous task.
Please answer the following question before completing this task:
What is your first/native language (L1)? _____.

Below you will find 8 different situations which conclude in a sentence or question. This sentence has two options: a) and b). Choose what you think the most adequate option is for each situation and explain your choice in one or two lines.

SITUATION 1:

I go into the University bookshop. I'm looking to buy a book for my Psychology class that I've been told is already available and some of my classmates have bought it from here. I know the title, but I don't remember the author. I can't find it on the shelves. I approach the assistant and ask her:

a) ¿Tienen un libro que se **llama** El Poder del Ahora?
b) ¿Tienen un libro que se **llame** El Poder del Ahora?

a) is better in this situation

b) is better in this situation

Both are correct in this situation

Neither is correct in this situation

I don't know

Please explain your choice below in one or two lines:

SITUATION 2:

When I was a child, I had a slight stutter. At school, all my classmates, even my best friends, used to mock me and laugh at me. At first I didn't like it at all and used to get really crossed. But I got used to it and in the end, I didn't care that much about it.

a) Lo que más me molestaba era que se **reían** de mí.
b) Lo que más me molestaba era que se **rieran** de mí.

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a) is better in this situation
b) is better in this situation
Both are correct in this situation
Neither is correct in this situation
I don't know

Please explain your choice below in one or two lines:

SITUATION 3:

During my last holiday in Spain, I spent 2 weeks on the Mediterranean coast and 5 days in Madrid. During my stay on the coast I had a really nice routine: every day I woke up late, had breakfast on the balcony, went to the swimming-pool, had lunch in a restaurant with friends, had a siesta until 5pm, went to the beach with friends and then, after a shower, we all went out for dinner and drinks until 3 or 4 in the morning.
a) En agosto pasé dos semanas de vacaciones en la costa, e **iba** a la playa todos los días.
b) En agosto pasé dos semanas de vacaciones en la costa, y **fui** a la playa todos los días.
a) is better in this situation
b) is better in this situation
Both are correct in this situation
Neither is correct in this situation
I don't know

Please explain your choice below in one or two lines.

SITUATION 4:

Ernesto is organising a farewell party for one of our colleagues. He's quite bossy, so he's decided who's in charge of what. He asked Laura to buy balloons, plastic glasses and plates. I have to make a cake, and Alberto is in charge of the music.
a) Ernesto ha dicho que Laura **compra** globos, vasos y platos.
b) Ernesto ha dicho que Laura **compre** globos, vasos y platos.
a) is better in this situation
b) is better in this situation
Both are correct in this situation
Neither is correct in this situation
I don't know

Please explain your choice below in one or two lines.

SITUATION 5:

I have a classmate at uni who always gets really good results. He's hard-working and shows real interest for every subject he's chosen this year. Everybody else sees him as an oddball, they always say he's a swot. He knows he's called that and he doesn't like it.
a) Le molesta que le **llamen** empollón.
b) Lo que le molesta es que le **llaman** empollón.
a) is better in this situation
b) is better in this situation
Both are correct in this situation
Neither is correct in this situation
I don't know

Please explain your choice below in one or two lines.

SITUATION 6:

They are shooting a film in my parents' neighbourhood. Everybody is very excited about it. The casting director is looking for non-professional actors to do some of the secondary roles. S/he's put an advert on the local paper that says:

a) Se **busca** a los actores no profesionales.

b) Se **buscan** actores no profesionales.

a) is better in this situation

b) is better in this situation

Both are correct in this situation

Neither is correct in this situation

I don't know

Please explain your choice below in one or two lines.

SITUATION 7:

I've been to a Halloween party and it's been a great success. Nearly everybody from my university course was there, and we drank and ate a lot. Music was fantastic too. It's four in the morning and nearly everybody's left, so I'm leaving too. I'm nearly home and a friend phones me because he wants to go to the party. I say:

a) Me temo que ya no **queda** nadie en la fiesta.

b) Temo que ya no **quede** nadie en la fiesta.

a) is better in this situation

b) is better in this situation

Both are correct in this situation

Neither is correct in this situation

I don't know

Please explain your choice below in one or two lines.

SITUATION 8:

We've just finished our third year at uni and we've passed all our subjects, although it's been very hard work and demanding. Next year is our year abroad in Spain. It's quite exciting, but at the same time quite stressful to think what it has in store for us.

a) Lo bueno es que no **tenemos** que estudiar este verano.

b) Lo bueno es que no **tengamos** que estudiar este verano.

a) is better in this situation

b) is better in this situation

Both are correct in this situation

Neither is correct in this situation

I don't know

Please explain your choice below in one or two lines.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THIS TASK

PRODUCTION TASK: LEVEL C1+/C2:

This is an anonymous task.
Please answer the following question before completing this task:
What is your first/native language (L1)? _____.

Below you will find 6 different situations which you're required to comment on in Spanish. Please try to use the lines available in your responses. Ask your tutor about vocabulary if you need to. Thank you.

SITUATION 1
You want your sister to come and visit because she's never been to your new house. You haven't seen her for nearly a year due to her work commitments, and you really miss her.
She has been given a few days off, but she needs to visit your parents too. You doubt she will make it, but you really wish she would.
What would you say to your best friend (in Spanish) if you wanted to put into words your feelings?

_____

_____

SITUATION 2
You're looking for a particular coat you've spotted in a fashion magazine. It's quite expensive, but you've been saving to buy a nice birthday present for yourself, so you decide to buy it.
The coat has an unusual characteristic: it has a perfect circle cut out of the back, and it is bright green. You pay for the coat online, but you can't collect it in person, so you send your brother who's not working today. You describe the coat in detail to your brother, so he collects the one you bought, since there are other coats with the same shape but in different colours. Besides, your brother is not very fashion conscious and you're concerned he will bring you the wrong coat.
How would you describe the coat, so your brother doesn't mess things up?

_____

_____

SITUATION 3
It is November and you need to prepare an informal oral presentation for your last Spanish class. One of the tasks requires from you to summarise in 2 lines something odd that happened to you or someone you know on your last holiday abroad. This could be a culturally-related episode, a misunderstanding, or even a dream (or something made up).
How would you say this in Spanish?

_____

_____

SITUATION 4
You've been looking for a specific book for a long time. This book has a peculiar characteristic: it contains a study on *linguistic variation in the Spanish speaking world* that you need to read in order to write an essay for one of your Honours classes. Finally, you managed to locate it and you're more than delighted. [ESP: *variación lingüística del español*]
How would you finish the following sentence?

Por fin...
_____

SITUATION 5
You're in your Spanish native speaker class (i.e. oral class) and your tutor asks you to imagine some 'impossible' situations. Originality is an important factor, so you need to let your imagination run free. How would you start the following sentences?

...saldría todos los días en la televisión.
_____

...podría ir a la luna de vacaciones.

...habría pasado algún tiempo en la cárcel.

SITUATION 6
Your lecturer has asked you to translate into Spanish the following passage:
"My best friend is quite tall. He's friendly and polite, but he's a bit crazy. He's also too thin these days, although he's always been very fit. His girlfriend is fed up of him, because he's always jogging. She says that he's obsessed, and she would like him to change".
Can you translate it using the lines below?

To conclude, just a few questions to be answered in Spanish:
¿Qué te ha parecido este tipo de ejercicio? ¿Lo encuentras difícil? ¿Crees que tienes un nivel C1+ o un C2 ahora que casi has terminado tu último año de español en la universidad?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THIS TASK

APPENDIX G: Comprehension Activity (Intervention Study: Stage 1)

Q1: Me llamo Mario Roldán.

▲	He *declares* that his name is Mario Roldán.		✓
◆	He **does not** *declare* that his name is Mario Roldán.		✗

Q2: Sé que Pablo tiene una parte del dinero.

▲	He *declares* that Pablo kept a share of the money.		✓
◆	He **does not** *declare* that Pablo kept a share of the money.		✗

Q3: Supongo que Jenaro estará en otro país.

▲	He *declares* that Jenaro is abroad by now.		✓
◆	He **does not** *declare* that Jenaro is abroad by now.		✗

Q4: Es posible que Lourdes esté todavía en España.

▲	He *declares* that Lourdes is still in Spain.		✗
◆	He **does not** *declare* that Lourdes is still in Spain.		✓

Q5: La verdad es que yo necesitaba conseguir dinero.

▲	He *declares* that he needed to get hold of some money.		✓
◆	He **does not** *declare* that he needed to get hold of some money		✗

Q6: No creo que Rosa esté implicada en el robo.

▲	He *declares* that Rosa is involved in the theft.		✗
◆	He **does not** *declare* that Rosa is involved in the theft.		✓

Q7: Quiero que venga mi abogado inmediatamente.	🖼️ 30 sec
🔺 He *declares* that his lawyer is coming immediately.	✗
🔷 He **does not** *declare* that his lawyer is coming immediately.	✓
Q8: Le aseguro que no tengo ninguna implicación en el robo.	🖼️ 30 sec
🔺 He *declares* that he has no involvement in the theft.	✓
🔷 He **does not** *declare* that he has no involvement in the theft.	✗

Q1. My name is Mario Roldán.
Q2. I know that Pablo has a share/portion of the money.
Q3. I guess that Jenaro will be in another country by now.
Q4. It is possible that Lourdes is still in Spain.
Q5. The truth is that I needed to make some money.
Q6. I don't think Rosa is involved in the robbery.
Q7. I want my lawyer to come immediately.
Q8. I assure you that I don't have any involvement in the robbery.

APPENDIX H: Classroom Observation II (Intervention Study: Stage 1)

QUESTIONS ANSWERED DURING THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS:

1. How is the teacher greeting the students? (e.g. language, register, etc.)

2. Is the teacher presenting the relevant concepts with clarity? Is s/he confirming this with the students?

3. Is the teacher giving students enough time to reflect on the new information presented? (e.g. in order for the students to respond to the questions in the slides which are addressed to them)

4. How long does it take the tutor to go over all the slides? (i.e. estimated time of approximately 40/45 minutes)

5. Do some students ask questions during the presentation?

6. In what way does the tutor explain the students what they need to do in order to complete the practice (online) activity at the end of the session? (e.g. does s/he warn students that they are also required to provide an explanation for their yes/no answer before or after the task is completed?)

7. Do students give enough time for reflection before answering each of the nine situations presented to them when completing the practice activity?

8. When students are asked to provide a 'reason' or 'explanation' for their yes/no answer, do they use the recently learned conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration? Or, on the contrary, do they use terms/concepts typical of the traditional approach?

9. Are all students participating? Are students confirming their comprehension (or lack of comprehension) when asked?

10. Do (any) students look overwhelmed at the end of the session?

APPENDIX I: Informal Interview with Teacher Participants (Intervention Study: Stage 1)

QUESTIONS ASKED DURING INFORMAL INTERVIEW:

1. Do you think (all) your students understood the conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration?

2. What would you do differently if you could deliver the presentation again?

3. What are your views about this method?

    o   Do you think it can improve students' comprehension and use of mood selection?

    o   Did you feel comfortable implementing it?

    o   Do you believe that the lack of publications (e.g. textbooks) implementing this method could represent an important drawback for teachers to adopt it in their classes?

4. Would you be willing to learn more about this method so that it can be applied at all levels of proficiency?

APPENDIX J: PowerPoint Presentation 1 (Intervention Study: Stage 2 - updated)
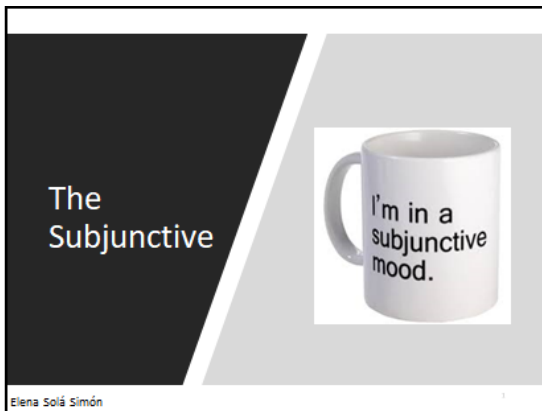
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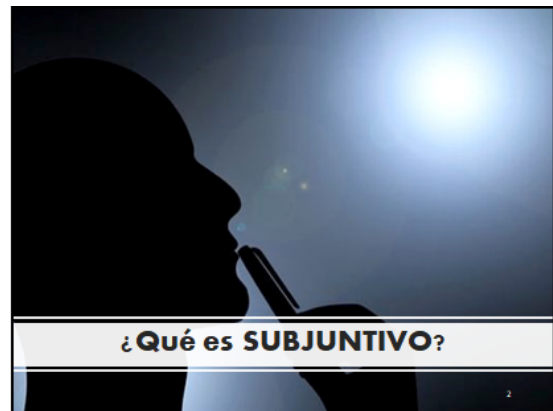
2

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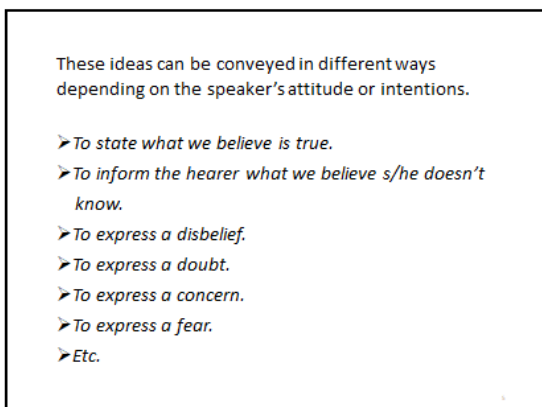
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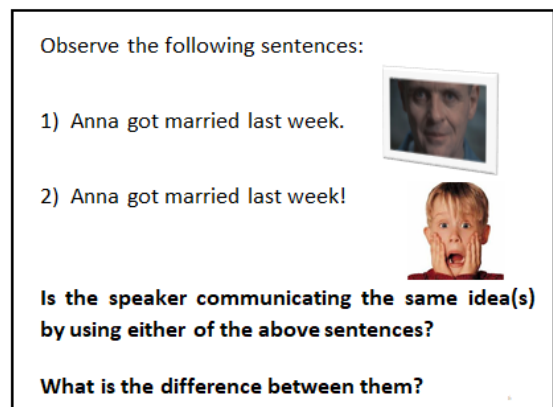
6

The language we use depends on **HOW** we want to communicate our ideas (or somebody else's ideas).
Linguistically speaking, this is called:

MODALITY

↓

"the speaker's attitude towards what is said."

7

GRAMMATICAL MOODS are the linguistic forms of **MODALITY**.

Traditionally speaking, there are 3 different moods (in Spanish, and in English):

➢ *INDICATIVE*

➢ *SUBJUNCTIVE*

➢ *IMPERATIVE*

8

The subjunctive in English

The subjunctive in English is limited to a few verb forms (or word order changes) and mostly used in a formal register.
Some examples:

The teacher insists that her students **be** on time.

If I **were** you I'd buy that Porsche. But I'm not you.

Would that it **were** so simple…

9

Hail, Caesar! (Joel and Ethan Coen, 2016)

10

In English, to convey modality, a wide variety of **modal verbs** and structures are commonly used.

Examples:
➢They said they **might** come later.
➢If we don't hurry we **could** be late.
➢I know it **can** be very cold in winter.
➢I guess you **must** be hungry.
➢She says they **should** arrive soon.
➢I believe she **may** be right.

11

In Spanish, however, apart from some **modal verbs**, there is also **a specific verb morphology** for the subjunctive mood (with its own endings and irregular forms).

12

Slide 13

Let's observe the following four sentences:

1) **I know** John will come tomorrow.

2) **I assume** John will come tomorrow.

3) **It's possible** John will come tomorrow.

4) **I don't think** John will come tomorrow.

What is the main difference between sentences 1&2 and sentences 3&4?

13

Slide 14

The difference is that the speaker is saying that *John will come tomorrow* ONLY in the first two sentences.

***John will come tomorrow* is the '**proposition**' or piece of information that the speaker communicates or reports in every sentence (1-4).

14

Slide 15

1) **I know** *John will come tomorrow*.

2) **I assume** *John will come tomorrow*.

3) **It's possible** *John will come tomorrow*.

4) **I don't think** *John will come tomorrow*.

MAIN CLAUSE / MATRIX	SUBORDINATED CLAUSE / PROPOSITION
I know (that)...	...John will come tomorrow.
I assume (that)...	...John will come tomorrow.
It's possible (that)...	...John will come tomorrow.
I don't think (that)...	...John will come tomorrow.

15

Slide 16

The concept of **DECLARATION** is used to explain the difference between the **INDICATIVE** and the **SUBJUNCTIVE** moods.

Declaration is the formal or linguistic representation of what the **speaker** or **subject** of the matrix **knows** (**ass**erts) or **thinks** (**ass**umes).

SPEAKER'S PERSPECTIVE

16

Slide 17

To **declare** (www.collinsdictionary.com):
1) to show, reveal, or manifest.
2) to make known one's choice or opinion.
3) to state emphatically; assert.
Synonyms: make known, tell, reveal, show, communicate, etc.

Declarar (www.rae.es):
Manifestar, hacer público.

17

Slide 18

Let's go back to the previous four sentences:

1) **I know** *John will come tomorrow*.

2) **I assume** *John will come tomorrow*.

3) **It's possible** *John will come tomorrow*.

4) **I don't think** *John will come tomorrow*.

In sentences 3 and 4 the speaker is **NOT** saying that *John will come tomorrow*.

18

Slide 19:

To introduce the concepts of **DECLARATION** and **NON-DECLARATION** in relation to the contrast between the **INDICATIVE** and the **SUBJUNCTIVE** moods to students of Spanish, Ruiz Campillo (2005) uses the following sentence:

In Spanish, when someone says that it's raining, that means that someone says that it's raining.

19

Slide 20:

Let's observe the following sentences:

➢ I want it to rain.
➢ I hope it rains.
➢ It's not likely to rain.

Is the speaker saying that *it rains or it will rain* in any of the above sentences?

NO

20

Slide 21:

In Spanish, when the speaker (or subject) wants to *declare* a proposition s/he uses the **indicative**.

Creo que está^IND lloviendo.
(I think it's raining)

When the speaker (or subject) **DOESN'T** want to *declare* a proposition s/he uses the **subjunctive**.

No creo que esté^SUB lloviendo.
(I don't think it's raining)

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Slide 22:

A LITTLE TRICK

I **think** *John will come tomorrow.*

John will come tomorrow, I think. ✓

I **don't think** *John will come tomorrow.*

John will come tomorrow, I don't think. ✗

I **think** *John won't come tomorrow.*

John won't come tomorrow, I think. ✓

22

Slide 23:

ANOTHER LITTLE TRICK

If you can change the matrix for "I **ass**ert" OR "I **ass**ume" (I = the **speaker**)

or "you, s/he, we, they **ass**ert/s" OR you, s/he, we, they **ass**ume/s" (the **subject of the matrix** if different from the speaker)

and the sentence still **means more or less the same**, then the proposition is a *DECLARATION*.

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Slide 24:
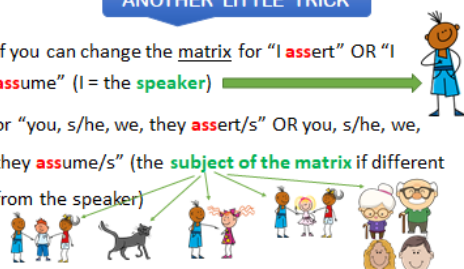
ANOTHER LITTLE TRICK

*I know **you understand this concept**.*
I assert you understand this concept. ✓
*I believe **you understand this concept**.*
I assume you understand this concept. ✓
*Javier doubts **you understand this concept**.*
Javier asserts/assumes you understand this concept. ✗

24

Slide 25:

Is the speaker declaring that John will come tomorrow?

1. I know John will come tomorrow. `YES`
   ➢ Sé que John **vendrá**[IND] mañana.
2. I assume John will come tomorrow. `YES`
   ➢ Supongo/Asumo que John **vendrá**[IND] mañana.
3. It's possible John will come tomorrow. `NO`
   ➢ Es posible que John **venga**[SUB] mañana.
4. I don't think John will come tomorrow. `NO`
   ➢ No creo que John **venga**[SUB] mañana.

Is the speaker declaring that it rains or it will rain?

5. I want it to rain. `NO`
   ➢ Quiero que **llueva**[SUB].
6. I hope it rains. `NO`
   ➢ Espero que **llueva**[SUB].
7. It's not likely to rain. `NO`
   ➢ No es probable que **llueva**[SUB].

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Slide 26:

¡GRACIAS!
(por escuchar)
¿ALGUNA PREGUNTA?

26

APPENDIX K: Examples Classroom Activities (Intervention Study: Stage 2)

ACTIVITY 1:

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20

21

22

23

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ACTIVITY 2:

Alex always *declares* everything he says, but Julio is the exact opposite, he never *declares* anything. In the following cases, who is saying what? Write 'Alex' or 'Julio' in the gap below each sentence.

1. Quiero **sacar muy buena nota en el examen final**.

Answer: _____

2. Siempre le digo que **no vuelva a casa tan tarde**.

Answer: _____

4. Creo que **no existe el infierno**.

Answer: _____

6. Sé que **has tenido problemas con tu novio**.

Answer: _____

5. No creo que **exista el infierno**.

Answer: _____

7. Es indudable que **trabajáis mucho**.

Answer: _____

8. Es muy posible que **nos compremos esa casa**.

Answer: _____

9. Necesito **salir de aquí**.

Answer: _____

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

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PRACTICE

¿DECLARAMOS O NO DECLARAMOS?

Me han dicho que **no van a comprar la casa.** **SÍ**
Todos imaginan que **el examen será difícil.** **SÍ**
Necesito que **me ayudes.** **NO**
Te garantizo que **te pagaré a final de semana.** **SÍ**
No es verdad que **trabaje poco.** **NO**
Me parece que **tus hijos tienen hambre.** **SÍ**
Me parece bien que **te eches una siesta.** **NO**
Espero que **entendáis este concepto.** **NO**

Can we change the matrix for 'assert' (**afirmar**) or 'assume' (**suponer**) and maintain a similar meaning?

13

1b (questioning) 1c (commenting) 1d (wanting)

Es posible que trabaje el viernes. *questioning*
Es muy triste ir a la cárcel. *commenting*
¿Me recomiendas que compre este libro? *wanting*
Es necesario estudiar mucho para aprobar el curso. *wanting*
Dudo que tenga paciencia con él. *questioning*
Necesito que me ayudes. *wanting*
No es verdad que trabaje poco. *questioning*
Me parece bien que te eches una siesta. *commenting*
Espero que entendáis este concepto. *wanting*

14

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COMPREHENSION TASK 1

Id. Number:	**Is English your L1?** YES ☐ NO ☐
	(Optional) L1 (if you answered NO above):

In the following cases, say whether the speaker (or subject of the matrix) is *'declaring'* (YES) or *'not declaring'* (NO) the information in the **proposition** by <u>ticking the corresponding box</u> and then choose the most appropriate option (*a*, *b*, or *c*) to explain <u>why</u>.

1. Está claro que **Ana tiene dinero suficiente para comprar el coche**.

    YES ☐   NO ☐

    a) Because you can change 'Está claro que' for 'Afirmo que'.

    b) Because you can change 'Está claro que' for 'Supongo que'.

    c) Because you can**not** change 'Está claro que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.

2. No creo que **Renato se divorcie de Inma**.

    YES ☐   NO ☐

    a) Because you can change 'No creo que' for 'Afirmo que'.

    b) Because you can change 'No creo que' for 'Supongo que'.

    c) Because you can**not** change 'No creo que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.

3. Me parece que **estás equivocado**. El examen no es mañana.

    YES ☐   NO ☐

    a) Because you can change 'Me parece que' for 'Afirmo que'.

    b) Because you can change 'Me parece que' for 'Supongo que'.

    c) Because you can**not** change 'Me parece que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.

4. La profesora nos ha pedido que **trabajemos más fuera de clase**.

    YES ☐   NO ☐

    a) Because you can change 'La profesora nos ha pedido que' for 'La profesora afirma que'.

    b) Because you can change 'La profesora nos ha pedido que' for 'La profesora supone que'.

    c) Because you can**not** change 'La profesora nos ha pedido que' for either 'La profesora afirma que' nor 'La profesora supone que'.

5. No es verdad que **estemos cansados**. Solo hemos caminado cinco kilómetros.

    YES ☐   NO ☐

    a) Because you can change 'No es verdad que' for 'Afirmamos que'.

    b) Because you can change 'No es verdad que' for 'Suponemos que'.

    c) Because you can**not** change 'No es verdad que' for either 'Afirmamos que' nor 'Suponemos que'.

6. Quiero que **vuelvas pronto a casa**.

    YES ☐   NO ☐

    a) Because you can change 'Quiero que' for 'Afirmo que'.

    b) Because you can change 'Quiero que' for 'Supongo que'.

c) Because you can**not** change 'Quiero que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.

7. Asumimos que **habrá suficiente comida para todos**.

   YES ☐   NO ☐

   a) Because you can change 'Asumimos que' for 'Afirmamos que'.

   b) Because you can change 'Asumimos que' for 'Suponemos que'.

   c) Because you can**not** change 'Asumimos que' for either 'Afirmamos que' nor 'Suponemos que'.

8. Sé que **ya no me quieres**. No me importa porque yo tampoco te quiero a ti.

   YES ☐   NO ☐

   a) Because you can change 'Sé que' for 'Afirmo que'.

   b) Because you can change 'Sé que' for 'Supongo que'.

   c) Because you can**not** change 'Sé que' for either 'Afirmo que' nor 'Supongo que'.

APPENDIX N: Task 2 – comprehension (Intervention Study: Stage 2)

COMPREHENSION TASK 2

Id. Number:	Is English your L1? YES ☐ NO ☐
	(Optional) L1 (if you answered NO above):

Choose whether the speaker (or subject of the matrix) is declaring or not declaring in the following combinations of '**matrix** + proposition'.

If the speaker (or subject) is declaring, write *asserting* (afirmar) or *assuming* (asumir) in the gaps provided as appropriate. If the speaker is not declaring, choose from *questioning* (cuestionar), *commenting* (comentar) or *wanting* (querer/desear) to fill the gap.

E.g. **Creemos que** estará aquí mañana. (<u>assuming</u>)

E.g. **Mi hermano me pide que** le acompañe al dentista. (<u>wanting</u>)

1- **Está claro que** no están en casa. El perro está ladrando. ☐───────────☐

2- **Es lógico que** tengáis problemas con estos ejercicios. ☐───────────☐

3- **Esperamos que** nuestra profesora sea generosa con las notas. ☐───────────☐

4- **Es evidente que** están cansados de tanto trabajo. ☐───────────☐

5- **Supongo que** dicen la verdad. ☐───────────☐

6- **No es necesario que** vengáis mañana a clase. ☐───────────☐

7- **Es posible que** mi hermana haga un máster en la universidad. ☐───────────☐

8- **Imagino que** la fiesta será en casa de Mario. Sus padres están fuera. ☐───────────☐

9- **Me parece muy mal que** compréis un coche tan caro. ☐───────────☐

10- **Dice que** te calles y termines de lavar los platos. ☐───────────☐

PRODUCTION TASK 1

Id. Number:	Is English your L1? YES ☐ NO ☐
	(Optional) L1 (if you answered NO above):

Change the following *'declarations'* into *'non-declarations'* and vice versa. Keep the same proposition (in **bold letters**) but be aware that the **mood** will change depending on whether the speaker (i.e. I) or subject (i.e. you, s/he, they, everybody, …) declares it or not.

You can use any of the matrices in the box below. The sentence you write does not need to mean exactly the opposite of the one provided (as illustrated in example 0), you just need to make sure that 'declarations' change to 'non-declarations' and vice versa.

> (No) Es posible que…   (No) Me parece que…   (No) Estoy seguro/a de que…
>
> (No) Quiero que…   (No) Creo que…   (No) Dudo que…   (No) Es verdad que…
>
> (No) Pienso que…   Te aconsejo que…   (No) Es necesario que…   Dicen que…
>
> (No) Está claro que…   Es mejor que…   Me alegro de que…   Sé que…
>
> Es importante que…   Está genial/fatal que…   Nos exigen que…   Es una pena que…

Example:

0. Dudo que **Jose tenga suficiente dinero para comprar la bicicleta**. No tiene trabajo.
    Estoy segura de que Jose tiene suficiente dinero para comprar la bicicleta.
    Me parece que Jose tiene suficiente dinero para comprar la bicicleta.

1. Está claro que **está con él por su dinero**.
    _____ .
    _____

2. Supongo que **vendrás a la fiesta de Rafa**. Después de todo, es tu mejor amigo.
    _____ .
    _____

3. No creo que **vaya al mercado esta tarde**. Me siento mal.
    _____ .

4. Tu novia piensa que **comes mucha carne y pocas verduras**.
    _____ .

5. Es verdad que **sus hijos son encantadores**. Están muy bien educados.
    _____ .
    _____

6. Me alegro de que **Sergio y Bea estén juntos**. Hacen muy buena pareja.
    _____ .

7. Mi madre dice que **salga de casa con abrigo**.
    _____ .

8. Todo el mundo dice que **siempre llegas tarde a clase**.
    _____ .

APPENDIX P: Reflective Diary (Intervention Study: Stage 2)

DAY 1 (session 1): Grammar Presentation – Introduction of the Conceptual Pair	
What happened?	**Comments/reflections on the session**
All students (participating or not in the study) were introduced to the conceptual pair of *Declaration / Non-declaration* for the first time (see Appendix I for more details on the PowerPoint presentation).	The PowerPoint presentation was sent to and commented on by Ruiz Campillo (February 2019) before being introduced to student participants. He suggested no major changes[129] and believed the explanation was very clear and suitable for the type of student it was targeted at. It was reassuring to have Ruiz Campillo's confirmation that the presentation employed with these students depicted the conceptual pair with accuracy and clarity, since the latter were beginner students with little experience learning the target language.
This introduction was delivered during a grammar lecture (known by students as Language Reinforcement class). At this level (i.e. first-year Beginners), grammar lectures take place at the end of the week and in two big groups (i.e. 77 and 45 students, respectively). There were 35 students present from the first group and 20 from the second group. Some students mentioned the fact that they were quite tired when I asked about their energy levels. The grammar lecture is one of the last classes within the teaching week. The introduction lasted 40 minutes approximately and students were encouraged to ask questions and share their thoughts throughout.	The fact that less than half the students in each group attended was a concern because this introduction involved the presentation of new concepts and metalanguage. The presentation was immediately available on Moodle after this first session so that students who attended could review what they have learned and students who did not attend could catch up before the next session. I sent a notification reminding students of the importance of going over the presentation during the weekend and asked them to email any questions they could have so that everybody was on the same page when moving to the next stage.
Only a few did in Group LC01, the ones sitting in the first rows (big groups might make students more self-aware and shier when it comes to speaking in public). Group LC02, with only 20 students, was more willing to share their views and provided plenty of comments, making comparisons with English.	The allocated classroom for Group LC01 during both semesters was quite big (i.e. 150 fixed seats) and although the students were frequently encouraged to sit closer to the screen and white boards, quite a few ignored that petition. This issue was taken into account when the presentation for the next lecture was being developed.
Both groups confirmed that they had understood the concept/s at the end of the lesson.	This was not an issue with Group LC02. Since with the second group I had already delivered the presentation, I had the chance to amend/modify the aspects that did not really work in order to improve the students' comprehension. Furthermore, this

---

[129] His only suggestion was for me to use just compound sentences (i.e. matrix + embedded clause) as examples for both moods in order to stress the idea that the subjunctive (and thus mood contrast) is characteristic of this type of sentence.

A 10-minute Kahoot activity (see Appendix F for further details) in small groups was carried out in which the comprehension of the concept was tested. The activity was based on one of the exercises included in the students' textbook (GBEE), and the situation described a police interrogation in which the suspect of a robbery was questioned. Students needed to decide whether the suspect was *declaring* (or not) the information of the proposition (or embedded clause).

When Group LC01 (i.e. 35 students) started the activity, nearly half of the groups failed to respond accurately to the first sentence.

After the second sentence, I paused and explained the concept again briefly before continuing with the activity. After this interval and from the third sentence onwards, all groups responded accurately to the remainder of the cases (there were eight sentences in total).

Group LC02 (20 students) responded accurately to all the sentences without the need for further explanations.

At the end of the lecture, I asked students for some feedback about the presentation and concepts they had just been introduced to. One said that she understood the concept but that she would have liked to have been introduced to the morphology of the Spanish subjunctive prior to the concept. I explained to this student that the aim of the presentation was to make sure the (universal) concept of modality, and

group had only 20 students and most were able to ask questions and answered mine with little difficulty.

No students said they had not understood the concept, and I am certain that they would have said something if they had not understood it, because they always do if that is the case. Although it is not possible to confirm this regarding the first group (i.e. LC01), because not everybody participates in the discussion.

From the beginning of the course, these students had been encouraged to share their thoughts and discuss the different cases presented to them, comparing grammar structures in the target language with those corresponding to their L1 (not only English, since there were students with various nationalities: Italian, Polish, Slovenian, Greek, Norwegian, Chinese, etc.). For instance, some mentioned that in their L1 they had a subjunctive mood, others said that their L1 did not have a subjunctive mood but had other ways to express the same ideas (e.g. modal verbs in English), and a few did not know.

This discussion was relevant because students had the chance to think about how a language/code (in this case, its grammar) conveys meaning. Since the concept of modality is universal, that is, it is mostly linguistically represented in every language, students were encouraged to think logically about form-meaning connections characteristic of their own grammar as well.

This was kept in mind when developing/updating the activities which would be completed in the following sessions.

This could be partly due to the fact that, whenever there is a Kahoot activity completed in class, students get quite excited because they need to choose a name for the group, which inevitably achieves a humorous effect, and this might cause some type of distraction. Therefore, I decided not to use this format for the remainder of the instruction period, so students would give enough reflection when this completing the tasks.

the related concepts of (linguistic) mood and declaration/non-declaration were perfectly understood before fully entering into the morphology and uses of the present subjunctive.	

DAY 2 (session 2): Language Skills class - Introduction of the Present Subjunctive morphology	
What happened?	**Comments/reflections on the session**
Students were introduced to the present subjunctive morphology first, in contrast to the present indicative. The week before, they were reminded that they should "know" the present indicative morphology in order to be able to differentiate both conjugations. At the end of the second semester, students are expected to know and use the present indicative with some proficiency. Following this, a Powerpoint based on a presentation by J.P. Ruiz Campillo (www.terceragramatica.com) was delivered to students. This consisted of an explanation of the conceptual pair and a practice exercise in which students needed to decide whether the speaker (or subject of the matrix, if different to the speaker) was declaring or not the proposition (i.e. embedded clause). In order to find out, they needed to replace the matrix by "I assert" or "I assume". The concept implies that, if this change can be made keeping the same (or very similar) meaning, then the speaker (or subject of the matrix if different) is declaring the proposition. If this change does not work, then the speaker is **not** declaring the proposition. **Group LW01**: 10/11 students attended. We did not have enough time to finish the practice exercise. Students asked numerous questions and were not too sure about the 'value judgements' ('commenting' context). An example to illustrate this: • *Me encanta que me regalen flores.* (I love to be given flowers) *Afirmo/Supongo que me regalan flores*. (I assert/assume that they give me flowers) – **NOT THE SAME (SIMILAR) MEANING.** Some students mentioned that the speaker was declaring that s/he is given flowers, but after replacing the matrix for assert/assume, they accepted that it did not have the same meaning.	Quite frequently, in order to revise verb morphology, I prepare an online game activity (Kahoot), which is commonly used by some language teachers, called *Tenis de Verbos* (verb tennis). Students are given a verb in the infinitive form and a grammatical person and they need to decide (in groups) which of the four options is the correct conjugation for the specific tense/mood we focus on at the time. During the two weeks this experiment was carried out, I used this technique twice in class. Most students take it quite seriously and they usually prepare in advance for this type of activity, so this represents a good strategy to encourage students to study and prepare for their language class. The idea that it is the proposition or embedded clause what the speaker or subject of the matrix 'declares' (or not) was reinforced several times throughout the instruction period. I noticed that even native speaking teachers/tutors had some difficulty in understanding this idea, since on several occasions, while delivering teacher training sessions, some insisted on the fact that certain non-declarations were declarations because they focused on the matrix instead. An example to illustrate this: • *Me encanta que me regalen flores.* (I love to be given flowers) The speaker does not assert or assume that s/he is given flowers, and this is why we are dealing with a non-declaration and the subjunctive mood is used. However, some teachers mentioned that the speaker was declaring that s/he loved to be given flowers. They were reminded at that point that all matrices are declarations by the speaker or subject and this is why all of them go in indicative. The conceptual pair of declaration and non-declaration concerns the embedded proposition, which is the one that can take either mood with a distinction in meaning. Both teachers immediately realised their mistake in the interpretation.

	Some extra examples were added to the class material and explained in more detail.
Group LW03: 14/17 students attended. We finished the exercise and they all seemed to have understood the difference once the practice exercise was completed and discussed in class.	This activity seemed to work well even for the less straightforward cases (e.g. commenting). It was important to focus mood contrast practice on this type of activity at first, which is quite mechanical, but may help not only with the learning of the prototype (i.e. conceptual pair), but also with the learning of relevant vocabulary, that is, the multiple matrices triggering indicative or subjunctive. The latter is aided by further classifying these matrices into asserting, assuming, questioning, commenting or wanting.
	A few students from both groups (i.e. 2 from LW01 and 4/5 from LW03) had some more trouble to understand this conceptual pair. These students, however, from the beginning of the course, were often struggling with understanding the grammar of the target language. In fact, for the duration of this experiment, the same students continued to have some trouble, and this was expected to be reflected in the results of the tasks.

DAY 3 (session 3): Language Skills class – The Imperative I	
What happened?	**Comments/reflections on the session**
Group LW01: 10/11 students attended. **Group LW03:** 13/17 students attended. The practice exercise based on a presentation from *Tercera Gramática* was completed. All students attending, who are also participants in this study, confirmed their comprehension.	They seemed to find this exercise (i.e. replacing the matrix for 'the speaker or the subject asserts or assumes') quite straightforward and helpful to decide between moods. I am confident that if these students had had any doubts or concerns about this mechanism to select between moods at this point, they would have made that clear. After nearly 20 weeks meeting with them 4 times per week, I would venture to maintain that there was good rapport among us, and they all were confident enough to share their views and concerns with me or their peers.
For the second part of the lesson, the Imperative form for 'tú' and 'vosotros' were introduced. The Imperative represents the only non-declarative form that is used in simple sentences. Furthermore, most of its morphology coincides with/corresponds to the present subjunctive's, that is, the remainder of the grammatical persons (*usted* – formal you singular*, ustedes* – formal you plural*, nosotros* - we) and all the negative forms. This is why both are introduced together to students.	The introduction of the Imperative was part of the class programme and had been approved at departmental level so I could not make any changes on my part. Having had the choice, I would have introduced the Imperative at the end of the subjunctive instruction, once the four non-declarative contexts had been entrenched.

At this point, some looked a bit overwhelmed and I asked whether there was anything they were worried about. One mentioned the fact that they had seen so many different tenses/moods in the last few weeks that he was not sure whether he would be able to learn/remember all the different forms.	In fact, the course programme for this class is quite dense, since these students need to cover two and half levels of proficiency in only 22 weeks (i.e. A1, A2, and B1-). These students were introduced to the Preterit, Perfect, Imperfect, Future and Conditional in the first six weeks of the second semester. In weeks 7 and 8, they were introduced to the Subjunctive and
Students were reassured at this point that it was more important to understand in which situations these tenses/moods would be used by native speakers than being completely accurate with the morphology.	Imperative moods. Therefore, these students were rightfully concerned, and this issue became slightly worrying from that point.

DAY 4 (session 4): Language Skills class – The Imperative II

What happened?	Comments/reflections on the session
Group LW01: 6/11 students attended. **Group LW03:** 8/17 students attended. The Imperative morphology and uses were introduced and practised with some exercises from the students' textbook (GBEE) plus an extra interactive activity in which the use of the Imperative was illustrated within advertisement. For the last task, students needed to make up one-line slogans for some adverts for which only an image was provided. Time ran out before this task was completed, so students were advised to finish it at home. At the end of the class, I asked students what they thought of the activity, and all of them agreed that it was quite effective/helpful to work with real-like situations in which the Imperative is used by native speakers. At the same time, they mentioned, firstly, that this mood is used in nearly the same situations as in English, and secondly, that they very much enjoyed completing a class activity which fostered their creativity. However, both classes had smaller numbers than usual, so there was quite a lot of opportunity for interaction among students and between those and the teacher. Two online quizzes were uploaded on Moodle so (all) students could continue practising during the weekend. The first quiz was a song (i.e. *Noche de Boda* -Wedding Night) in which all the verbs were in the present subjunctive form and students were provided with the infinitive forms in a box (with their translation into English) so that they could complete the gaps with the adequate form of the present subjunctive. The second quiz was a comprehension task in which some sentences were uttered by two characters: Alex and Julio. Alex always declares everything he says, and Julio never does. Students	The first quiz was completed by only 7 students, but the quiz with the sentences by the two characters (Alex and Julio) was completed by 27 students. The former was quite challenging for this level of proficiency, so it is not surprising that not many students attempted it. However, these students were not accustomed to use Moodle as a learning tool and probably missed some of the online quizzes and activities because they were not an item of the Continuous Assessment.

needed to choose which sentences were uttered by each character.	
DAY 4 (session 5): Language Reinforcement class	
What happened?	**Comments/reflections on the session**
Group LC01: 28/77 students attended.	
Group LC02: 20/45 students attended.	
The grammar presentation focused on the different contexts in which the subjunctive and the indicative moods are used. The first part consisted of a list of matrices that students needed to classify depending on their meaning. First, they had to classify them as declarative or non-declarative. The matrices that introduced a declaration could be further classified as conveying an 'assertion' or an 'assumption', a mechanism with which these students had some practice already. The non-declarative matrices were further classified as:	For all the PowerPoint presentations employed during this experiment, I used the same colours to distinguish between moods. Thus, red was used for the indicative (i.e. embedded verb or matrix, depending on the exercise) and blue for the subjunctive (i.e. embedded verb or matrix, depending on the exercise). Furthermore, I also used bold letters in order to highlight the form/s that were relevant so that students were able to notice them more easily.

- Questioning: when the speaker or subject of the matrix rejects an idea or contemplates a possibility. E.g. *No creo que apruebe el examen* (I don't think I'll pass the exam) or *Es posible que apruebe el examen* (It's possible that I pass the exam).
- Commenting: when the speaker or subject of the matrix offers a value judgement or comment. E.g. *Me parece muy mal que no llames a tu padre* (I think it's wrong that you don't call your dad).
- Wanting: when the speaker or subject of the matrix introduces a wish or an objective (i.e. required action). E.g. *Es fundamental que hables con ella* (It's essential that you talk to her).

The Powerpoint slide showed part of Ruiz Campillo's Mood Map to help with the explanation (see Appendix K for further details).	The map was slightly modified to simplify it for beginner students. This map also employs red for the indicative context and blue for the subjunctive contexts.
The map represents the 'uses' of the subjunctive covered at this stage. Since the conceptual pair of declaration/non-declaration depends on the 'meaning' of the matrices, the main activity consisted in classifying the different matrices into the above four sub-contexts: the declarative context (**1a**: asserting or assuming) and the non-declarative context (**1b**: questioning, **1c**: commenting or **1d**: wanting). All the examples were taken from their textbook (GBEE).	Since the choice of these particular colours was not a conscious decision on my part when developing the presentations, I assumed that the fact that these forms were highlighted helped me notice them more readily. As a consequence, it could be drawn that this technique should also help students to notice the forms more readily.
Students were also introduced to the concept of co-reference.	
Although some students had their difficulties at the beginning of the lecture, after completing the classification, a practice activity was carried out in	

which they were able to classify a series of sentences, first as declarative or non-declarative, and then, the latter, as questioning, commenting or wanting without any issues at all.	
Some students had difficulties with the following sentence:	
Me parece bien que te eches una siesta (I am all in favour of you taking a nap).	
It belongs to the non-declarative 'commenting' context, but some students said it belonged to the declarative 'assuming' context because the verb '*parecer*' (seem) has a similar lexical meaning to '*creer*' (think) or '*asumir*' (assume).	
I explained to these students that this verb, when it goes on its own, has that very same meaning, but when it is accompanied by '*bien*' (well/good), '*mal*' (bad), '*estupendo*' (great), '*genial*' (brilliant), etc., its meaning is quite different, and it becomes a 'commenting' matrix.	
The importance of the matrices' meaning for mood contrast was stressed again at this point.	

DAY 5 (session 6): Language Skills class – Completion of Task 1 (comprehension)

What happened?	Comments/reflections on the session
Group LW01: 8/11 students attended.	Students participating in this study were sent an email at the end of the first week in case they had missed the last two classes (i.e. language skills and language reinforcement on day 4). They were advised to go through the material covered that day during the weekend because it was relevant in order to be able to complete Task 1 (comprehension) on day 5 of the experiment.
Group LW03: 12/17 students attended.	
In class, before completing Task 1 individually, they worked on a couple of activities in groups in order to warm up, but also to catch up in case they had missed day 4 of the experiment. The first activity consisted of some compound sentences (i.e. matrix + proposition) in which they needed to decide whether the speaker (or subject of the matrix if different) was declaring or not the proposition and then write the correct form of the embedded verb in indicative or subjunctive. As an aid to doing this, they were provided with another sentence in which the matrix had been changed for *"the voice"*[130] (i.e. speaker or subject of the matrix) *asserts or assumes that…* If both sentences had the same or similar meaning, then the voice was declaring and the correct form for the verb was the indicative, and vice versa. The second activity consisted of several sentences in English that they needed to translate into Spanish: some of them required the indicative and others required the subjunctive. Before translating the sentences, they	Some students seemed to miss these classes frequently because they take place at the end of the week. To some extent, the fact that attendance was not compulsory acted to the detriment of this study. However, most of the student participants in my two groups were quite consistent in their attendance and were keen to help and do well.
	In addition, most students were quite pleased for the opportunity to take part in an 'experiment' and were really impressed by the fact that the creator of the theory (i.e. Ruiz Campillo) had developed a presentation with them in mind.

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[130] The use of "the voice" as a substitute for 'the speaker or the subject of the matrix' was taken from one of the latest online activities developed by Ruiz Campillo on his website *Tercera Gramática*.

were asked to attempt changing the matrix for "the voice asserts or assumes that…"	
After those two activities were completed, all ━━▪ students were asked to do Task 1 individually. The students not participating in the experiment completed the task as well, as a class activity. Only the ones participating in the study had been assigned an ID number when completing the pre-experiment questionnaire, so they were asked to write that number and not their names.	However, some did not remember the number assigned to them on the first day and wrote their student ID number instead, which helped to maintain the subjects' anonymity.
The completed tasks were collected and only the ones belonging to the participants were photocopied to be subsequently analysed.	After the lesson, I discussed some aspects of the experiment with the other two tutors involved. They confirmed that their students also completed the task in 3-5 minutes.
It was expected that this first task would take around 10 minutes to complete, but it was completed in 3-5 minutes.	

DAY 6 (session 7): Language Skills class – Further practice on mood contrast

What happened?	Comments/reflections on the session
Group LW01: 5/11 students attended.	
Group LW03: 8/17 students attended	
Due to the fact that not all the participating students ━━▪ were present, we did not go over Task 1's results, but it was returned to students. They were informed that their answers would be commented on the following class.	The lower numbers on day 6 of the experiment were the result of the weather conditions, since the university had sent an email to staff and students that morning advising of a yellow warning for strong wind and heavy rain.
There were two activities programmed for this lesson: one in which they needed to work in pairs and provide solutions/advice to some problems using the Imperative, and another activity which involved a reading comprehension, grammar practice and vocabulary (i.e. synonyms and antonyms). However, only part of the grammar practice was completed in class. This consisted in filling the gaps with a verb in the Present Indicative, Present Subjunctive or Imperative. In order to complete this exercise, students were reminded of the concept of (non-)declaration by drawing the 'map' of the subjunctive on the whiteboard (Table 1 below).	On repeated occasions, students were encouraged to bring their 'notes' to every lesson since these were essential in order to be able to complete the class activities. While some students came to class with just a blank sheet and a pen, others had created their own verb conjugation book and/or vocabulary lists and always brought them to class. There was an obvious split between the motivation/priorities of students, and this was mirrored not only in the results of the assignments and exams, but also, to some extent, it was expected to also affect the results of the tasks. Fortunately, most of the students who accepted to participate in the experiment belonged to the latter group, who were, at the same time, the students who attended classes regularly.
Students were told that the remainder of the activity would be completed in class the following day, but that if they did not have time to finish the grammar practice, they needed to finish it at home before the following lesson.	

Table 1

DECLARATION (Indicative)	NON-DECLARATION (Subjunctive/Imperative)
We assert or assume the proposition.	We DON'T assert NOR assume the proposition.
Assertion **Assumption**	**Questioning** (i.e. rejection or possibility) **Commenting** (i.e. value judgement) **Wanting** (i.e. wishes or demands/requirements)
	*Imperative belongs to the last section (wanting)

DAY 7 (session 8): Language Skills class – Wrapping up	
What happened?	**Comments/reflections on the session**
Group LW01: 7/11 students attended. **Group LW03:** 9/17 students attended This class was exclusively used to finish the text about "el reciclaje", which was quite challenging due to the new vocabulary and the fact that the grammar exercise required the students to choose between the Present Indicative, the Present Subjunctive and the Imperative. Prior to finishing the text activity, we commented the responses for Task 1. Most students did not have any issues understanding the task and completing it. They also mentioned they did not find it challenging and that is why they had completed it so quickly. Students were encouraged to watch Ruiz Campillo's presentation during the weekend in order to gather feedback about their views on its practicality/usefulness to understand better the concept and in which contexts both moods are used.	This response was reassuring because it meant that these students were ready to progress to the next stage. Ruiz Campillo created an online presentation with interactive activities with this experiment in mind. His intention was for me to test it with university students in order to gather some views from L2 learners on this conceptual pair's 'operationality', so that it could be developed and improved as a learning tool. Before making it available for my students, he asked me to provide feedback on how to make it more suitable for the type of student it was aimed at. For instance, the participants in this study were first-year students, so only the basic more straightforward cases of the obligatory subjunctive were part of the programme. The fact that the author of this conceptual pair supported this study and accepted to collaborate, helped to confirm that what I was intending to achieve was not only possible but could also provide strong empirical evidence on its functionality. I was expecting that if all students were to watch this presentation before completing tasks 2 and 3 of the experiment, this would definitely help with the entrenchment of the conceptual pair, and, as a consequence, this would be reflected in the tasks' results as well.

DAY 7 (session 9): Language Reinforcement class	
What happened?	**Comments/reflections on the session**
Group LC01: 28/77 students attended. **Group LC02:** 10/45 students attended. Attendance was quite low, and especially obvious among the LC02 students. This lesson was a recap/summary of everything they needed to know about the contrast between the Indicative and the Subjunctive, including the morphology of the latter. Some of the most challenging exercises from their textbook (i.e. GBEE – level B1) were completed in groups and with my help. Since attendance was low, it was easier to verify which students understood the concept/s of declaration/non-declaration because there was a lot of interaction. Most of them clearly showed that they could use this concept as a mechanism to select between moods.	This was probably due to the fact that no more new structures were scheduled to be introduced. The last two weeks of the semester are normally used for revision and for the completion of class tests and assignments. This class did not have any other class tests or assignments programmed for the last two weeks, but some had mentioned that they had class tests and assignments to submit for other subjects. The lack of attendance was slightly worrying because I intended to distribute Task 2 (comprehension) and Task 3 (production) among students the penultimate week of the semester. This reinforced the idea that 'practice makes perfect'. Students were advised to continue revising and completing the online quizzes during the weekend in order to be ready for the last two tasks of the experiment. They were also reminded of the fact that even if they were not participating in the study, preparing for the tasks (as mere class activities) would help them to revise for the final exams too.

DAY 8: Language Skills class – Completion of Task 2 (comprehension)	
What happened?	**Comments/reflections on the session**
Group LW01: 8/11 students attended. **Group LW03:** 9/17 students attended – one student was not a participant. No more 'mood contrast' content was covered in the last two weeks of the semester. As previously mentioned, the last two weeks are devoted to the revision and completion of past papers as practice for the final exam. However, Task 2 (comprehension) was completed by all students in class. This task took longer (i.e. 10-15 min) to complete by students in both groups (i.e. LW01 and LW03) than the first task, since it involved the classification of some situations in the different contexts studied at this level (i.e. asserting or assuming for declaration, and questioning, commenting or wanting for non-declaration).	Some of the student participants had missed one or two lessons. Although I had sent them reminders to catch up on their own and asked them to email me if they had any queries, it was obvious that not all of them had, because they were asking some questions to confirm their knowledge of the conceptual pair prior to completing the task. The other tutors confirmed that their students also completed the task in 10-15 minutes.

DAY 9: Language Skills class – Completion of Task 3 (production)	
What happened?	**Comments/reflections on the session**
Group LW01: 7/11 students attended. **Group LW03:** 9/17 students attended – one student was not a participant. Students completed Task 3 (production). This task also took longer to complete (i.e. 20-30 minutes) since students needed to write whole complex sentences (i.e. matrix + proposition) using the indicative or the subjunctive in the embedded verb. The task was completed during the first part of the lesson, which meant that some students finished in just 15/20 minutes and others spent much longer (i.e. 25/30 minutes). The latter were mostly the students who had missed several lessons, among which some were not participants in the study. From the very beginning, students were informed about the specifications of the experiment, that is, all of them needed to complete the tasks as class activities, but only the ones completed by participants would be photocopied by the researcher for further analysis. This meant that some students were involved in a different group activity while some were still trying to complete the task. Therefore, there were a few students who did not write all the sentences required, because they probably felt they were jeopardising the pace of the class.	The other tutors confirmed that their students also completed the task in 20-30 minutes. This was a mistake on my part, because I should have anticipated it. The task should have been completed during the second half of that lesson.

DAY 10: Language Skills class – Completion of Task 3 (production)	
What happened?	**Comments/reflections on the session**
Group LW01: 6/11 students attended. **Group LW03:** 5/17 students attended. This was the last lesson for this course/academic year. Two participants from LW01 and one participant from LW03 who did not attend DAY 9, completed Task 3 (production) while the other students completed an oral task in pairs.	This last lesson was aimed at having a relaxed gathering while practising the target language, answering any questions about the final exams and discussing plans for the following year. I brought some cake for the students as a thank you for participating in the experiment.

APPENDIX Q: Pre-/Post-Experiment Questionnaire for Students (Intervention Study: Stage 2)

PRE-/POST-EXPERIMENT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENT PARTICIPANTS :

Is your L1 English?   Yes ☐   **No** ☐

(Optional) L1 (if different from English):

Please tick the corresponding boxes (on a scale from **1** – *Strongly Disagree* to **10** – *Strongly Agree*) to answer to or concur with the following statements:

STATEMENTS	1 👎	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 👍
Learning Spanish is easy for me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I find verb tenses and conjugations difficult.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know the difference between tense and mood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know what the Indicative mood is.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know what the Subjunctive mood is.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I understand the difference between the Indicative and the Subjunctive and why they are studied together and in contrast.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am able to use the Subjunctive mood in Spanish.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe the Subjunctive mood is very difficult to learn.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Subjunctive mood does not exist in English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe that using the Spanish Subjunctive mood is not necessary to communicate the message effectively.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(Next question only included in the post-experiment questionnaire)

Please define/describe what the subjunctive mood is/means in one or two lines:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.

APPENDIX R: Student Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form (Intervention Study)

Participant Information Sheet for HISP 1008 (Spanish 1 Beginners)

Name of department: School of Humanities, University of Strathclyde
Title of Study: The teaching of the Spanish subjunctive in the L2 classroom

Introduction

I am conducting an experiment as a PhD student at the University of Strathclyde in which a relatively new teaching method to introduce the Spanish subjunctive to undergraduate students is investigated. I am the main researcher of this study and my contact details are the following:

Elena Solá Simón

Email addresses: elena.simon@glasgow.ac.uk / elena.sola@strath.ac.uk

What is the purpose of this investigation?

The purpose of this investigation is mainly to improve the teaching and learning of Spanish grammar. Specifically, it aims to examine whether this new method to introduce the Spanish subjunctive may improve its learning by undergraduate students.

Do you have to take part?

The research concerns work that you will be doing in class in any case. This work will be analysed for research purposes. In addition, participants will be asked to complete two questionnaires, before and after the work. Participating in this study is completely voluntary and will not affect your class marks. You can withdraw participation at any time. If you do so, you are still expected to complete the classwork as normal, but it will not be included in the study.

What will you do in the project?

This experiment comprises some class instruction provided by the researcher (also one of the teachers and class convenor for this course) and the completion of several tasks by student participants, within a period of 3 weeks approximately. Since the main topic (i.e. mood contrast in Spanish) is part of the class course programme, you will complete tasks as class activities and on paper. Each will take around 15 minutes to complete. Your results will be analysed by the researcher as part of a PhD study.

As participants, I will ask you to complete a brief questionnaire prior to instruction and another questionnaire after all the tasks have been completed in order to gather further information on your beliefs about what learning a foreign language means and, more specifically, about what you know of linguistic moods and the subjunctive.

Why have you been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part because you are enrolled in HISP 1008 (Spanish 1 Beginners) at UofG and this grammar point is part of the course programme.

What are the potential risks to you in taking part?

There are no potential risks involved in this experiment. The tasks to be carried out are those you would be undertaking as classwork in any case. The questionnaires are straightforward and will not take long to complete. You can decide to withdraw from the study at any point.

What happens to the information in the project?

The results of this study will be analysed as part of a PhD investigation. Your involvement as participants will be acknowledged (without mentioning your names) and you will receive a brief summary of the outcomes, either via a personal email of by publishing the results in an electronic platform. Your anonymity will be protected at all times.

The anonymous research data will be stored by a maximum of 2 years after the study has been completed and may be shared with other researchers.

Thank you for reading this information – please ask any questions if you are unsure about what is written here.

Consent Form for HISP 1008 (Spanish 1 Beginners)

Name of department: School of Humanities, University of Strathclyde

Title of Study: The teaching of the Spanish subjunctive in the L2 classroom

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above project and the researcher has answered any queries to my satisfaction.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, up to the point of completion, without having to give a reason and without any consequences. If I exercise my right to withdraw and I don't want my data to be used, any data which have been collected from me will be destroyed.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study any personal data (i.e. data which identify me personally) at any time.
- I understand that anonymised data (i.e. data which do not identify me personally) cannot be withdrawn once they have been included in the study.
- I understand that any information recorded in the investigation will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available.
- I consent to being a participant in the project

(PRINT NAME)	
Signature of Participant:	Date:

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