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**LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL  
INGLÉS**

**INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH ON THE THIRD  
LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS**

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## **PÁGINA DE AUTORIZACIÓN**

## **DEDICATION**

To Mom and Dad without whom I would not have been able to finish this long but beautiful journey called University.

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## ABSTRACT AND KEY WORDS

The purpose of this study was to explore the issues that an English Teaching degree student faces during the learning of a third language. A semi-structured interview of twelve questions was used for this study led by the three research questions: “What is the role of English in the learning of the third language?” “How does English interfere in the process of the third language acquisition?” and “What are the advantages for English learner when learning a third language?” The results were analyzed in charts and each of them were classified according to the different results found from the participants’ responses including : 1) Experience in the English learning, 2) Second and third language process, 3) English influence, and 4)English as an enhancement, 5) English as a setback, 6) Strategies used in the second and third language learning process.

**Keywords:** *English influence, second language learning, third language learning, English as an enhancement, English as a setback, English Teaching students, English teachers awareness.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

1.1 Introduction.....	10
1.2 Rationales for the topic Selection.....	11
1.3 Significance of the study.....	12
1.4 Context of the research.....	13
1.5 Aim.....	15
1.6 Objectives.....	15
1.7 The Research Questions.....	15
1.8 Conclusion.....	16

## CHAPTER II

2.1 Introduction.....	18
2.2 English as a Foreign Language in Mexico.....	18
2.2.1 Learning a 2 <sup>nd</sup> Foreign Language in Mexico.....	21
2.3 Second Language Acquisition.....	22
2.3.1 Behaviorism (Operant Conditioning).....	23
2.3.2 Universal Grammar.....	24
2.3.3 Learning Strategies to acquire a Foreign Language.....	25
2.4 Third Language Acquisition.....	28
2.4.1 Multilingualism.....	28
2.4.2 Multicompetence.....	29
2.4.3 The separation model.....	30
2.4.4 The integration model.....	31
2.4.5 The integration continuum model.....	31

2.4.6 The parasitic model.....	31
2.4.7 Cross-linguistic influence.....	34
2.5 Conclusion.....	36

### **CHAPTER III**

3.1 Introduction.....	38
3.2 Research Design.....	38
3.3 Description of the context.....	40
3.4 Description of the participants.....	41
3.5 Description of the instrument.....	43
3.6 Description of the data collection.....	44
3.7 Description of the data analysis.....	45
3.8 Conclusion.....	45

### **CHAPTER IV**

4.1 Introduction.....	46
4.2 Presentation and discussion of the results.....	46
4.2.1 Participants' experience in the English learning.....	46
4.2.2 Participants' second and third language learning experience.....	48
4.2.3 English language learning experience as an enhancement or setback...50	
4.2.4 Language used as a tool in the third language learning process.....	51
4.2.5 Learning the third language without/before English.....	53
4.2.6 Strategies used during the second and third language learning process..54	
4.3 Discussion.....	56
4.4 Conclusion.....	60

## **CHAPTER V**

5.1 Introduction.....	61
5.2 Research Questions.....	61
5.3 Summary of finding keys.....	66
5.4 Contributions of the study.....	67
5.5 Limitations of the study.....	68
5.6 Directions for further research.....	69
5.7 Conclusions.....	69

## **REFERENCES**

References.....	71
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## **APPENDIXES**

Appendix 1: Instrument.....	78
Appendix 2: Transcription Participant 1.....	79
Appendix 3: Transcription Participant 2.....	83
Appendix 4: Transcription Participant 3.....	87
Appendix 5: Transcription Participant 4.....	91
Appendix 6: Transcription Participant 5.....	94
Appendix 7: Transcription Participant 6.....	97
Appendix 8: Transcription Participant 7.....	101

## TABLE OF CHARTS

### CHARTS

Chart 1. Participants' profile.....	42
Chart 2. Participants' experience in the English learning.....	47
Chart 3. Participants' second and third language learning experience.....	49
Chart 4. English as an enhancement or setback.....	51
Chart 5. Language used as a tool in the third language learning process.....	52
Chart 6. Participants' perception of having learnt English before a third language.....	53
Chart 7. Strategies used in the second and third language learning.....	55

### FIGURES

Figure 1. Curricula for LEI (English Teaching Degree's curricula).....	41
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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction to the study

#### 1.1 Introduction

Learning a language is a process that takes time and effort, however, the learning process of a language involves different circumstances, Then, it is relevant to say that learning a second language has its own process, but changing the circumstances such as learning a language when a second language has already been learnt or is being learnt, makes a huge difference. Therefore, learning a second foreign language or a third language process, which is the focus of this study, will be different from the second language learning.

Learners who have gone through the process of learning a second language are also more experienced language learners and it is likely that they have developed certain skills and strategies for achieving the language-learning task. When facing the task of learning a third language, these skills and strategies can be reactivated and adapted to the new challenge.(Cenoz, 2011, p.7)

From the previous statement, it can be said that the learning of a second foreign language is a different process from the second language learning process. This means that now, the student has a feature more, a second language, and it involves being exposed to the experience of learning a language. Then, it is likely to have second foreign language students have interference or influence of that experience, in other words, being influenced by the second language.

Students in an English teaching bachelor degree, who are learning English, are also learning a second foreign language as a requirement to graduate. For that reason, they may

not have realized the third language learning process and the role English plays in it. Thus, the process of learning a second foreign language can be enhanced by the awareness and practice of techniques to learn a language.

## **1.2 Rationale for the Topic Selection**

English has been a matter of importance not only for business purposes but also for some other personal goals such as traveling, meeting new people or for scholar purposes. According to Rodríguez (2015), English is the most important language in terms of business, this is due to globalization, specifically in the economic and technological areas and not knowing English can lead to loss of opportunities and loss of incomes. This means that in order to be successful within the professional context it is important to speak English. Within the particular context of this research, students from the *Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés* (LEI, English Language Teaching Bachelor program, for its initials in Spanish), English language must be accredited with a minimum of B2 level in the Common European Framework of Reference for the Languages (CEFRL). Moreover, these students are required to learn a second foreign language in order to graduate; that is a third language.

Considering the previous information, the rationale for this topic selection is about the learning process of the third language and how it is being influenced by the characteristics and circumstances that English Teaching Bachelor students at BUAP represent. It is likely to identify the complications that LEI students face during their second foreign language learning process/third language. The majority of students might consider that learning a language is difficult because of the grammar rules, for some others it is difficult to speak in the target language, and in other cases it is complicated to learn the vocabulary. Nevertheless,

the process of learning the second foreign language in LEI students can be compared to the process they had when they learned English, or a second language. Therefore, even when there are similarities between the processes, the student is doing something different that can be either changed or added so that, the two processes will be the same and will have the same results.

For this reason, this research is aiming to show the influence that English has in the second foreign language acquisition for LEI students. Then, it can be said that English is present in the second foreign language learning process and can be seen as an interference when the student is learning the third language and makes the learning process different from learning a second language.

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

According to Bill Snyder (2002) being a teacher involves having two important aspects: theory of pedagogy and theory of content. Thus, being a language teacher involves knowledge about the language and knowledge about how to teach it. Then, in order to know how to teach a language it is important to consider the students' features, it is to know the way they learn a language.

“Even though generally bilingualism tends to exert a positive influence on third language acquisition, the language acquisition contexts may be far more significant. Additive and subtractive environments are to a large extent determined by the development of the first language and its status. Not only the influence of the environment, but other individual and contextual factors, too, can wield a stronger

influence on third language acquisition than bilingualism.” (Cenoz and Hoffmann, 2003, p. 11)

That is why the importance of knowing the influence that English may have on the learning process of a second foreign language should be explored. As it was mentioned, the learning process of a third language or second foreign language can be influenced by many factors such as bilingualism, context, environment, and so on, some ones with more influence than the other but still having a role on the learning process.

Thus, the importance of this research is to allow English students and future English teachers to get a better understanding of the way the third language is learnt and how this process can be improved. The study may have an impact in the State of Puebla, and in the country of Mexico, preparing better English teachers who are able to understand and improve their students’ way of learning.

#### **1.4 Context of the research.**

This research will be done in a university from the state of Puebla. Puebla is a state in Mexico, it is located at the center of the country (México Desconocido, 2012). And according to INEGI (2015) there are 1 576 259 people in Puebla city.

Puebla is a state that concentrates a largest number of universities having 486 universities. (Sistema Nacional de Información de Estadística Educativa de la Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2015, in Islas, 2017, para. 4). As a result, many students from different states move to Puebla to study in the variety of universities that houses Puebla City.

The university where the research was done is a public school and it is placed within the 1000 best universities in the global ranking and in Mexico, it is situated in 13<sup>th</sup> place within the 100 best universities of the country. In the number of members of this university, there are 66,355 students enrolled in some of the available programs (Top Universities, 2019).

This university has different degrees, and among them there is the English Teaching Bachelor. According to BUAP (n.d.) in the ELT program from the university, it is required that students from the English teaching bachelor certify a third language that can be either French, Italian, German, or Japanese, and they are suggested to prepare themselves to certify the language as soon as they get into the bachelor.

This university has a building focused only on languages, where the different languages are taught. In this building, students can take courses offered from the same university. According to the program that offers the courses, CELE, (2019) the courses cost 100 pesos and are offered 3 times a year, this means that each course lasts 15 weeks so that, in three years a student will finish the 9 levels of a language and will be able to certificate it.

Moreover, the reason to do this research in this context is because the students from the LEI program are learning English as well as they are learning a second foreign language.

This characteristic of learning a third language can be found not just in Puebla or Mexico but in other countries due to the importance that English has taken on scholar contexts. Thus, knowing about the process of learning a third language will make this research useful for further research in different countries.

### **1.5 Aim.**

This research aims to explore the issues that English teaching students who are studying a third language have during the third language learning process, and to propose possible techniques that students can applied when they are learning that third language

### **1.6 Objectives.**

The objective of this research is to conduct a semi-structured interview with a group of 7 students from the LEI bachelor that already know English and are studying a second foreign language in order to know how their experience learning a third language has been, and whether English has been an interference or an influence when they are learning the third language.

Also, to analyze the information gathered from the interview and obtain possible recommendations from the probable patterns and/or problems that could be found in the process of the 3rd language learning to enlist the learning styles that a student of third language may have so that students will improve their learning.

### **1.7 The research questions**

The following questions will guide this research:

- What is the role of English in the learning of the third language?
- How does English interfere in the process of the acquisition of a third language?
- What are the advantages for English learners when learning a third language?

This research is focused on the process of learning a second foreign language and the interference that English as a second language may have. For that reason the previous questions are necessary in order to get the necessary information.

First of all, it is important for this research to know what the role of English as a second language in the process of learning a second foreign language is. In other words, it is important to know if English works in the process of obtaining new information of a second foreign language.

Secondly, if English has a role in the second foreign learning process, then it is important to know how it works. This leads to the third question: “What are the advantages for English learners when learning a second foreign language?”

Finally, from the previous two research questions, English can be taken either as an advantage or disadvantage in the process of learning a second foreign language.

By having established these research questions, learning English as a third language can be approached from the second language learning process in order to explore and find the best strategies for second foreign language students.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

The learning of a second foreign language is not a new topic but rather a field that has not been studied as the second language acquisition has been. According to Cenoz and Hoffmann (2003) “Third language acquisition is a very common phenomenon all over the world, in natural as well as formal contexts. It takes place in a large number of diverse sociolinguistic situations.”

Taking into account the previous information, it is possible to say that the number of people that are learning a third language, or in this case a second foreign language, has increased as well as the research about the process of it. To conclude, this research is being done to add new information about the second foreign language learning process and how it is affected by the second language.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **The literature review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the literature on which this research is based will be reviewed. Therefore, the authors who are important to support the ideas are presented in this research. Thus, in the present chapter, authors whose areas of research are related to the second language and third language acquisition are mentioned and discussed so the interpretation and analysis of the results can be approved or disapproved according to what the theories say. Moreover, the literature related to the context and how English is approached in Mexico is presented.

#### **2.2 English as a Foreign Language in Mexico**

In Mexico, there are approximately 123,163, 276 million people (World Bank Group, 2017) and “although the (Mexican) government uses Spanish almost exclusively, it is not technically the official language of Mexico” (World Atlas, 2020, para.6). However, a mother tongue is the first language learned by a person (RAE, 2018). Therefore, the majority of the habitants in Mexico have Spanish as their mother tongue.

Nevertheless, Labastida (2017) said that in Mexico there is no official language and no plan has been set to declare Spanish as the official language of the country as well as the other indigenous languages in each place where they are spoken. (As cited in De Ávila, 2016). As a result, it might be said that Spanish is not the official language in Mexico but it is the most spoken language by having the majority of its citizens as Spanish speakers, thus Spanish is the language spoken by the majority of Mexicans.

However, according to a study made by the British Council in Mexico (2015, p. 8) “English language has been taught in Mexican public schools since the 1960s” and this started with the National Agreement for the Modernization of Basic Education, signed in May 1992. Then “The agreement that was signed by the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP), the National Teachers Union (SNTE), and the governors of the 31 states established the conditions for the transfer of responsibility of basic education including English teaching” (British Council, 2015, p. 8). This means that the implementation of English in the curriculum has been set a long time ago and it has been changed over the years depending on the students’ needs.

Moreover, The British Council says that “in 2009 the Secretariat of Public Education launched the *Programa Nacional de Inglés en Educación Básica* (PNIEB), or National English Programme in Basic Education (NEPBE)” (2015, p.13) and this was made with the goal of having students learning English from a very young age. Then, it was established to teach English to children from pre-primary school until secondary school which is from age 5 to 15.

Therefore, students will have then developed competences related to the language and its culture, and at the end of secondary school, students will have achieved B1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages who created a program adapted to the Mexican context (British Council, 2015), so that, students will be competent to communicate in the language.

Nevertheless, the Teaching-Learning English in Mexican education changed, according to the New Educational Model or *Nuevo Modelo Educativo* (2017), students will

be prepared so that they will be able to speak, read, write and listen in English language fluently. The government has set as a goal to have students graduated from high school, and also their teachers, being bilinguals.

English in higher education in Mexico, specifically in Universities, has a different system with different characteristics compared to basic education. Narvaéz (2016) explains that English in higher education institutions has changed lately, thus, English has been implemented in the institutions' programs, and in some cases the certification of the language in B1 or B2 level is required to graduate. Therefore, different universities in Mexico have, as a requirement, to submit evidence that proves the understanding of a foreign language.

As an example of this, the Autonomous University of Morelos State has a general requirement that applies for any major, to have a certification to prove the comprehension of a foreign language (Universidad Autónoma de Morelos, n.d.), as well as the University of Ecatepec (Universidad de Ecatepec, n.d.) , the University of Tijuana (Universidad Tecnológica de Baja California, n. y.) , University of the Gulf of Mexico that requires for any of the modalities to graduate to have an English certificate to prove that they accredited the English courses (Universidad del Golfo de México, n.d.) , the Ibero-American University (Universidad Iberoamericana, n.d.), and the Popular Autonomous University of the State of Puebla that has as requirement to pass the TOEFL exam with at least 450 points (Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla, 2018). In some other cases, it applies for some majors such as the Faculty of Penal Science of the .Autonomous University of Chihuahua that states in their article 83 section III that it is a requirement to get accredited English as it is stated in the curricula Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua, Facultad de Ciencias Penales, 2018) , and the Landscape Architecture major at the National Autonomous University of

Mexico in the professional work experience modality (Secretaría General, Dirección general de Administración escolar de la UNAM, 2012). On the other hand, there are some universities that do not specify whether a foreign language is a requirement to graduate such as the Faculty of Agronomy and Veterinary at the University of San Luis Potosi (Universidad de San Luis Potosí, Facultad de Agronomía y Veterinaria, n.d.)

### **2.2.1 Learning a 2nd Foreign Language in Mexico**

Learning a Foreign Language (FL) is different than learning a Second Language (SL). According to Hakan Ringbom (1980) a second language is a “language... spoken in the immediate environment of the learner, who has good opportunities to use the language by participating in natural communication situations.” While a foreign language is completely the opposite, “the language is not spoken in the learner's immediate environment”, this means that a student learning Spanish in Japan is considered a foreign language student because of the environmental conditions in which the target language, Spanish, is not common to find and to be exposed to. Therefore, having the previous statements it can be said that a second foreign language is a language that is not either the first language/mother tongue or the first foreign language. It means that in Mexico the first language or mother tongue is Spanish, and the common (first) foreign language is English, therefore, the second foreign language is another language that can be either French, Italian, Japanese or any other language besides the two previous ones.

In Mexico, there is not an estimate of how many people speak or are learning a 2nd foreign language, however a study made through the app Duolingo (2016) the first foreign language learnt is English while the second foreign language learnt in Mexico is French.

(Europa press, 2016). Thus, it is likely to find only first foreign language learners rather than second foreign language learners.

As it has been mentioned before, in public Mexico's educational system the implementation of a curriculum with English as a foreign language hasn't been developed completely. Therefore, the implementation of a second foreign language hasn't been created. This means that people who want to learn a second foreign language would do it mainly in private schools or private programs.

This is the case for bilingual schools that have already implemented in their programs English and have some other language such as French, Italian or Germany as subjects or as extracurricular courses. On the other hand, we can find different private schools or enterprises that offer language courses and the most popular are the English courses. According to the Anders Languages website page (2019) in Mexico City there are different schools and enterprises that offer English courses according to the learners' needs and profiles.

### **2.3 Second Language Acquisition**

Learning a language is a whole process in which many competences and abilities need to be developed in order to learn a language. Second language acquisition has been a matter of importance in many parts of the world and in specific in Mexico as it has been mentioned before due to the different necessities that people have in their work life.

There are different authors that approach in different perspectives how people acquire/learn a language. In this section 2 authors will be presented: Skinner and his behaviorism method and Noam Chomsky and his Universal Grammar theory.

### **2.3.1 Behaviorism (Operant Conditioning)**

According to Skinner (1938) “Operant conditioning is a method of learning that occurs through rewards and punishments for behavior. Through operant conditioning, an individual makes an association between a particular behavior and a consequence” ( as cited in McLeod, 2018, para. 1). Thus a baby will learn a language through a system of rewards, punishment and reinforcement which will shape the learning of the language. Therefore the development of the language will be influenced by the environment in which it is being developed. This means that a language is going to be learnt according to the surroundings where the student is studying or is acquiring the language.

In words of Lemetyinen (2012, para. 6) “Skinner argued that children learn language based on behaviorist reinforcement principles by associating words with meanings. Correct utterances are positively reinforced when the child realizes the communicative value of words and phrases”. Ambridge and Lieven (2011) “For example, when the child says ‘milk’ and the mother will smile and give her some as a result, the child will find this outcome rewarding, enhancing the child's language development” ( as cited in Lemetyinen 2012, para. 7)

In other words, the language learning process, from Skinner’s perspective, is equal to the exposure of the input and the rewards or punishments: if the person says the word correctly, then he/she will get what he/she asked for; but if that person mispronounce the word, and gets the pronunciation of another word, he/she will get the something different from what he/she asked for. However, no matter whether the person gets a reward, what was really asked, or a punishment, what was not asked, the result will be the understanding, thus

the learning will come. So if a student asks for a beer / bɪər / and gets a drink, that will be the reward and he/she will understand that's the name for that drink and that is the pronunciation. But if the student asks for a beer but pronounces the word as bird / bɜ:d / and gets an animal, he/she will realize that the word he/she said was not the correct one and it is used for another object. In both cases, the student will get information, thus the learning will come.

### **2.3.2 Universal Grammar**

On the other hand, Noam Chomsky, who proposed a theory called Universal Grammar. According to Lightbown and Spada (2006) "Universal Grammar permits all children to acquire the language of their environment during a critical period of their development" (as cited in Salvino et al., 2015, p. 40). It means that a child can learn the language he/ she is exposed to, since it is an innate ability they are born with.

"Universal Grammar is considered to contain all the grammatical information needed to combine these categories, e.g. noun and verb, into phrases. The child's task is just to learn the words of her language" (Ambridge & Lieven 2011, in Lemetyinen, 2012).

As a result, a baby is born with the ability to learn a language and then use it. It means that every human being is potentially able to use a system of communication. In other words, the human being is capable of learning the language of the context and then speaking it. Lemetyinen (2012, para. 11) states that "children instinctively know how to combine a noun (e.g. a boy) and a verb (to eat) into a meaningful, correct phrase (A boy eats)".

### 2.3.3 Learning Strategies to acquire a Foreign Language.

From those two approaches, it is possible to see how it is thought that a language is learnt. Therefore, it is important to know this previous information in order to compare the process that occurs in the third language learning, if there are any similarities or if the process is totally different when Spanish is the mother tongue and English has been learnt as the foreign language.

During the learning process learning strategies can and should be used in order to enhance student's performance, thus it can be "an extremely powerful learning tool" (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper, & Russo, 1985, p.43, in Griffiths, C. 2004).

According to Oxford (1990), learning strategies in second/ foreign language can be classified into 6 categories: cognitive, metacognitive, memory-related, compensatory, affective, and social.

**Cognitive strategies** allow the students to manipulate the information directly (as cited in Oxford, 2003). Some examples of this kind of strategy are repetition, organizing new information of the language, summarizing meaning, guessing meaning from context, using imagery for memorization, making mind maps, visualization, mnemonics, underlining key works, scanning and self-testing and monitoring. All these strategies will help the student manipulate the information, so that students will be able to improve their learning (British Council, n.d.).

- **Metacognition** is being aware of what is known and what is unknown, understanding what it is necessary to know for certain assignments and having an idea how to use

the existing skills to learn the new information (Marin, 2014). Therefore, metacognitive strategies help and make the student realize and be conscious about their own way of learning. This allows the student to think about the way he/she thinks and processes the information (Inclusive Schools Network, 2015). An example of this is first “identifying one’s own learning style preferences and needs, planning for an L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, and evaluating task success, and evaluating the success of any type of learning strategy” (Oxford, 2003, p.12). From that example, it can be said that the way a student learnt the best should be known by the teacher who is going to help the student develop the accurate task and material and most important should be known by the student who is the one that need to be aware of the way he/she learns the best so at the end of the process there will be input learnt by the student.

- **Memory strategies** such as overlearning which consists on continuing working with the same information that is being learnt after it has been already learnt, thus the practice will enhance our brain to memorize and keep the information; repetition that is the action of repeat continuously the same action in order to master it; and break task down, which means to separate the information into small pieces so it will be easier to study one by one and not the whole material just in one period so the student will not feel pressed to learn everything at once and instead will be focused in just one matter. Another examples of this type of strategies are rehearsal; acronyms, those are words that are made up by the first letter of other words so these will help the students to be able to recall lists of information, for example NASA, FBI, and UNESCO; acrostics, they are also call catchphrases which according to the Academic Success Center it “ is a sentence made up of words beginning with the first letter of

other words” (2009, p. 3) but the difference between acrostics and acronyms is that acrostics may be used for lines and not just for words; and associations that a process in which the student will associate information with something easy to remember so when the time to recall the information come up in a test, the students will be able to activate their memory and facilitate getting the information. (Academic Success Center, 2009)

- **Compensatory strategies**, according to the British Council “communication strategies used by learners to compensate for limitations in their language” ( n.d. par. 1). It means that compensatory strategies are those resources that the students will make use of in order to compensate and supply what is missing, for example, if a students doesn’t understand what the teacher is saying, he/she will guess the meaning of some words by the context, the gestures the teacher is doing, the tone of voice and any other aspect the one speaking is giving to the receptor or in this case the student. (British Council, n.d.)
- **Affective Strategies**, according to Oxford (as cited in Corpas, 2017) “are concerned with the learner’s emotional requirements assisting them to cope with their emotions, motivation, and attitudes related to learning”. This means that affective strategies will help students from the emotional side, making them feel comfortable so that the student’s learning will be enhanced. Oxford (2003) declares that making use of the affective strategies has an important relation with the L2 proficiency by doing some examples “such as identifying one’s mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance, and using deep breathing or positive self-talk”. (Oxford, 2003, p. 14)

- **Social Strategies** make the student have more interaction with the target language and that is by the interaction with the other students and with other -people who speak that language (Corpas, 2017). As examples of social strategies, “asking questions to get verification, asking for clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, taking with native-speaking conversation partner, and exploring cultural and social norms” can be mentioned (Oxford, 2003, p.14)

## **2.4 Third language Acquisition**

### **2.4.1 Multilingualism**

Merriam-Webster (n.d. para. 4) states that “the roots of multilingual come from Latin. If you happen to prefer Greek, use the synonym polyglot, in which poly- has the same meaning as multi-, and -glot means the same thing as -lingual”. From this definition, it can be inferred that multilingualism makes reference to people who are able to speak more than two languages due to bilingualism.

Nowadays, multilingualism has become more popular due to the increase of interest in learning more than one language. Therefore, people do not speak just two languages but 3, 4 and in some cases more than 5 languages. As a result, the multilingualism phenomena is a matter of research in the latest years and in most of the researches the influence that the second language or foreign language has in the learning process of a third language or in some cases, the learning process of a second foreign language.

According to Cenoz (2011, p. 74) “Studies in the 1960s and 1970s reported that bilinguals had some advantages over monolinguals in phonetic discrimination skills and

auditory discrimination tests. They also found that more balanced bilinguals (those with similar competence in their two languages) made fewer errors than less balanced bilinguals”.

Moreover Nation and McLaughlin 1986; McLaughlin and Nayak 1989; Nayak et al. 1990 state that laboratory studies with artificial linguistic systems in the 1980s and early 1990s also reported that multilingual learners demonstrated greater flexibility than monolinguals in the use of learning strategies (as cited in Cenoz, 2015)

### **2.4.2 Multicompetence**

Cook (2005) states that “Multi-competence is a way of looking at things from another angle rather than of exploring the implications and contradictions within the same perspective... Multi-competence affects the whole mind, i.e. all language and cognitive systems, rather than language alone” (as cited in Scott, 2015, p. 446). The multicompetence term makes reference to learners of a language but taking each language as a whole system and not as separate parts.

Moreover, multi-competence makes references not only to the native language and the second language /foreign language but it also makes reference to the language learning process of a third language/ second foreign language. As Cook (1990) declares that “Multi competence relates to competence in two or more languages, which traditionally are understood as first and second or other languages (L1, L2, OL)” (as cited in Doyle, 2015, p. 887)

In addition, “Multi-competence affects the whole mind, i.e. all language and cognitive systems, rather than language alone” (Scott, 2015, p. 446). Thus, a multi-competent learner is defined as the learner who uses the second language/third language along the first or native

language, meaning that the second language/ foreign language is not being used from the first language as an imitation but rather it operates on its own (Scott, 2015). From this, it can be inferred that learners of a second language/foreign language can achieve, at certain stage, a level of the language where it is not necessary to make use of the native language as a resource and have the second language/ foreign language or the third language/ second foreign language as an independent system that can handle without the interference of the native language.

Moreover, multi-competence has to do with the ability to use the language for real purposes that people would really find in a real context.

Multi-competence is, by and large, a term that refers to people who are using their languages in real-life settings in order to get along. They are very likely motivated by both the need and the desire to communicate with the people they encounter in their daily lives. (Scott, 2015, p. 448)

Multi-competence has, as its name says, different competences necessary to learn a language. These competences are connected strongly to the willingness people have and the motivation, that as has been discussed previously, plays an important role in the learning process as a strategy.

### **2.4.3 The separation model**

According to Cook (2003), the separation model, in second language, refers to the coexistence of two the native language and the second language/ foreign language in the learner's mind without having them combined (as cited in Ruiz, 2015, p. 24). This means that the separation model explains that the two languages learnt are separated from each other

as different and unique systems that do not depend on the other or have any influence from the other language so they work isolated from each other.

#### **2.4.4 The integration model**

Cook (2003) states that the integration model in second language acquisition is the opposite of the separation model. In this model, the two languages, native language and second or foreign language, are one, meaning that they work in a “single language system”. However, the integration model establishes that the two languages are not influenced by the other one but have created a new language system where the two languages work without the interference of the other having its own element well separated (as cited in Ruiz, 2015, p. 25).

#### **2.4.5 The integration continuum model**

In the integration continuum model is described the phenomena of the combination of both models, separation and integration model. Cook (2003) states that the two languages can be separated from each other since they are in the same mind. On the other hand, they cannot either be integrated in a single system due to the fact each of them can be taken apart. (as cited in Ruiz, 2015, p.25) In other words, it means that the integration continuum model makes reference to the integration of the two languages into a system in the person’s brain, nevertheless they are not mixed in totality since they can be set apart but not completely.

#### **2.4.6 The parasitic model**

Another model for second and third language acquisition is the parasitic model. This model is described by Hall (1993) who developed this model in which describes the acquisition of

vocabulary in the second / third language. There, it can be predicted the vocabulary learning process in which are included the representational levels and acquisition stages (as cited in Ecke and Hall, 2014).

In addition, Ecke and Hall (2014) state that this model tries to explain not only the acquisition of new words in the second language process but also the learning of new vocabulary in the third language process and the influence each language plays to remember all these words or for this study, the acquisition of new vocabulary in the second foreign language. This is represented as the following schema:

The Parasitic Model: Stages of vocabulary acquisition (from HALL; ECKE, 2003, p. 78-79)

A Establishing a form representation

A1 The L3 word form is registered in STM and the closest matches (if there are any) in L3, L2, or L1 are activated, based on salient form attributes (cf. ECKE, 2001).

A2 The L3 form is connected to a host representation (normally the most highly activated related L3, L2, or L1 form, where some threshold level of similarity between them is met) and is established in LTM in distributed fashion (activating the same nodes in the network as the host form).

A3 Difference(s) between L3 form and host representation are detected, new patterns are rehearsed and the representation is revised with respect to the attributes that distinguish it from the host and/or other consolidated

neighbours. (This is difficult and not always achieved, leading to fossilisation of the interlanguage configuration).

A4 If no matching form representation is activated sufficiently, the L3 form is connected to the frame of the nearest conceptual (translation) equivalent (as in B2 below).

B Building connections to frame and concept representations

B1 The frame of the form-related host is adopted for deployment of the L3 form. It is retained while contextual cues confirm the inference, and is used as a link to the corresponding conceptual representation, place V [\_\_NP PP] 'put'  
FORM FRAME CONCEPT 363 ECKE; HALL (The parasitic model of L2 and L3 vocabulary acquisition...).

B2 If subsequent context contradicts information in the frame and conceptual representation inferred from the form-related host, another perceived conceptual (translation) equivalent from L1 or L2 is activated and its frame adopted.

B3 If no translation equivalent can be identified, a provisional frame (based on a variety of distributional and morphological cues) is constructed and connected directly to a conceptual representation. (This, we believe, will be a very rare case at initial stages of exposure and use.)

C Strengthening and automatization of representations and access routes

C1 Initially established connections with other L1, L2 or L3 representations are revised, bypassed or severed, to establish a more autonomous triad responding

to new cues in the input. (This, again, is not always achieved, leading to fossilisation, cf. JIANG, 2000)

C2 Autonomous connections between L3 form, mediating frame and concept are strengthened and the representations themselves refined, with increased frequency of exposure and use.

C3 Access routes between elements of the L3 triad are automatized.

(as cited in Ecker and ; Hall, 2014, p. 362-363)

The importance of the parasitic mode in this research takes place in the language acquisition process not only in the second but in the third language (second foreign language).

Moreover, Poulisse and Bongaerts (1994) explains that the parasitic model for the acquisition of vocabulary set three different stages in this learning process in which the third language/second foreign language learner make use of the other two languages in order to understand and learn the new vocabulary until they are able to use the third language as a whole system (as cited in Cenoz, 2003)

From the parasitic model it can be analyzed how a student that has already learnt a second/foreign language is learning a third/ second foreign language since the model can be applied for the study of any language acquisition in the process of learning vocabulary.

#### **2.4.7 Cross-linguistic influence**

The cross-linguistic influence refers to the “transfer, interference, avoidance, borrowing and L2-related aspects of language loss” (Smith and Kellerman, 1986, as cited in Cenoz, Hufeisen and Jessner, 2001). It means the cross-linguistic influence takes into account factors that

happen in the acquisition of a second language. However, it can be thought that if there is transfer of information, interference from the present knowledge, avoidance, and borrowing of new data from the new language, there will happen the same in the learning process of a third language due to there will be interference but now not just of one language but two, transfer of information from the first and second language, and borrowing the data previously known.

Moreover, Cenoz, Hammarber and Dewaele (2001) state that:

The study of cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition has focused on the identification of the specific conditions that can explain the use of one or more languages when speaking in the L3 and its implications for the organization of the multilingual lexicon. (as cited in Cenoz, 2003)

Therefore, it can be said that the second language or foreign language plays an important role in the acquisition or learning of a third language or second foreign language as well as the native language does.

Different studies from Ahukanna, Lund and Gentile (1981); Bartelt (1989); Stedje, (1977); Ringbom (1987); Singh and Carroll (1979), and Cenoz (2001) showed that third language speakers that have different combinations of languages use a second language that is similar typologically to the third language making it as the supplement instead of using the native language (as cited in Cenoz, 2003). This may mean that a person whose native language is Spanish, that comes from the romance languages, and has Japanese as his/her second language, he/she will make use of Japanese when learning a third language which is Korean, due to Japanese and Korean come from the same family.

On the other hand, Cenoz (2003) explains that “some studies have also reported that learners tend to transfer from the second language rather than from the first language in spontaneous oral production in the third (or additional) language”. Which proves that the even having two language as a repertoire in mind, third language learners might go for the second language knowledge since they are more aware of what that system represents and how it works and due to the lack of time that oral production gives the student to think, so that the system closer to that is the second language system.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Chapter II aims to provide with enough information to understand and prove the relevance English has as a foreign language in Mexico in the learning process of a second foreign language.

Therefore, various authors have been mentioned by taking into account the different aspects of the acquisition of language they have studied and moreover, the aspects that a third language/second foreign language have according to the researches these authors have carried out.

First of all, it is explained the role of English in Mexico as a foreign language and an overview of the context where this language is being taught is provided to define what the Mexican students face in order to learn this foreign language. Secondly, the two principal theories of language acquisition are presented to establish the basis for the learning process of a language, so that the process of acquiring or learning a third/second foreign language will be identified easily. The strategies used for learners in the acquisition of a language are

mentioned as well to see if there is any connection and similarities when using them in the second and third language learning process.

Finally, different concepts related to third language acquisition are discussed to show the perspective, models and different studies that have been done by other authors and have a better perspective of what this process is about. Such perspective contains concepts such as multilingualism and multicompetence that make reference to the ability to speak more than two languages. Also models such as the separation model, integration model, and integration continuum model as well as the parasitic model that describe the system to acquire lexicon, and the studied done in the cross-linguistic influence field that shows the interference and influence that the second language has in the third language process.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **The methodology of the study**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the methodology of this study is going to be discussed. This chapter contains the selection of the research design and then, the chapter will describe the context and the participants of the study. In addition, the description of the data collection and the instruments will be explained as well as the information gathered from the instrument.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

After establishing the objectives and the research questions, the qualitative approach was selected, following Creswell (2012) who stated that qualitative research is differentiated by:

- Exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon
- Having the literature review play a minor role but justify the problem
- Stating the purpose and research questions in a general and broad way so as to the participants' experiences
- Collecting data based on words from a small number of individuals so that the participants' views are obtained
- Analyzing the data for description and themes using text analysis and interpreting the larger meaning of the findings
- Writing the report using flexible, emerging structures and evaluative criteria, and including the researchers' subjective reflexivity and bias. (p. 39)

Therefore, this study is a qualitative study because of the nature of the study. It means that in this research that the phenomenon in the third language acquisition process is being addressed using the collection of data that comes from interviews.

As it was mentioned before, due to the nature of the study, an interview was selected as the instrument to collect the data. As Easwaramoorthy (2016) states:

Interviews are an appropriate method when there is a need to collect in-depth information on people's opinions, thoughts, experiences, and feelings. Interviews are useful when the topic of inquiry relates to issues that require complex questioning and considerable probing. Face-to-face interviews are suitable when your target population can communicate through face-to-face conversations better than they can communicate through writing or phone conversations. (p. 1)

Therefore, it was thought that the best instrument for this research is an interview since the intention of this study is to get to know the experience and opinion of the participants which provide the perspective and how this phenomenon is being approached.

In addition to the previous information, interviews are part of the narrative research which according to Salkind (2010):

“Narrative research aims to explore and conceptualize human experience as it is represented in textual form. Aiming for an in-depth exploration of the meanings people assign to their experiences, narrative researchers work with small samples of participants to obtain rich and free-ranging discourse. The emphasis is on storied experience.” (para. 1)

Consequently, this research follows the narrative research since the data obtained from the interviews provides information related to the participants' experiences so that this research is addressing a phenomenon and a specific problem that is happening in the human being so it can be understood and explained through description. In other words, this study uses a qualitative approach with a narrative method.

### **3.3 Description of the context**

This study took place in the “*Facultad de Lenguas*” from the “*Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla*” (BUAP). According to the *Facultad de Lenguas BUAP* webpage (n.d.) the university has into its variety of majors, the English Teaching Major. This major has two modalities: *Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés (LEI)* or English Teaching Major (4 years) “cuatrimestre” which was valid only until 2015’s generation, and *Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés (LEI)* or English Teaching Major (four years) semester which applies for 2016’s generation and on. There are some changes in the syllabus, for that reason, this research is only based on the modality “cuatrimestre” which refers to a four-month period and there are 3 of those periods each year: Spring, Summer and Fall.

In this modality, the curricula is composed of some classes focused on the language learning (English) which are five in total and at the end of these five target language classes, the student is supposed to achieve the B2 level in English according to the Common European Framework of Reference. Moreover, the students also have to take some workshops to improve the language skills such as writing and reading.

On the other hand, in the curricula, there are subjects such as pedagogy, language acquisition, evaluation learning, skills development, didactics and workshop materials which



2015 generation which means that they studied under the “cuatrimestre” program mentioned before.

The participants have already taken the five target language courses of English, so that they have reached an intermediate or advanced level of English. According to English First (2019) “at this level, students can function independently in a variety of academic and professional environments in English, although with a limited range of nuance and precision.” This means that students are able to comprehend “main ideas of complex text, standard spoken language, live or broadcast, and texts with a broad reading vocabulary and large degree of autonomy” (English First, 2019).

Also, they have coursed all the subjects related to the language such as language acquisition, morphology and syntax, phonetics and phonology and pragmatics. On the other hand, they have taken as well subjects related to the teaching area such as workshop materials, didactics, teaching methodology and curriculum design.

**Chart 1.** - Participants’ profile

***PARTICIPANTS CHART***

	<b>LEVEL OF ENGLISH</b>	<b>OF THIRD LANGUAGE</b>	<b>LEVEL IN LANGUAGE</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Age</b>
<i>Monserrat</i>	B2 - C1	French	A2	22
<i>Pamela</i>	C1	French	A2	22
<i>Laura</i>	B2	French	A1 - A2	22
<i>Gabriela</i>	B1	Italian	A2	22
<i>Diego</i>	B2	Italian	A2	22
<i>Vicente</i>	B2	Portuguese	A2	26
<i>Marlén</i>	B2	Japanese	N5	22

These participants had to learn English because of the nature of the major, however, in order to graduate, they are required to certificate a third language besides English. They have to reach at least an A2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference of Languages. Therefore, the participants are studying or studied a third language. In the language that the participants have studied we can find: French, Italian, Portuguese, and Japanese.

They were contacted and invited to participate by email, they responded they agreed to participate in this research and they were told that their information will be used only for research purposes.

### **3.5 Description of the instrument**

The instrument used to collect the data for this research was designed to be a semi-structured interview and according to Cohen (2006) this kind of interview is distinguished by the following aspects:

- The interviewer and respondents engage in a formal interview.
- The interviewer develops and uses an 'interview guide.' This is a list of questions and topics that need to be covered during the conversation, usually in a particular order.
- The interviewer follows the guide, but is able to follow topical trajectories in the conversation that may stray from the guide when he or she feels this is appropriate.

(para.1)

For that reason, the semi-structured interview that was used for this research contains 12 questions. (See Appendix 1). The questions are related, on one hand, to the participants' experiences in the second language learning so they were able to describe how their process was and on the other hand, the questions are related to their process when learning a third language. Moreover, the question addresses the English influences or not the learning process of the third language.

### **3.6 Description of data collection**

As the data required for this study is information related to the students experience in the languages learning process, an interview was designed since it is the best way to make the participants tell their experience guided by the questions.

The instrument was applied on weekdays: Wednesday and Thursday since everyone was able and free those days, so the interview took place in the university *BUAP*, exactly, in the *Facultad de Lenguas*.

The participants were interviewed in the morning and part of the evening, the majority of them wanted to have a look at the question before starting it to get familiarized and then they gave it back to me. Some of the participants took more time to think and answer the questions. Especially for the questions that addressed the English interference and their previous experience learning a language. The majority of them had never thought about it as something important and even some of them had never thought about that at all.

Each interview took approximately 10 or 15 minutes because I briefly explained what they had to do and what it was about, and at the end I explained exactly what the research

purpose is and thanked each of the participants. After the explanation, the participants told me that they had never thought about it and paid enough attention to that phenomenon.

The information gathered from the semi-structured interviews were narratives from the participants who told their experiences in the second language learning and the third language learning.

### **3.7 Description of data analysis**

Once the information was collected, the answers provided by the participants were analyzed in charts so they can be understood and studied in a better way. This process is going to be presented in the following chapter, which is the results of the study.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter presented the methodology of the study which is a qualitative research that uses a narrative method. Moreover, it can be found the context where the instrument was applied, the description of the participants of this study who participate in an interview in order to obtain the information needed for this research. Finally, the description of the data collection and data analysis are discussed.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **The results of the study**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter will present the answers given by the participants, therefore, the information gathered is presented in different charts classified into the different categories which are the main ideas that came along the interviews. These categories were selected due to the patterns found out during the examination of the data.

Moreover, in this chapter, the discussion about the most important findings which are related to the third language learning process and how English is in fact an influence in a positive and negative way depending on different aspects and circumstances is presented. Thus, the different characteristics that English presents in each case are provided as well as additional aspects that not only influenced the third language learning but the learning itself such as motivation and the teacher's role in the classroom.

In addition, a discussion of the participants' experience in the third language learning process as language teacher is presented. In this section, the comparison of the second language learning process and third language learning process is made so the advantages or disadvantages of having studied English before a third language are discussed as well.

#### **4.2 Presentation and discussion of the results**

##### **4.2.1 Participants' experience in the English learning.**

In the interview, the participants were asked about their level of English and how long they have been studying that language. Thus, it can be noticed that the majority of the

participants (5 participants) have studied English before getting enrolled in the English Teaching major. Moreover, the average level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference is B2 which is an advanced level.

On the other hand, they were asked what the third language they are studying is. Six of the participants are studying a language coming from the family of the Romance languages and just one of the participants is studying an Asian language.

**Chart 2.** - Participants' experience in the English learning.

Participant	Level of English (CEFR)	Years studying English	Third Language	Level of third language
Montserrat	B2 – C1	10	French	A2
Pamela	C1	18	French	A2
Laura	B2	12 - 13	French	A1 – A2
Gabriela	B1	7	Italian	A2
Diego	B1 – B2	7	Italian	A2
Vicente	B2	4	Portuguese	A2
Carla	B2	5	Japanese	N5

#### **4.2.2 Participants' second and third language learning experience.**

Participants were asked to tell their experiences of the second and third language learning process and the following patterns were found:

1. Two of the participants who learnt English since they were kids found English learning funny and entertaining at the beginning but when it started to get more serious it became boring and complicated. For example, Laura said "I learned English when I was 9 years old so the classes were very, I don't know, funny, entertaining but when I started high school the classes were a little bit boring, I think it was because of my age and also because of my subjects and I had more responsibilities than when I was a kid". The same way Gabriela said "When I was in primary school it was very funny, very entertaining to do it, to learn something different so, so far it has been a really nice experience. It was difficult when I was in high school. It was a different environment". Therefore it can be seen that the process was complicated because of different factors related to the age and interest of the participants.

The same way happens in the learning of a third language because of the difficulty of the topics seen in the classroom. It means that normally, at the beginning of the language course, easy topics such as greetings or common vocabulary are taught and as the course continues, the level gets higher so that it becomes more difficult. That is how Gabriela describes it: "[my learning process of the third language was] really cool and funny too because there were different teachers so in my two first courses the classes were very dynamic so I learned in a good way but the other two were very theoretical so it was hard".

2. Participants had problems because of the environment in the classroom. For example, Carla mentioned: “when I was taking target language 1 most of classmates were used to practice and talk in English so I was under my classmates’ level and that made me feel sad”. As well as Gabriela who said: “there were students that knew more than me so it was hard and also in the university it was still complicated”. Thus, having a lower level of English than the rest of the classmates is a factor which plays an important role in the learning process of a language of the students.
3. Finally, one of the patterns found was that the process of learning the second language was difficult or hard but the process of learning a third language was easy and good. For example, Vicente mentioned that the process of learning English was difficult because it was a new experience for him. Then Carla said: “My experience learning Japanese was really good, first because thanks to learning English I had an idea of how a language works and how a language is composed...”

**Chart 3.** - Participants’ second and third language learning experience.

The following chart summarizes the opinions of the participants regarding their experiences while learning a second and a third language. Their own words are used in the chart.

Participant	Process of learning the second language	Process of learning the third language
Montserrat	Difficult and slow	Easy at the beginning but got difficult.
Pamela	Difficult and slow.	Stressful
Laura	At first funny and entertaining, then boring	Easier than English
Gabriela	Funny, entertaining, and nice. Then difficult and complicated.	Cool and funny. Then theoretical and hard.
Diego	It wasn't difficult	Easy.
Vicente	Difficult, then it got better.	Incredible, amazing and easier than English.
Carla	Difficult.	Good.

#### 4.2.3 English language learning experience as an enhancement or setback

One of the questions asked the participants what the positive and negative aspects are of having studied English before studying a third language and the results were of a big variety.

On one hand, there are answers which say that knowing English before studying a third language is an enhancement, for example, Pamela said: “I think it has allowed me to find more sources to learn new languages”.

On the other hand, some of the participants said that the fact of having studied English before the third language was a setback, like Montserrat said: “the negative aspects were the pronunciation because I’m used to pronounce word differently and in French the pronunciation is completely different than in English”.

Finally, Gabriela said: “Italian is very similar to Spanish so English doesn’t really affect my process of learning a third language.” It means that she thinks that English has no influence on the process of her third language learning.

**Chart 4.** – English as an enhancement or a setback.

Participant	ENHANCEMENT	SETBACK
Montserrat	Awareness of <b>grammar and vocabulary</b>	<b>Pronunciation</b>
Pamela	<b>Experience to find more sources to learn new languages and pronunciation</b>	<b>X</b>
Laura	Awareness of the structure and use of the language tenses.	Methodology used by teachers
Gabriela	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
Diego	<b>X</b>	Interference while learning vocabulary.
Vicente	Previous knowledge of how to do research about languages.	Different process of teaching the two languages.
Carla	Knowledge about how a language works and similarity in vocabulary	Interference while writing or speaking.

#### **4.2.4 Language use as a tool in the third language learning process**

One of the patterns found in the results of this question is that those who are learning a Romance language always use Spanish as a tool to remember, translate and/or learn words because of the similarity as Gabriela said: “Spanish, my mother tongue because Italian is very similar to Spanish”.

However, due to the use of English for a long time, one of the participants uses English as a tool before using Spanish to compare the vocabulary or the grammar. That's how Pamela describes it: "My first instinct is English and then I'm like no, I translate those things in Spanish because you know it's easier because the rules are similar.

Finally, the participant who is studying Japanese said that she doesn't need Spanish since the grammar or vocabulary are not similar at all. Thus, she uses English just to learn vocabulary because in Japanese there is an alphabet used specifically for foreign words that mostly come from English: "I think that in the case of Japanese I made use of English as a tool to learn because of the relationship between words".

**Chart 5.** – Language used as a tool in the third language learning process

Participant	Third language	Language used as a tool	
		Vocabulary	Grammar
<b>Monserrat</b>	French	Spanish	Spanish
<b>Pamela</b>	French	English then Spanish	English then Spanish
<b>Laura</b>	French	Spanish	Spanish then English
<b>Gabriela</b>	Italian	Spanish	Spanish
<b>Diego</b>	Italian	Spanish	English
<b>Vicente</b>	Portuguese	Spanish	English
<b>Carla</b>	Japanese	English	None

#### **4.2.5 Learning the third language without/before English**

One of the problems found in this research was that the majority of the participants (4 participants) think that the process of learning the third language would have been easier or better without English. For example, Pamela said: “I think I could’ve been a little bit easier because I would not confuse word or rules which is what I do when I’m learning French”

Two of the participants think that it would have been more difficult without having English as a second language. That is the case of Vicente who thinks: “Well, probable I would’ve studied Portuguese as a second language instead of English so I think it would be so difficult to learn Portuguese because I wouldn’t have that experience of learning a foreign language”

At last, just one participant, Gabriela, maintains that English doesn’t affect the process of learning another language at all: “I don’t think there would be a problem because as I said Italian is very similar to Spanish”.

**Chart 6.** – Participants’ perception of having learnt English before a third language.

Participant	Third Language	Learning the third language without/before English
Montserrat	French	“Easier”
Pamela	French	“A little bit easier”
Laura	French	“A little bit more difficult”
Gabriela	Italian	“No difference”
Diego	Italian	“Better”
Vicente	Portuguese	“So difficult”
Carla	Japanese	“Easier”

#### 4.2.6 Strategies used during the second and third language learning process

The participants were asked about the strategies they have used during the learning process of both languages and the results were that the majority of them have used the same strategies in the third language learning process than in the second language learning process. That is the case of Laura who stated: “I used the same ones, I think that my main interest about this third language is because of the movies and music and in English is the same, almost the same”.

Then, it can be found that two of the participants used the less strategies in the third language learning process. Pamela explains that: “I think with English I used a lot more songs, I used to translate songs over and over and repeat the songs over and over and also

watch shows and I don't do that with French. I haven't been really interested in French shows or songs".

Surprisingly, just one participant said that he implemented more strategies in his learning process of the third language. He explains: "Now, I have tried something new and that is to listen to podcasts something that I didn't do with the English language and now I'm doing it with Portuguese and also I try to speak to myself like you know like telling your events in the days".

**Chart 7.** – Strategies used in the second and third language learning.

Participant	Strategies used while learning the third language	Strategies used compared to the ones used while learning English	Reason
<b>Montserrat</b>	Listening to music	Less	Her interest went down because of its difficulty and the teacher.
<b>Pamela</b>	Talking to yourself and with native speaker, and using Doulingo.	Less	Lack of interest.
<b>Laura</b>	Listening to music and watching movies.	The same ones	Her interests are based on those activities.
<b>Gabriela</b>	Listening to music and watching movies	The same ones	Laziness
<b>Diego</b>	Listening to music, talking to yourself, reading and watching movies.	The same ones	Awareness of what works for him.
<b>Vicente</b>	Chatting on Facebook, writing, talking to yourself.	More	Trying new things to know better yourself.
<b>Carla</b>	Making words lists, listening to music, watching movies, make relationship with words.	The same ones	Awareness of the learning process of a language.

### 4.3 Discussion

In this research, the different outcomes found are discussed as follows:

First, it was found that metacognition plays a fundamental role in the third language learning process. As Marin (2014) said “metacognition is being aware of what you know and don't know, understanding what you will need to know for a certain task and having an idea of how to use your current skills to learn what you don't know.” The same way, the participants said that their English learning experience has helped them understand and learn the third language because of their previous experience they had learning a language. It means that after learning English, they know what a noun, a verb or an adjective is so every time they were in the third language class, they found it easy to understand the grammatical part. For example, Laura said “A positive aspect as I mentioned before [of having studied English before the third language], it's just that now I am aware about the structures, I know when and how to use the tenses of both languages that's the easy part. I know when the French teacher tells me “this is an adjective, or a verb” I can recognize those parts of the speech. As well as Laura, Carla mentioned that “the positive aspects of studying English before Japanese was the fact that I know how a language, how the process of learning a language is”. Therefore, it can be seen how the participants made use of the metacognition strategies when learning the third language based on their experience of learning a second language.

Second, as Cook (2003) states in the separation model as well as Ecke and Hall (2014) establish in their parasitic model, the process of learning a second and third language will be interfered by the mother tongue or the previous language learnt. They say that in the process

of learning a second or third language the learner makes use of the previous language acquired to use it as a tool to learn or understand. Thus, the new information learned in the third language will be mixed and stick with the second language or mother tongue until the third language becomes a single system in the learner's brain.

Therefore, the interference of English in the third language learning process of the participants can still be seen due to the level of their third language. The average level of the third language is A2 which is a basic level for that reason, students still have the interference of English and also of their mother tongue.

Third, in relation with the parasitic model and the separation model, all the participants said that they use either their mother tongue or the second language as a tool to translate vocabulary or remember information and even to relate and understand grammatical structures. For example, Monserrat shares that she uses Spanish in the third language class as a tool. She said "Spanish, because it is my mother tongue so that makes it inevitable for me to compare it with my language.

However, the use of the previous language varies for some of the participants. Some of them use Spanish and some others use English. As Cenoz, Hammarber and Dewaele (2001) established in the cross-linguistic influence, the study of that field focuses on the causes of the use of one or more languages when learning or using a third language, so the participants explained their reasons why they use or another language.

In terms of vocabulary, the participants who are learning a romance language make use of Spanish to learn vocabulary. For example Vicente explains: "in Portuguese there are

many similar words to Spanish so there is no need to use English”. Or Diego who said that he uses Spanish when he is in the third language class because of the similarity.

On the other hand, it was found that the participant who is learning Japanese as a third language, instead of using Spanish as a tool to learn vocabulary. That proves the studies made by Ahukanna, Lund and Gentile (1981), Bartelt (1989), Stedje, (1977), Ringbom (1987), Singh and Carroll (1979), and Cenoz (2001) in which they say that learners use the second language that is typologically similar to the third language so that Carla explains: “In the case of Japanese I just compare the words, if a make use of the alphabet “katakana” the whole alphabet is used to talk about foreign things, so that’s the only thing I compare to English”.

Third, as Cenoz (2003) explains that learners tend to use the second language before using the first language. That is the case of some of the participants who have said that the influence of English comes mainly because of the similarities in the learning process of the second and third language, which makes the third language learning process easier for them. For example, Diego explains that he uses English to compare with Italian: “because I think I learned English grammatically as the same way in which I learned Italian because I didn’t take (learn) my mother tongue like grammatically.”

On the other hand, Vicente explains that English interferes in the productive ability, specifically in the speaking ability, so he said: “in my experience sometimes when I have to speak in Portuguese, I am speaking or giving a presentation of something and all of the sudden an English word appears and I’m like “sorry, sorry” and sometimes instead of thinking in Spanish I’m thinking in English”.

Fourth, motivation has emerged in this research and as Oxford (2003) affective strategies are related to the emotion, motivation, and attitude towards the learning. Therefore, some participants have mentioned that they have used less strategies in the third language learning than when they learned the second language (English). For instance, Monserrat said: “It was good, at first, it was easy for me but then it began to get a little difficult because of the teacher” which led to have no motivation and use less strategies to improve her learning, so that she explained: “I used even less because I don’t really like French, I thought I liked it but it turns out that I don’t really because it has become a little difficult for me.”

Nevertheless, in the case of Carla, the role played by the teacher was significant, so she explains: “So I think that the teacher role is very important in the process of learning a language and from level 2 to level 7 the teacher was really good so that improved my skills in Japanese and that helped me to develop”.

Finally, it was found out that only the minority of the participants has used their experience learning English and their experience in the English Teaching major in their favor to improve their third language level. For example, Diego and Carla said that they have used the same strategies that they used to learn English in order to learn the third language because they already know themselves and know what works for them. That is a positive aspect that represents the abilities acquired and learned for the participants during university which not only will help them in their learning but also to understand their students’ and how they learn and/or why problems have come up. Therefore, their teaching will improve for their own benefit and their students’ benefit.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the outcomes of the instruments were analyzed and discussed. Therefore, it was found that English as a second language is certainly an influence when learning a third language. English has been approached as a tool that has helped students to understand and improve their third language learning, and also, it has been approached as interference since in some cases it doesn't allow learners to comprehend the new information from the third language.

In addition, the influence of English is also determined for the type of the language is being addressed, if it is a language coming from the same family of languages or it is a different one. Moreover, motivation arose as an important outcome during the learning of the third language student. It was found out that even when the students are used to the process of learning a language, the teacher keeps playing an important role.

## CHAPTER V

### The conclusions of the study

#### 5.1 Introduction

This study was undertaken in order to explore the issues that English Teaching bachelor students face during the learning process of a third language and how it is influenced by English as the second language. In this chapter, the answers of the Research Questions are presented using the findings and the theory related to second and third language acquisition, learning and learning strategies. Moreover, this chapter includes a discussion of the contributions and limitations of the study as well as directions for further research.

#### 5.2 Research Questions

In this section, the research questions of the study and the answers based on the results of the study are presented based on the information obtained from the participants along with the theory used to support the study.

##### **(R1): What is the role of English in the learning of the third language?**

The learning process of a language is going to be influenced by the knowledge that the student has before studying the language, so that, having studied a language is a precedent that will influence the learning of a third language as Cenoz describes in his cross-linguistic influence study. In addition, the results obtained from the interview showed that English language is either an enhancement or a setback in the third language learning process. Therefore, the role of English language in the learning of a third language takes place as an influence that will not be approached in the same way by the students. Also English's role in the third language

learning process is to work as a system in the students' brain that will collaborate in this process along the process of the third language so English can play two roles: the role of a boost or the role of an impediment to learn other languages but it is definitely part of the learning process of an additional language.

**(R2): How does English interfere in the process of the third language acquisition?**

As it was mentioned, English language is an influence in the learning process of a third language and it can be seen from two different perspectives and for two different purposes: to help or to interfere. Thus, from the results, English is considered as an interference in different cases. For example, when trying to pronounce new sounds from the third language that are different from the sounds in the English language, so it was described as a barrier to develop the phonetic and phonology part of the third language.

However, this is a problem found in the learning process of a language that comes from a different family or group of languages: French, Italian, Portuguese and Japanese. This means that English as a second language is an interference in the acquisition and development of new sounds if the language does not come from the same family, which in this case, French comes from the Romance Languages and English comes from Germanic languages.

Another example is the interference of English when the student is trying to learn vocabulary. As it was mentioned in the previous statement, the connection that languages have among them according to the family they belong to plays an important role when trying to obtain new information. Thus, when a students is trying to learn new vocabulary in the third language that comes from a different family of language than English, in this case, Italian, makes the acquisition of vocabulary a little messier and confuses the student and this

is explained as well in the the cross – linguistic study made by Ahukanna, Lund and Gentile (1981), Bartelt (1989), Stedje, (1977), Ringbom (1987), Singh and Carroll (1979), and Cenoz (2001) who describe in the relationship among languages and the families they belong to.

Moreover, the participants reported that English is an interference when trying to use the third language, that is, the productive skills: speaking and writing. According to the results from the instrument, every time that the student tries to speak or write in the third language, English appears, either as vocabulary or as grammar. This is mentioned, in the parasitic model of Ecke and Hall (2014) where they describe that the third language in its first stages of learning is connected to one of the first two languages and it will be to the highest activated in the student's mind until it consolidates as a single system and does not depend on another language. Therefore, it means that English is going to interfere in the third language learning process due to the importance it has in the student's life which can be said that it's high because of the nature of the degree that the student is taking.

Finally, English is an interference in the learning process itself. This is the previous experience of having studied a la language.

On one hand, the teacher(s) and the methodology used to teach English was not accurate. Then, when the student started to learn the third language, he/she realized that it was the same so it led the student to stop enjoying the classes and it causes the lack of motivation for the learning of the third language.

On the other hand, the variation in the teaching process of the two languages. This means that the student is used to a type of teaching and it has suit correctly, however, the third language teaching is different and uses a complete unlike methodology, approach and

techniques than the previous one. Consequently, the teacher faces a new process that is not working for him/her.

**(R3): What are the advantages for English learner when learning a third language?**

As we have seen, English is an interference in the third language learning process. However, the results show that it is also considered as an advantage when learning the target language meaning that it is an enhancement as well as a setback.

The first advantage of having studied English before a third language is related to the previous experience learning a language. Here there are three different points:

- **Awareness of grammar:** The results indicate that students who have studied a language are more aware of grammar, what it is and how it is used. Thus, students are able to understand the teacher when she/he says that the present simple is used for routines and that the structure of the sentence is composed by a subject + verb in present tense + complement. In other words, the student has the knowledge to recognize the grammatical part of a language and will make use of that information to understand the new information of the third language.
- **Knowledge about how a language works:** similarly to the previous statement, the knowledge of the previous experience learning English gives the student the opportunity to comprehend that a language is a system and that each part has a function in it. Therefore, the students will not feel overwhelmed during this process.
- **Vocabulary:** As it was mentioned before, English will be approached as an enhancement or as a setback depending on the student's perspective and how he/she has

experienced these two processes. Therefore, the acquisition of vocabulary appears previously as a setback but in this case it is taken as a tool to learn vocabulary in the third language. This is because of the nature of the vocabulary. It means that there are similarities in the second language, English, and the third language vocabulary. Even though the third language is not from the Germanic languages, it shares vocabulary taken from English so it makes English be an instrument to learn new vocabulary.

- **Pronunciation:** In the same way as vocabulary, English is taken now as a utensil to learn how to pronounce new sounds as well as it was seen as a disadvantage.

In this case, English is approached as a tool that has helped the student to develop the abilities to produce new sound. This is that the student now is more aware of how sounds can be produced depending on how the tongue and the rest of our mouth is situated and articulate, so after that experience, trying to produce new sound is not a new task and can take advantage of what she/he knows about it. Also, as the students mentioned, it was like discovering a new world of sounds since they were used to produce their mother language sounds and after studying English, they know that there's much more than and are able to do it.

The second advantage of having studied English as a second language is that students know how to do research about language. It means that the previous experience learning a language has provided them the knowledge of a language as a system. Thus, they know exactly what to look for and how to research about the third language.

### **5.3 Summary of finding keys**

At the beginning of the study it was thought of English as an influence in the process of a third language and that it was a powerful tool to acquire more languages. It was thought this way due to the characteristics that the participants have: having studied to be a language teacher, in this case, English teachers. Therefore, the acquisition or learning of a new language will be easier than learning English thanks to the new knowledge they were taught in the degree related to the acquisition, learning and teaching of a language.

However, one of the most important findings is that the third language learning was not easier than English for the majority of the participants. In addition to that, English was described as a setback or impediment to learn the third language in different aspects such as in pronunciation and/or learning vocabulary, and that it would have been easier without English. It means that English is not as helpful as it was thought it would be.

Moreover, one of the main ideas of this study was to know how much LEI students take advantage of the knowledge they have as English teachers. Then, it turned out that the participants do not make the most of what they know about languages and their acquisition and learning to improve their learning in a third language. The reasons why they don't use more strategies to boost their learning goes from laziness to lack of interest which are the majority of the participants. The rest, which is the minority, described that they know what works for them. It means that even though English Teaching students are prepared to teach others and look for the method and the techniques and strategies that fit the best for the students, they are not prepared to make use of these tools for their own benefit.

Therefore, the hypothesis about how English Teaching students have the advantage of knowing more about language acquisition, learning and teaching and they are not making use of it was confirmed. Surprisingly, the participants proved that their experience learning a second language, in this case, English, and having studied a bachelor's degree in the teaching area was not enough to improve their learning.

#### **5.4 Contributions of the study**

Throughout the analysis of the results, it was found that third language learners make use of the second language, English, because it is a language they have been using for a long time for different purposes, therefore, it is a language that plays an important role in their academic and professional life. The same way, at the step A2 in The Parasitic Model from Ecke and Hall (2014), the new information from the L3 is connected to a “host representation” that will be normally the one greatly activated.

However, the participants whose third language is a romance language mentioned that the language they use in order to learn vocabulary is Spanish, their native language while the participants whose language comes from the Germanic languages family use English to learn vocabulary due to the similarity between words. This confirms the Cenoz (2001) study about cross-linguistic where it is said that the use of either first or second language will depend on the topological similarity.

One of the most relevant findings is the unawareness of the information that English Teaching students have. That is a powerful tool that can be used to achieve more than it is being obtained because it is being used for a single and exclusive purpose which is teaching someone else when it can and should be used to teach oneself.

Therefore, this study is aiming to contribute to the learning languages field so that it might be used to propose techniques and strategies that language teachers can use for their own benefit and take advantage of the knowledge they already have to achieve their goals in learning a language. It might be taken as a problem that exists in the language teachers' community and study the more deeply the reason why they are not taking into account the advantage in the language teaching and learning field.

### **5.5 Limitations of the study**

During this study, there were some constraints that made it take more time than expected as well as helped to determine the structure. One of the most important was the time disposed to do the interviews. Some of the participants couldn't do the interview because of their schedules and at the end decided that they were not going to participate. However, the rest of the participants could arrange their schedules and take time to do the interview.

Another limitation of the study was the number of the participants allowed for this study. Since it is a qualitative study, the number of students should not be so many in order to make the analysis of the results not only easy but work as best as possible.

The results from this study are valid in the English Teaching Bachelor's degree since it studies the characteristics that students from this degree have. It means that the results are based in English teachers that are studying a third language during and after their bachelor's degree.

## **5.6 Directions for further research**

As further researches, it is necessary to keep studying the behavior not only of language students but language teachers while they are studying a third, fourth, and additional language. This is with the purpose of study under what conditions language students learn an additional language. Thus, different aspects should be studied such as: the methodology used for teaching, the techniques and strategies implemented in the teaching/ learning process. Finally, the reason why language teachers do not take advantage of their experience on the field, and if they need to take some other courses and if so, what kind of courses or workshops will fit the best for them.

## **5.7 Conclusions**

In this research, the different outcomes that were obtained from the instrument applied to the participants have been discussed. The study provided different answers related to the third language acquisition and how this process is approached by future language teachers. Thus, it was found that English is certainly an influence in the learning process of an additional language but it will vary depending on the circumstances such as the language approached, level of English that the student has, learning styles, motivation, and the teacher's role.

Throughout this research, I learned that learning and teaching are two completely different things that even though they are related, will not be approached in the same way. Therefore, a language teacher is capable of looking for resources and planning classes with the best method and techniques for his/ her students. He/she is also able to make materials and select activities with the only purpose of making their students learn a language.

Nevertheless, this teacher is not applying all these benefits that only a teacher has studied and knows how to use for her/his own benefit.

Consequently, I consider this study as an opportunity for language teachers to study themselves and increase their knowledge taking into account all the characteristics they own.

On the other hand, I found important the fact that during the research, it was found that motivation is as important and that it was not taken seriously by the participants. That means that students are being demotivated because of the way the class is taught. However, I think that it is a big opportunity to create a change not only in the teachers' methodology but in the learning, teaching and self-teaching.

Finally, it was evident that as future language teachers, the participants were not aware of the process they are going through by learning an additional language which means that they had not thought of the third language learning process as an experience that could have been improved with the existing abilities and skills. At the end of the interviews, all of the participants said that they never thought about it before. They agree that when they are in a class as a teacher, they play the teacher's role using all the information and when they are in a class as students, they play the student's role as if they were not teachers or did not have the enough tools to learn a language and enhance the language learning process. All of them assured that when learning the third language, they forget they are capable of looking for more instead of just taking what is provided in the class. Therefore, while doing the interview, they were so thankful and confused since they had never questioned about those circumstances, the study led them to reflect on their language acquisition process in relation to their future as language teachers.

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## APPENDIX 1

### The influence of English in the third language learning process

#### Instrument

Semi-structured interview

The information gathered from this interview will be only used for academic research purposes. Therefore, the information will be confidential and anonymous.

1. What level of English do you have according to the Common European Framework of Reference?
2. How long have you been learning English?
3. How was the process of learning English? (How long did it take? Was it difficult?)
4. What other language besides English are you studying?
5. What level are you in the third language according to the international standards of such language?
6. How has your experience of learning the third language been?
7. What have been the positive and negative aspects of having studied English before studying the third language learning?
8. How do you think the learning of the third language would have been if you did not know English?
9. When you are in the third language class, what language do you use as a tool to learn? For example, in order to translate or to understand. Why do you think it happens?
10. Do you think that English is an influence when learning the third language? What kind of influence?
11. When you learn a new word or grammatical structure, do you compare it with another language? If so, what language? Why do you think so?
12. What strategies have you tried to improve the learning process of the third language?

## Appendix 2

### Transcriptions: Participant 1(Monserrat)

I: What level of English do you have according to the common European Framework of Reference?

P: I haven't certified my English language but I consider that I am between B2 and C1

I: How long have you been learning English?

P: Since I was 12 years old

I: How was the process?

P: I started in elementary school because I was, I took bilingual classes, so since I was little, like, my kindergarten was in English, and then during the elementary school it was one day English and one day Spanish, then during the secondary school I slowed the process because the school wasn't bilingual so I forgot some part of English but then in high school I retook it.

I: Do you think it was difficult?

P: Yes, because I thought I had a good English but when I went to high school it seemed that I didn't because I didn't take the classes that I needed during secondary school, there was a like a slowdown (retroceso)

I: What other language besides English are you studying?

P: French

I: And what level do you have in that language?

P: A2

I: How was your experience of learning the third language?

P: It was good, at first, it was easy for me but then it began to get a little difficult because of the teacher but I liked taking French.

I: What have been the positive and negative aspects of having studied English before you studied French?

P: I think that the positive aspect was that I was aware of more grammatical rules and vocabulary and the negative aspects were the pronunciation because I'm used to pronounce word differently and in French the pronunciation is completely different like in English.

I: How do you think the learning of the third language would have been if you didn't know English?

P: (takes a little time to think) I haven't really thought about that but I think that maybe could've been easier because I used to compare Spanish and the Spanish grammatical rules with French so whenever I would think about English and French, they would be like ... well like a huge difference between those language, well, at least for me

I: When you are in the third language class what language do you use as a tool to learn ?

P: Spanish, because it is my mother tongue so that makes it inevitable for me to compare it with my language

I: And do you think it is also because it's similar?

P: Yeah, surely

I: Do you think that English is an influence when learning a third language?

P: Yes, I think so

I: Why? What kind of influence?

P: Well, I think that the one that is a big influence for me is vocabulary because there some words in English that don't exist in Spanish or they do but in English they are shorter and in French they are longer or they have a different kind of genre so I think that's a big influence for my, the vocabulary.

I: When you learn a new word or grammatical structure do you compare it with another language?

P: Yeah, for example when I used to learn French, because now I'm not taking classes but when I used to, I used to compare it with Spanish and sometimes with English

I: Now, what strategies have you tried to improve the learning process of the third language?

P: The speaking ability, I've tried to listen more music in French so that I can learn more vocabulary in French and also the pronunciation

I: Do you use the same strategies that you used when you learnt English?

P: Yes, the same

I: Or do you use more?

P: No, I used even less because I don't really like French, I thought I liked it but it turns out that I don't really because it has become a little difficult for me and when I like there's been more English impact in my life than French, so English has been around my life ever since that I was little so I grew up listening music in English watching shows in English and all of that kind of stuff and with French hasn't had an impact in my life that has made me maybe look for more strategies or learn it more because I haven't had like a real contact with the language

I: At the beginning why did you decide to study French?

P: Because I needed to choose one.

I: Yeah but why did you choose that one in specific?

P: Yeah because I liked it and I chose it because of the pronunciation

## APPENDIX 3

### Transcriptions: Participant 2 (Pamela)

I: What level of English do you have according to the common European Framework of Reference?

P: I have C1

I: How long have you been learning English?

P: I've been studying English since I was like five years old

I: How was the process of learning English?

P: It was difficult, at first it was very slow because my teacher were not helping much I guess, I started getting a little more serious in High school which is that I started learning on my own

I: What other language besides English are you studying?

P: I am studying French and Dutch

I: And what level do you have in that language?

P: In French I have A2 and in Dutch like A1

I: How was your experience of learning the third language?

P: It's been stressful, especially because I've been procrastinating learning it on my own and I've not taken course for like a year now but I think learning English before learning French helped me a little

I: What have been the positive and negative aspects of having studied English before you studied French?

P: Negatives, I can't think of but **positives I think it has allowed me to find more sources to learn new languages** and it also allows me to communicate with people that know the languages I'm speaking and I'm learning

I: How do you think the learning of the third language would have been if you didn't know English?

P: I think, for French **I could've been a little bit easier because I would not confuse word or rules which is what I do when I'm learning French** and with Dutch, I think it would've been a bit harder because with Dutch is very similar in some ways to English and it would be a little more difficult

I: When you are in the third language class what language do you use as a tool to learn?

P: I use, my first instinct is English and then I'm like no, because I translate those thing in **Spanish because you know is easier because the rules are similar.** To use I also use English but with Dutch is similar so

I: Do you think that English is an influence when learning a third language?

P: Yes, not only the rules I think it can be applied to different languages like Dutch, not only the grammatical rules but also word that are used in that language and **with French I think yes, the rules and the words that sometimes can be similar but also some sounds, I think that you learn to make different sounds that you don't have in your language so it gets a little easier**

Comparison

I: When you learn a new word or grammatical structure do you compare it with another language?

P: Yes, **I compare it with English, both, French and Dutch**

I: Now, what strategies have you tried to improve the learning process of the third language?

P: I use, I talk to myself a lot, so I do that, I talk with friends that are natives speaker of the languages I'm learning and can I say duolingo? Yeah, duolingo, I use that a lot, I write main words, some vocabulary in that language

I: Do you use the same strategies that you used when you learnt English?

P: No, I think with English I used a lot more songs, I used to translate songs over and over and repeat the songs over and over and also watch shows and I don't do that with Dutch or French

I haven't been really interested in Dutch shows or songs but I decided for French and Dutch to take classes and not learning it on my own which is bad I know, yeah I should do that more

I: Do you think that your experience here in the degree has helped you to improve your learning process in the third language?

P: To be honest not really, I feel like I learn, with English, I learnt that I can learn a new language by myself and I know what works for me and I really haven't seen new learning strategies that work for me in those languages

## APPENDIX 4

### Transcriptions: Participant 3 (Laura)

I: What level of English do you have according to the common European Framework of Reference?

P: Ok according to that reference, I have B2

I: How long have you been learning English?

P: I think it's about 12 or 13 years

I: How was the process of learning English?

P: The process? Like in general? Well, I learned English when I was 9 years old so the classes were very, I don't know, funny, entertaining but when I start high school the classes were a little bit boring, I think it was because of my age and also because of the, my subjects and I had more responsibilities than when I was a kid.

I: What other language besides English are you studying?

P: French

I: And what level do you have in that language?

P: Like A1- A2, in the middle

I: How was your experience of learning the third language?

P: My experience with French, I actually chose French because I really liked like the culture but about the learning process it was easier for me to learn French than learning English.

I: Why?

P: Because French is very similar to Spanish. They share some structures in common, and also because of all the knowledge that I acquired here in the major that made me feel more conscious, aware about the language and structures.

I: What have been the positive and negative aspects of having studied English before you studied French?

P: A positive aspect as I mentioned before, it's just that now I am aware about the structures, I know when and how to use the tenses of both languages that's the easy part. I know when the French teacher tells me "this is an adjective, or a verb" I can recognize those parts of the speech. And a negative aspects, it might be the methodology because there was a time in which I was tired of the way English because it was very methodological and very structured and then I found out that French teachers do the same in the classes so that's very boring for me and made me in the past think that I couldn't be able to express myself in French or at least it will take a lot of time so that's a negative aspects, that they would make you feel that you won't be able to express yourself but like in three or four years when you certificate the language but not in this moment, that's something that I don't like.

I: How do you think the learning of the third language would have been if you didn't know English?

P: Well, I think it would've been a little bit, maybe more difficult because I think that English language has given me the basic structures, like I told you, I can recognize the parts of the speech, I'm used to the process, I'm used to the grammar itself so if I wouldn't learn English I think French wouldn't have been easy for those aspects of grammar but also thanks to Spanish, I mean, French and Spanish are very similar.

I: When you are in the third language class what language do you use as a tool to learn?

P: Spanish

I: Have you used English?

P: I think yes, sometimes, like in a second face, for example, at first I compare a new structure, a new word with my mother tongue and after that I make this comparison with my second language which is English

I: Do you think that English is an influence when learning a third language?

P: I think it depends on the person and in my case, I think it didn't influence my learning my learning at all, but it provided me the basis but not at all, I think the major part it was Spanish

I: What kind of basis?

P: As I told you, structure, I know what this is, I know what that is, I know when this tense is used.

I: Now, what strategies have you tried to improve the learning process of the third language?

P: One strategy might be to listen to music and watch movies, French movies.

I: Do you use the same strategies that you used when you learnt English?

P: Yes

I: Have you tried new ones?

P: No, the same, I think that my main interest about this third language is because of the movies and music and in English is the same, almost the same, but for example, in English I used to read books but in French cannot read books, I don't know, it's much more difficult for me but when listening to it it's easier, so that's a strategy. I used more my auditory channel.

## Appendix 5

### Transcriptions: Participant 4 (Gabriela)

I: What level of English do you have according to the common European Framework of Reference?

P: I think I have B1

I: How long have you been learning English?

P: Well, it started when I was in primary school but when I was in secondary school I didn't have good teacher so I didn't learn something but let's count from High school, so 7 years.

I: How was the process of learning English?

P: When I was in primary school it was very funny, very entertaining to do it, to learn something different so, so far it has been a really nice experience. It was difficult when I was in high school it was a different environment there were students that knew more than me so it was hard and also in the university it was still complicated

I: What other language besides English are you studying?

P: Italian

I: And what level do you have in that language?

P: A2

I: How was your experience of learning the third language?

P: Really cool and funny too, because there different teacher so in my two first courses my classes were very dynamic but the other two were very theoretical so it was hard

I: What have been the positive and negative aspects of having studied English before you studied French?

P: I think it depends on the language you are studying because Italian is very similar to Spanish so English doesn't really affect my process of learning a third language.

I: How do you think the learning of the third language would have been if you didn't know English?

P: I don't think there would have a problem because as I said Italian is very similar to Spanish, although, there are some vocabulary that keep the words or fit the words in English.

I: When you are in the third language class what language do you use as a tool to learn?

P: Spanish, my mother tongue

I: Why do you think it happens?

P: Italian is very similar to Spanish

I: Do you think that English is an influence when learning a third language?

P: Yes, but also again it depends on the language you want to learn, and in my case not really.

I: When you were in the Italian class, English was not like in your mind?

P: Well, there were some moments in which as English has been part of my life completely there were moments in which I was thinking in English instead of in Spanish but mostly is Spanish

I: When you learn a new word or grammatical structure do you compare it with another language?

P: Yes, with Spanish

I: Now, what strategies have you tried to improve the learning process of the third language?

P: I listen to song, sometimes I watch Italian movies, I tried to do it without the subtitles.

I: Have you tried more strategies than you used when you learnt English or just the same ones?

P: The same ones.

I: Why?

P: I think I'm very lazy to find new strategies so I stick with the same ones

## Appendix 6

Transcriptions: Participant 5 (Diego)

I: What level of English do you have according to the common European Framework of Reference?

P: Actually I haven't done the certification but I think that near from B2 or B1

I: How long have you been learning English?

P: I think since I was in high school but I did some study when I was in primary school but it was just vocabulary

I: How was the process of learning English?

P: No, I don't think it was difficult because I was constant... I think an important aspect when I was learning English it is that I learned through the videogames because all the time I was looking for the words I saw in the videogames

I: What other language besides English are you studying?

P: Right now French and Italian, but I tried to learn German when I was in high school also at the beginning of the university

I: And what level do you have in that language?

P: A2

I: How was your experience of learning the third language?

P: It was very good because Italian as many people say it's very similar to Spanish so in some way I think I could see these similarities and it makes it very easy

I: What have been the positive and negative aspects of having studied English before you studied the third language?

P: I think that we are full of English so most of the time we think that is more important to learn English because it's very common in our culture even though Italian it's important because of the certification, because I want to learn it I think its negative in the way in which when I learn a word I first think of the translation first in English

I: How do you think the learning of the third language would have been if you didn't know English?

P: Better, I think because as I mentioned before Spanish and Italian are like brothers so I relate them easily if I didn't know English because as I told you before I'm used to think in English before another English.

I: So, do you consider English as an interference?

P: Yes, in some ways

I: When you are in the third language class what language do you use as a tool to learn?

P: Spanish because of the similarity but when I was learning German I refer most of the time to English because of the similarities

I: When you learn a new word or grammatical structure do you compare it with another language?

P: Yes, with English, because I think I learned English grammatically as the same way in which I learned Italian because I didn't take my mother tongue like grammatically.

I: So it was like the same process?

P: Yes, exactly

I: Now, what strategies have you tried to improve the learning process of the third language?

P: You know the common ones, listening to music in that language and one of my favorite one is talking to myself because you just need your own time, you need to be alone so when you're not doing anything probable you just start talking about whatever you want and you practice the language you want to practice, the other one could be reading and watch movies or tv

I: Have you tried more strategies than you used when you learnt English?

P: The same ones because I think they work for me.

## Appendix 7

### Transcriptions: Participant 6 (Vicente)

I: What level of English do you have according to the common European Framework of Reference?

P: Well according to the European Frameworks I am probable B2

I: How long have you been learning English?

P: I've been studying it like probable 3 years

I: How was the process of learning English?

P: At the beginning it was very difficult because it was a new experience for me so you know to get to know the structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, it was difficult for me but in the middle it was better because you can notice that you are able to communicate that's the good thing

I: What other language besides English are you studying?

P: Portuguese

I: And what level do you have in that language?

P: A2

I: How was your experience of learning the third language?

P: Incredible, amazing.

I: Do you think it was more difficult or easier than learning English?

P: It was easier because Portuguese and Spanish are quite close, of course there are some exceptions like in other languages.

I: What have been the positive and negative aspects of having studied English before you studied the third language?

P: Well, I think for examples Portuguese in this case so I have certain knowledge about how to do research about a topic for example Portuguese but and I know some websites and I go there because in English I can find many information so I think in this case, the positive is the previous knowledge and the negative could be that I don't have someone who is teaching me because of the culture because I'm just learning what I need in that moment or what I can find but in English the process was different because there was a teacher and him was teaching culture or the most common language use everyday life and in Portuguese is not that much

I: How do you think the learning of the third language would have been if you didn't know English?

P: Well, probable I would've studied Portuguese as a second language instead of English so I think it would be so difficult to learn Portuguese because I wouldn't have that experience of learning a foreign language.

I: When you are in the third language class what language do you use as a tool to learn?

P: Probable I use to translate and to understand, I use both of them because in Portuguese there are many similar words in Spanish so there is no need to use English but sometimes is much better to remember things when I think in English and not in Spanish

I: Do you think that English is an influence when learning a third language?

P: Yes, it is, in my experience sometimes when I have to speak in Portuguese, I am speaking or giving a presentation of something and all of the sudden an English word appears and I'm like "sorry sorry" and then but sometimes instead of thinking in Spanish I'm thinking in English, I don't know but it's weird

I: When you learn a new word or grammatical structure do you compare it with another language?

P: Yes, in this case could be most of the time Spanish but sometimes English because you can see the difference of the structures.

I: Now, what strategies have you tried to improve the learning process of the third language?

P: Well, for example something that I really use when I started to learn English was to chat to talk to people on Facebook so that was like a way to practice my writing skills and well I'm doing the same now with Portuguese and try to write as much as possible but now I have tried something new and that is to listen to podcast something that I didn't do with the English language and now I'm doing it with Portuguese and also try to speak myself like you know like telling your event in the days

I: Why do you think you are trying new strategies?

P: It's something like you're trying something that works for you and something doesn't work for you so in this case I'm trying like well I'm going to try in this case podcast and I fell they are working for me.

I: And do you think that you are trying new strategies because of your experience with English?

P: Yes, in this case I didn't have too many listening practice with English, now I'm doing this with Portuguese, I'm practicing a lot of listening, listening.

I: So we can say that you know better yourself?

P: Yes, of course, after a while you find yourself, you can see the way in which you learn much better

## Appendix 8

### Transcriptions: Participant 7 (Carla)

I: What level of English do you have according to the common European Framework of Reference?

P: I consider that I have a B2 level

I: How long have you been learning English?

P: I've been studying for around 5 years

I: How was the process of learning English?

P: The process of learning English was difficult for me even I had English classes at high school, the topics and the lessons were not enough to have a good English level before getting enrolled at the English teaching major so when I was taking target language 1 most of classmates were used to practice and talk in English so I was under my classmates' level and that made me feel sad but through time I think thanks to the importance I gave to English I could manage that situation and I consider that it is a manner of time so that can get use to English .

I: What other language besides English are you studying?

P: I'm learning Japanese

I: And what level do you have in that language?

P: I have already made the N5 certification

I: How was your experience of learning the third language?

P: My experience learning Japanese was really good, first because thanks to learning English I had like an idea how a language works and how a language is composed so now I have like some strategies to learn vocabulary or to understand better. In addition to what I have said, I was motivated by learning Japanese because I was interested in learning Asian languages so I think that motivation is an important factor for learning a language. And yes, it was good, if I consider the background that English provided me when I learned Japanese I could relate some words and that's it because grammar it's different in Japanese.

I: What have been the positive and negative aspects of having studied English before you studied the third language?

P: I think that the positive aspects of studying English before Japanese was the fact that I know how a language, how the process of learning a language is and the relationship between vocabulary, between some words that are similar in English and the negative aspects were that due to Japanese level are lowers than the English level when I try to create a sentence or when I want to say something in Japanese I was thinking about English so when I participate in Japanese class it was difficult for me to speak fluently because I was thinking in English but it was different I remember that in Japanese level one wasn't good so I think that teacher role is very important in the process of learning a language and from level 2 to level 7 the teacher was really good so that improved my skills in Japanese and that helped me to develop, I could say that I developed the writing and listening skills.

I: How do you think the learning of the third language would have been if you didn't know English?

P: I think that if I hadn't studied English before learning Japanese it could be easier to learn Japanese because due to I didn't have a previous background about how to learn a language I think I could have been able to figure out how to learn first the Japanese writing then the grammar and then the character that are used in Japanese for this I think that sometimes English is like a barrier while learning another language

I: When you are in the third language class what language do you use as a tool to learn?

P: I think that in the case of Japanese I made use of English as a tool to learn because of the relationship between words and because currently I'm used to use more English than Spanish so sometimes even in Spanish it's difficult for me to communicate or to say words correctly because I make a mix between Spanish and English so I'll say that I use English as a tool to learn Japanese

I: Do you think that English is an influence when learning a third language?

P: Yes, I think that English influences my learning in Japanese because as I already mentioned the advantage of knowing how English is composed provides you a better understanding and some strategies to learn quickly. I think that sometimes it can work as a positive influence but sometimes it couldn't because if English is deep in your mind sometimes you can get confused with the words and fortunately the Japanese grammar is different if not it would be a mess.

I: When you learn a new word or grammatical structure do you compare it with another language?

P: In the case of Japanese I just compare the words, if I make use of the alphabet “katakana” the whole alphabet is used to talk about foreign things, so that’s the only thing I compare to English, talking about structure, grammar and conjugation, no, I didn’t compare it because the structure of Japanese has grammatical aspects so much different than other languages

I: Now, what strategies have you tried to improve the learning process of the third language?

P: I’m not sure if the activities I do improve my learning, my Japanese learning but I make list words to learn vocabulary, I try to watch movies or to listening to music without subtitles or probable I try to make relationship so that I can remember them and use them appropriately

I: Do you use the same strategies that you used when you learnt English?

P: Yes, I use the same ones that I used to learn English because I think that when you are learning a language the way in which teacher teach you topics is the same, I mean the topics go from the very basic topic or information to the difficult ones so I think that when you have the knowledge how those topics can be taught you can link them and try to apply those strategies to learn another language.