Understanding the dynamics around text production in an EFL classroom: a systemic functional approach

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"La Universidad distrital francisco José de caldas no será responsable por las ideas expuestas por el graduando en este trabajo."
Thanks to:

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Abstract

The purpose of this research project is to identify and describe the morphosyntactic interference between L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English) and to understand how this interference affects the exchange of information labelled as the interpersonal metafunction of language. With this qualitative, descriptive and interpretative study we attempted to answer the research question, *How does the balance between the systemic and functional dimension of written texts interfere with L2 text production?* In order to answer this question we implemented a pedagogical intervention in the second grade of a Colombian public school.

This pedagogical intervention was divided into two stages: The first stage involved a trial period in which the purpose was to identify, on the one hand, the students’ topics of interest in order to create stories and materials interesting for them and, on the other hand, the activities suitable for their age and context. The second stage had to do with the implementation of the intervention which was based on the whole language principles; here, the use of pop-up books, discussions, listening and movement activities were strategies utilized to encourage students to use the language in a meaningful manner and to produce their own texts in the target language. The artifacts collected during the intervention were organized in a matrix and analyzed using the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory proposed by Halliday. This theory not only allowed us to analyze the data collected but also helped us to understand the phenomenon under study and thus answer the research question.

**Key words:** interference, interpersonal metafunction, text production, EFL, classroom.
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Introducción

Our project addresses primarily a linguistics theme: the morphosyntactic aspects of Spanish that interfere in L2 text production and how these aspects affect the use of the interpersonal metafunction of language. This is a case study developed in a public school in the area of Engativá, zone 10, in the city of Bogota, Colombia. The level selected to carry out this research was second grade of elementary school, the last grade of the first cycle of education. This research was developed based on a pedagogical intervention in which the approach was whole language. We presented a series of tales that were built around the educational page Raz-kids, the Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés [Basic Competency Standards in Foreign Languages: English], and topics that were of interest to the students.

After the reading of the stories students were asked to produce their own texts, which were then analyzed in order to answer the research questions and reach the objectives. This topic has been addressed by Applied Linguistics for English Language Teaching and we focused specifically on the Systemic Functional Linguistics theory whose main exponent is M.A.K. Halliday. This theory was the main basis of the analysis, preceded by the identification and description of the morphosyntactic interference in the texts produced by the participants. Before we framed our research with this topic we experienced different situations that made us interested in studying them in real life.
In our initial practices in elementary schools we realized that when students were asked to write a text the main characteristic in their writings was a list of vocabulary instead of structured phrases or sentences. This caught our attention since this behavior was repeated by different students from different grades, ages and literacy levels. Also, in their writings there was another common trait: the use of Spanish grammatical rules. Considering this, we wanted to address this research issue from theoretical and practical perspectives.

Therefore, in order to address this research issue we looked for theoretical foundations that gave us a deeper understanding in order to focus our study on a more specific field. Through the searching of theory that fitted our research needs we found SFL as a means to understand the phenomenon of interference and its implication on text production in L2 (English). From the practice and theory we framed and conducted this study. Next we are going to give a brief description of the chapters that made up this study and their contents.

This document presents five chapters in which the reader will find in detail the various stages that emerged in this research:

The first chapter supports the relevance of this project and the reasons that led us to develop it; also, it is going to present the research questions and objectives. The second chapter is going to present the concepts upon which this research is based, exposing various theoretical constructs that are complementary and allowing for an accounting of the problems surrounding the phenomenon of the interference of the mother tongue on foreign
language text production and its implication on the use of the interpersonal metafunction of language. The third chapter presents the pedagogical intervention in which we give an account of the setting, population, pedagogical approach, a chronogram of activities and the innovative component of our intervention. The fourth chapter presents the research design, which narrates the investigative process, describes the sources of information and the treatment given to the design. The fifth chapter presents the way the data was handled, as well as the analysis process, findings, conclusions and implications.
Chapter One

The Study

In this chapter we present what the study is about, including the reasons why we conducted this research from a theoretical and practical perspective. Also, we present the research questions and objectives as well as the pedagogical and research purposes in addition to explaining how this project contributed to our personal and professional development as well as the academic importance of this study for L.E.B.E.I. (Licenciatura en Educacion Basica con Enfasis en Ingles OR Teacher Certification in Basic Education with an Emphasis on Teaching English)

Problem Statement

When we were engaged in our initial teaching practices we noticed that the English classes were focused on vocabulary and the lessons did not include the use of materials different from the ones present in the classroom. Most of the students´ tasks were activities in which they had to write the name of an object, make a list of vocabulary or draw a specific object. Unfortunately, these activities did not involve the use of this vocabulary in sentences or expressions that allowed students to use the language in a contextualized manner. According to Moats (2007:12), vocabulary development is “learned by repeated
exposure to a word’s use in context and by explicit, direct instruction in word meanings”, which means that vocabulary lessons should be linked to activities that help and encourage learners to use and understand words in contexts and these activities should not only be written but also should include speaking, listening and reading activities since the language is a “whole entity and it should be taught as a whole” (Ping: 1).

Also we could observe that the presence of Spanish language characteristics at the time of writing vocabulary in English was a constant. This phenomenon is called interference. For Santos (2009), interference is "the phenomenon that occurs when an individual uses in a target language, a phonetic, lexical, morphological and syntactic trait, characteristic of his native language." The constant use of traits from students’ mother tongue (Spanish) in English assignments made us wonder about the importance this interference had on the production of written texts in English. Besides the frequent use of Spanish traits in students’ texts, we also noticed that their texts were describing or addressing someone else most of the time e.g. people such as family members, classmates or teachers were the usual topics; furthermore, trying to exchange information or demands is a function of language that according to The Systemic Functional Language theory by M.A.K Halliday is called the Interpersonal Metafunction.

The interpersonal metafunction, according to Halliday and Matthiessen, is “concerned with the interaction between the speakers and addresses the grammatical resources for enacting social roles in general, and speech roles in particular, in dialogic interaction; i.e. for establishing, changing, and maintaining interpersonal relations.”(2004).
The fact that students usually wrote about someone else made us want to analyze the Interpersonal Metafunction that, according to Halliday, studies the exchange of information or demands, the roles of the participants and the status of their relationships. The phenomenon of interference and students’ preferences to write about other people made us wonder about how this interference from the mother tongue (Spanish) interfered with students’ functional purposes when they wrote a text in English as a foreign language. This background generated the following research question and objectives that served as the foundation to develop this project.

Research Question:

What characterizes the interpersonal metafunction of EFL 2nd graders’ written texts in terms of L1 and L2 morphosyntactic interference?

Main Objective:

To analyze the systemic and functional dimension of written texts produced by second graders

Specific Objectives:

- To identify the grammar aspects of the mother tongue, Spanish, when they interfere with the text production of the foreign language (English)

- To identify how the use of Spanish language characteristics interfere with the exchange of information between addressee and addressee.


**Justification**

Based on our experiences in the educational field and the theoretical basis that support the issue that we found, there are two main reasons why we decided to conduct this study: First, the fact that most of the students during our pedagogical practices wrote a list of vocabulary when they were asked to write a text and, second, in most of those texts they used false cognates and grammatical rules from Spanish. This practice caught our attention. We found theoretical foundations that supported these issues e.g. the interference phenomenon which we mentioned earlier and which is, according to Santos, when an individual uses in the language he is learning a phonetic, lexical, morphological and syntactic trait that belongs to his or her mother tongue.

Reading the texts that students wrote, we found another characteristic that caught our attention: The students in most cases addressed or talked about other people besides themselves, usually family members, classmates or teachers. We got interested in students’ willingness to write about someone else, we wanted to understand the students’ functional purposes in their texts and how their native language (Spanish) interfered with their intentions to communicate effectively; hence, the reason we selected the Systemic Functional Language theory by Halliday as the main framework where the interpersonal metafunction addresses participants’ intentions when they communicate.

The Second reason we decided to conduct this study involved the kind of pedagogical approaches that, according to students from our pedagogical practices-- the ones from the school where the project took place and where we made our observations, were focus on
learning vocabulary so we wanted to use an approach where students were challenge to produce their own text in the foreign language (English). We selected the whole language approach, basing the intervention on tales read in the target language. These tales were followed by a discussion and activities related to the tales’ topics; therefore, the basis of this intervention was the whole language approach that, according to Violet Harris, “is the perspective where learning occurs when information is presented as a whole rather than divided into smaller components and is thus meaningful” (1993).

This research was focused on the analysis of the systemic and functional dimensions of texts written in English and produced by second graders. It is linked with the Licenciatura en Educación Básica con Énfasis en Inglés (L.E.B.E.I), since the phenomenon of interference that was described and the analysis of the exchange of information the interpersonal metafunction of language are descriptions and analyses that help with the understanding of aspects of the language that can hinder students’ English learning; therefore, student-teachers can pay attention to them and think of ways to approach the problems thus improving their teaching skills.

This project contributes to L.E.B.E.I in two different aspects, the main one being a perspective from where the understanding of the students’ native language and the English language basic grammatical structures are collaborators for improving the effectiveness of the learning process and, at the same time, finding issues that can be linked with student proficiency on this matter; additionally, through the study of the language form, find issues or characteristics of the students that affect them on a personal or social level. The second aspect is how important it is to take into account students’ needs and opinions related to
what they want in a class. From an initial trial and then interviews we were able to notice the topics that were of their interest and were pertinent for them according to their age and educational level. Based on this knowledge we created materials that were interesting to them and kept them motivated during the classes. The result of this practice was students’ disposition to use the knowledge they acquired from the classes and their context in a practical and communicative way. This research caused an impact on the students that were part of it, and on us as teacher-researchers on personal and professional levels; these impacts are going to be explained in the following pages.

The students were used to a type of learning focused on learning vocabulary by rote memory without any connection with everyday language. Our intervention helped the students on the one hand to become aware of the language used, how language can serve to communicate their thoughts and interact with others, using not only isolated words but instead learning how to use them all together based on the information they acquired from their context so that they could create texts that were meaningful for them and for others. On the other hand, the approach we used to teach English was something they had not experience before; their responses to it were positive since we could see they were interested in the tales and the materials we used; hence, they were motivated to follow the activities prepared for the class.

This research also contributed to our personal and professional growth. In the personal level this project made us realize that having set objectives with a specific date is the best way to achieve goals even though it means hard work. Additionally, it taught us the importance of teamwork, how important it is to be committed and responsible in order to
reach goals that are not individual but collective. On a professional level this Project helped us to strengthen our abilities as educators and researchers by allowing us to make use of our knowledge and creativity when we planned, prepared and implemented our English as a foreign language classes. Furthermore, the project helped us realize that we want to continue doing research along our teaching career since it is a tool to improve ourselves as teachers and can contribute to different academic fields.

The main objective of this project was to understand the phenomenon of interference between the mother tongue (Spanish) and foreign language (English) and how this interference affects the exchange of information or the interpersonal metafunction in texts produced by second graders. The project was designed to be developed to describe aspects of the language that are related to its form and from there analyze the effectiveness of the exchange of information. The importance of this project is the relevance it gives to the study of systemic aspects of the language in order to analyze issues concerning the process of language learning and social relationships.

Along this chapter we presented a brief introduction to this project, the practical and theoretical foundations that led us to conduct it, how important it was for our personal and professional lives as well as its academic relevance within LEBEI. In the following chapter we are going to present the theoretical foundations that helped us to frame this research project.
In the previous chapter we presented the reasons why we decided to conduct this study and a brief presentation of what this research is about. In this chapter we present the theoretical bases upon which this project lies. The purpose of this chapter is to construct the concepts of *text production*, *interference*, and *interpersonal metafunction*, according to our point of view, and how these fit into this research based on theories given by Ferreiro & Teverosky, Halliday, Matthiessen and Thiemer.

Firstly, in order to understand the phenomenon which is the interference between the mother tongue (Spanish) and the foreign language (English)-- which was studied through the analysis of the texts produced by the participants-- we proposed a discussion around the terms *Text Production* and *Writing*, highlighting characteristics that belong to children’s writings; later, considering the research objectives and the way the analysis was done, we propose a discussion around the term *interference* explaining, in its broadest sense, *morphology* and *syntax*, which were the grammatical aspects considered to identify and describe the phenomenon of interference. Finally, we are going to explain what the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory is, focused specifically on how students used Ellipsis for the subject and Anaphoric Ellipsis when writing about others and for others and how this use interfered with the exchange of information between addressee and addressee,
which is labelled in the SFL theory as the Interpersonal Metafunction of Language. Next, we are going to present the main constructs around the terms previously presented.

**Text production and writing**

Our conceptualization of text production and writing comes from our own experience in our pedagogical practices in public schools and the review of literature related to these concepts. According to Lemke, text production is “The process of making text by selecting the components of language or successive clauses in such a way that the resulting sequences of clauses form a socially recognizable unit of linguistic action” (1991). From this definition we understand the term Text Production as a corpus (which is a body of written or spoken material upon which a linguistic analysis is based (Robin, 2009)), produced by an individual where the components of language are used with the intention of communicating within certain context features, in this case, a second grade classroom in a public school. In this research these features are also determined by students’ personal lives and the stories used in the class which were adapted from the educational program Raz-kids.

Based on what we have already said, we understand that a text can be produced in two different ways: written and oral; here, we focused on the written text; this is why we consider it important to relate the concept of writing to text production. Writing, in its broadest sense, "is the alphabetical notation system, the letters and their rules of combination, also the set of characters and non-alphabetic graphic conventions such as
punctuation, capitalization, underlining, etc." (Tolchinsky, 1990) Understanding this, we can see that even in a broad definition, as the one this author gives, the combinatorial nature (morphosyntactic) of writing as a linguistics production is always recognized. Also, it is important to remember that in the Latin notation system letters identify phonologic segments and the other graphic characters reflect paralinguistic or non-verbal qualities\(^1\).

Instead of Tolchinsky’s view of writing as a set of graphic symbols, Krashen gives a more functional explanation of writing based on the generative theory proposed by Chomsky.

For his part, Krashen takes the concepts of *competence* and *performance* and adapts them into the writing code, defining competence as “the set of knowledge of grammar and language that authors have in memory” and performance as “the set of communication strategies used by authors to compose a text”. Furthermore, Lyle Bachman, in accordance, proposes a similar theory whereby the linguistic competence can be of two types: organizational competence and pragmatic competence. These, in turn, consist of different categories and within them we find the grammatical competence and sociolinguistic competence.

The grammatical competence according to Bachman:

Includes those competencies involved in the *linguistic system*. These consist of a number of relatively independent skills such as knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax and phonology / spelling. These control the choice of words to express specific meanings, their shapes, their order in sentences to express

\(^1\) Ibidem: Tolchinsky. p: 5
propositions and its physical implementation, either as sounds or written symbols.
(1995)²

The sociolinguistic competence is “The sensitivity to, or control of the conventions of language use that are determined by the features of the specific language use in context” (2003). These two competences allow the user to compose a text grammatically correct and to express the appropriate meaning for his or her context. Considering the previous concepts and according to our research objectives, we understand writing as the means by which the individual formally starts to know and use the grammatical rules of language (morphosyntax) in order to communicate his or her vision of the world. Since the population involved in this study were children seven and eight years old, we considered it necessary to present a different definition of writing besides the traditional one and a brief explanation of the Early literacy process by Emilia Ferreiro and Ana Teverosky.

Children’s writings, according to Emilia Ferreiro, can be conceived as “the comprehension of how a representative system is built”(1982). According to the traditional view, the initial stages are when the child learns the correspondence between morpheme and grapheme, developing graph motor abilities and understanding how to transcribe and codify (Flower & Hayes. 1981). Nevertheless, authors such as Ferreiro and Teverosky had a different opinion on what the initial stages are. For instance, Ferreiro states that a child makes a big effort before he or she even starts to learn the linguistic systems since he or she needs to

² Author’s note: incluye aquellas competencias implicadas en el sistema lingüístico. Estas consisten en un número de competencias relativamente independientes tales como el conocimiento del vocabulario, morfología, sintaxis y fonología/grafía. Estas controlan la elección de palabras para expresar significados específicos, sus formas, su orden en los enunciados para expresar proposiciones y sus realizaciones físicas, sea como sonidos o como símbolos escritos.
understand what writing means and what it is used for; as such, there is a previous process before the child learns how to transcribe and codify.

Ferreiro and Teverosky also state that children have their own vision of what writing is and it does not necessarily agree with the conventional definitions of writing (1979). Fauconnier claims, “Writing is a mental representation of language, a different type of representation, therefore an arbitrary system 1” (1984). Ferreiro and Teverosky established the process that a child goes through when writing a text:

- The Discovery of the properties of the graphical representative elements: type of graphics and differences between iconic and non-iconic representation.
- The Discovery of the object’s quality, the one that is being substituted by written language.
- The Discovery of the relationships among the representative graphic elements: Quantitative and qualitative written productions.
- The Discovery of the correspondence between sounds, writing and language.
- The Discovery of the strategies to create new links among the language system.

According to Ferreiro and Teverosky, these stages are influenced by familiar and cultural characteristics (1982). The process previously described goes through the following literacy stages and were organized by Ferreiro and Teverosky in the following manner:

- Pre-syllabic: The text cannot be coded.
- Syllabic: The text contains a letter for each syllable that the target word contains.
- Alphabetic: The words can be coded.

Ferreiro states that the *early literacy* process does not evolve the same way in every child as its development is also affected by social and cultural factors. Ferreiro claims that writing should be seen from an angle differently from the traditional one when it is produced by a preliterate child or a child who is in the process of becoming literate; therefore, children’s writings need to be interpreted by focusing on trying to understand the intention to exchange information rather than on its structural accuracy.

The previous concepts were constructed with the purpose of guiding the analysis, including answering the research questions and thus understanding the phenomenon studied. As we studied the system and the function of written texts, it is important to clarify that in terms of form, we specifically focused on the morphosyntactic elements that caused interference between L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English) in the corpuses produced by the participants. This is why it is important to explain what interference means for this research.

**Interference**

Despite criticism and reproaches that the traditional notion of interference has received, this has not meant the abandonment of such designation, deeply rooted among specialists. However current research reserves the term to describe surface isolated phenomena that can be unpredictable, involuntary and effectively diverted from the rules: the situation of foreign language students, in
which interference arises as a result of inexperience, presumably transitory, in the use of a new language. (Siguan. 2001)³

Considering Miquel Siguan’s proposal around the term *interference*, here we are going to present and relate some of the most relevant theories regarding the concept and from there, based in our own experience, we are going to build a concept of what this phenomenon means for the study. According to Thiemer (1980), interference is divided as follows:

a) Internal: includes structural and morphological changes within the same linguistic system of the language. That is, the interference is presented in the language itself, as in the conjugation of irregular verbs in Spanish, which arises frequently in children’s interference and misuse. For example, the regular infinitive verb "seguir" whose past conjugation in third person is "siguió" (this also happens in verbs like "comer - comió", "partir - partió") presents a uniform structure that interferes negatively among children when using irregular verbs; for example, the infinitive irregular verb "venir", whose conjugation in past in the third person is "vino", is mistakenly conjugated by children, due to morphological interference, as "vinio".⁴

b) External: studies the influence of known structures in other languages, given the fact that during the process of learning a foreign language, the student is exposed to a

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³ Author’s note: A pesar de las críticas y reproches que ha recibido la tradicional noción de *interferencia*, ello no ha supuesto el abandono de tal denominación, muy arraigada entre especialistas. Sin embargo, la investigación actual se reserva el término para describir fenómenos aislados, superficiales, que pueden ser impredecibles, involuntarios y, efectivamente, desviados de las normas: es la situación de los estudiantes de una lengua extranjera, en los que afloran las interferencias como consecuencia de su impericia, probablemente transitoria, en el uso de una nueva lengua.

⁴ Examples from Montes, J (2000):
permanent conflict between rules and habits acquired in their native language, and structures of the foreign language he or she is learning e.g. it is not born of internal causes of the linguistic system, but of the contact of some systems with others.

In addition, for Santos (1992) interference is "the phenomenon that occurs when an individual uses in a target language, a phonetic, lexical, morphological and syntactic trait, characteristic of his native language". To Czochralski⁵, interference is unconscious, synchronous, and dynamic and occurs due to the lack of knowledge of the language and is part of the word. We would like to have this definition in mind as the axis of the morphosyntactic analysis will be the word, concrete space where linguistic interference occurs (the word itself-- internal morphological relationships-- and their relationship to other words-- distance syntactic relationships). For purposes of our research we want to focus mainly on the external interference proposed by Thiemer.

Since what we studied was not the internal structure of Spanish but the interference of this linguistic system in the written production of English, it is also important to clarify that interference, as suggested by Santos, does indeed occur at the individual level but within it there are generalities which this study aims to identify and describe. Finally, as mentioned above and as Czochralski specified, we are going to highlight the role of the word because in it we specifically found the external interference. Since the systemic analysis was focused on the morphosyntactic interference of L1 (Spanish) on L2 (English), we consider it important to build the concept of morphosyntax according to our research objectives.

⁵ Quoted by Buitrago, S., Ramirez, J., & Rios, J., 2011
For the purpose of building the concept of morphosyntax, we present some definitions of morphology and syntax, their differences and similarities in theory and practice, and thus support why these two language disciplines are vital to the development of this study. For Bosque and Gutierrez (2009), syntax is a combinatorial discipline in the sense that it studies ways to organize more basic units: words. The morphology is also a combinatorial discipline. The essential difference between morphology and syntax is in their respective borders. Morphology has as minimum unit of analysis: the morpheme\textsuperscript{6}, and studies the combinatorial of morphemes to form words. Therefore, the upper limit of analysis of this discipline is the word. Syntax takes as a minimum unit of analysis the word. It studies how words are combined to form larger units, and how these higher units, in turn, lead to even larger units.

Taking what we mentioned above into account, we consider it pertinent to emphasize the word as the maximum unit of morphology analysis and, in turn, as the minimum unit of syntax analysis. To Benveniste (1997), the word has an intermediate functional position due to its dual nature. On the one hand, it is broken down into phonemic and morphological units that are lower level; on the other hand, it comes to be a significant unit and with other significant units, it becomes a top-level syntactic unit. According to Benveniste, Bosque, and Gutierrez’s ideas, morphology and syntax are complementary language disciplines that

\textsuperscript{6} Morphemes are the smallest meaningful units of language structure. These are constituents of words and understand the suffixes (morphemes in word-final position), prefixes (morphemes in word-initial position), and the basis on which these elements adhere. For example, we can find in Spanish the word \textit{inconstitucional} the prefix \{in\} and the suffixes \{-ción\} and \{-al\}. Morphological analysis indicates how the word is formed: It starts from the verbal root \{constituir\} then the suffix \{-ción\} is added to the base constitucion, then \{-al\} is added and the word is terminated with the addition of the prefix \{in\} to the resulting base. Gleason, H. (1970)
at the time of analyzing the corpus produced by students can account for the morphosyntactic interference of the L1 (Spanish) on the L2 (English).

In accordance with Czochralski, interference is evidenced specifically in the word, and when viewed from a morphosyntactic approach the word can be a highly significant object of study to show the phenomenon of interference more thoroughly and accurately. Our purpose, besides describing the morphosyntactic interference between L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English) in the corpus produced by the students, is to analyze the use of language that the participants produced in order to construct meaning in their context. Authors such as Halliday and Matthiessen propose that from the form of a text it is possible to identify the function that the writer meant to give, which means grammar as a system enables the writer to make meaning resource (Halliday & Matthiessen. 2004). Based on M.A.K. Halliday’s theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), we decided to analyze the interpersonal metafunction, which is why we are going to approach this term in the following pages.

**Interpersonal Metafunction**

We analyzed the text produced by students based on the Systemic functional linguistics theory by Halliday, specifically the use of ellipsis and its connection with the external interference explained on page( ) and the interpersonal metafunction of language. First of all we consider it important to conceptualize what is the Systemic Functional Linguistics theory. The Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory (SFL) is a theory that analyses the language from its form to its function, taking into account the choices the
speaker or writer made in order to accomplish his or her communicative intentions. Halliday claims that an author’s linguistic and functional choices “are the result of social circumstances and their influences on an author’s perception; therefore, linguistic choices should be highlighted at the discourse level” (1985). Concerning Systemic Functional Linguistics, Halliday presents what he considers are the most important functions an individual develops within the oral or written production of a text.

This author claims there are three metafunctions and he gave them this name since the functions of language by tradition only refer to the use of language and not to the analysis of it. As he claims: “Why this rather unwieldy term ‘metafunction? We could have called them simply ‘functions’ however, there is a long tradition of talking about the functions of language in contexts where ‘function’ simply means purpose or way of using language, and has no significance for the analysis of language itself” (1985). These metafunctions are the Ideational metafunction, Interpersonal metafunction and Textual metafunction.

The first one, the ideational metafunction, according to Haratyan, “provides grammatical resources at clause rank to construe the inner and outer experience or ‘goings-on’ of the word, as the domain of functions and meanings of the word through the systems of transitivity” (2011). Halliday states that language “provides a theory of human experience, and certain of the resources of the lexicon-grammar of every language are dedicated to that function. We call it the ideational” (1985). The following, the interpersonal metafunction, is the one we worked with; it studies the exchange of information or good and services between writer/speaker and reader/listener. Halliday
explains the interpersonal metafunction as “language as action”; he says that the clause serves as an interactive event where the transmitter and receptor are both involved (1984). Later in this chapter we are going to explain this function in a broader manner. The third one, the textual metafunction, deals with cohesion and coherence within a text and how the writer or speaker uses the language “in order to communicate his/her message”7. The metafunction selected to develop this research analysis was interpersonal metafunction, which is why from now on our focus of attention is this metafunction.

The interpersonal metafunction, as stated by Halliday and Matthiessen, is “concerned with the interaction between the speakers and addresses, the grammatical resources for enacting social roles in general, and speech roles in particular, in dialogic interaction; i.e. for establishing, changing, and maintaining interpersonal relations.” (1997). The Interpersonal Metafunction is the one in charge of the exchange of information or demands among participants where the principal grammatical system is the Mood. The Mood analyses whether or not the speaker or writer is providing or asking for information or goods and services.

The mood element consists of two parts: the Subject, which is a nominal group, and the finite operator, which is part of a verbal group. On the one hand the subject, according to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 116):

Supplies the rest of what it takes to form a proposition: namely, something by reference to which the proposition can be affirmed or denied; for example, in

the duke has given away that teapot, hasn’t he? The Finite has specific reference

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7 Op cit: 2011
to positive polarity and present time, while the Subject the duke specifies the entity which the assertion is claimed to have validity

On the other hand, the finite element, according to M.A.K. Halliday (2004:115):

Has the function of making the proposition finite. That is to say, it circumscribes it; it brings the proposition down to earth, so that it is something that can be argued about. A good way to make something arguable is to give it a point of reference in the here and now; and this is what the Finite does. It relates the proposition to its context in the speech event.

These texts were written in English and considering that the participants’ mother tongue is Spanish, we were mainly interested in identifying and describing the morphosyntactic interference from a Spanish to English written text. Within the text we identified the use of a resource at the wording level that interfered with the use of the Mood element, specifically the subject; this resource is Ellipsis.

Ellipsis of the subject is when the writer or speaker omits the subject in a sentence since he or she thinks it is not necessary because the subject had been mentioned before. Halliday and Matthiessen state, “Ellipsis makes it possible to leave out parts of a structure when they can be presumed from what has gone before. Ellipsis indicates continuity, allowing speaker and addressee to focus on what is contrastive.” (p. 535). An example of it was made in the same text by these authors:
For any clause, there is one choice of Subject that is ‘unmarked’ — that is assumed, in the absence of evidence to the contrary. In a giving clause (offer or statement), the unmarked Subject is ‘I’; while in a demanding clause (question or command), the unmarked Subject is ‘you’. This means that, if a clause that on other grounds can be interpreted as offer or statement is without a Subject, the listener will understand the Subject ‘I’ — that is, Subject equals speaker, for example: (a) Carry your bag? (‘Shall I . . .?’) — Would you? Thanks. (b) Met Fred on the way here. (‘I . . .’) — Did you? Where? (p. 152).

Ellipsis can also be used at the anaphoric level. Anaphora, according to Richard Nordquist, is “A grammatical term for the use of a pronoun or other linguistic unit to refer back to another word or phrase.” (No year) Halliday and Matthiessen claim that “When a reference item is used anaphorically, it sets up a semantic relationship with something mentioned in the preceding text; and this enables the referenced item to be interpreted, as either identical with the referent or in some way contrasting with it.” (p. 561). We considered it was important to define what Ellipsis is, since according to Halliday and Matthiessen, “Ellipsis in the clause is related to the mood element” (p. 563).

Within this chapter we presented the theoretical foundations we based this research on; from the interference phenomenon, the conceptualization of text to the Systemic Functional Linguistic theory proposed by Halliday and supported by authors like Matthiessen, Haratyan and Granger. The next chapter gives a broad explanation about the pedagogical intervention, the place it was developed and the approach used.
Chapter Three

Pedagogical Intervention

In the previous chapter we presented the theoretical foundations on which this project is based. Within this chapter we present a description of the pedagogical intervention implemented at Colegio San José Norte I.E.D., and point out the information about the institution where the pedagogical intervention took place, the teacher role, student role, and materials role. Likewise we present the theory of language, the theory of learning, the theory of teaching, plus explanations on how this intervention is innovative and the relationship between the research question and the setting where the research took place. Finally we present content, themes, the methodology and evaluation used.

Educational institution and grade.

This study took place at Colegio San José Norte I.E.D., a public institution located in Éngativa in the northwest sector of Bogota, Colombia. This school has preschool, primary, secondary and middle school levels; it uses the calendar A schedule (February to December). The institution has two different venues, one for secondary and middle school students and the other for preschool and primary. The research was carried out in a second grade classroom where 30 students were present; these students were 7 and 8 years old; one
teacher, who teaches students the majority of the subjects including English, was in charge of this grade. The English classes along the year are focused on vocabulary learning objectives, according to this grade head-teacher. The design of the pedagogical intervention was developed by Danitza Cárdenas and Johana Sánchez, who based it on the Whole Language Theory, the education web page Kids-Raz and the first trial that was carried out with this grade.

**Pedagogical Intervention**

We selected a set of theories in order to define the pedagogical approach, language, teaching and learning vision that framed this pedagogical intervention. They are going to be presented next.

**Pedagogical Approach: The whole language**

The whole language approach, according to Violet Harris in *Evaluating children's books for whole-language learning*, “is the perspective where learning occurs when information is presented as a whole rather than divided into smaller components and is thus meaningful” (1993). This approach, according to Kenneth Goodman (1986), “attempts to get back to basics in the real sense of that word; to set aside basals, workbooks, and tests, and to return to inviting kids to learn to read and write by reading and writing and real stuff” (p. 26). Considering this, we feel the whole language approach encourages both the
child and the teacher to learn and teach in a natural way through the context and experience, where knowledge is no longer something merely rote but becomes something meaningful.

There are some principles that characterize this method and they must be taken into account when implementing the method in the classroom: First of all, there is the premise that language, both written and oral, cannot be separated from human experience and culture (Sumara, D. 1990), which means children must be exposed to real and natural language. Second, readers construct meaning during reading, and this is possible thanks to their prior learning and experience which allow them to make sense of the texts. Third, readers predict, select, confirm, and self-correct as they seek to make sense of print and finally, writers and readers are strongly limited by what they already know, writers in composing, readers in comprehending.  

Considering that this information is important for providing students with opportunities to interact with the language, we, in our case, incentivized writing production in English through different short stories from which a series of activities were developed, including discussions and games where children, using their prior knowledge and creativity, were able not only to construct meaning but also were able to use this meaning for their own writings.

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8 Goodman, K., 1986. Quoted by Harris, V., 1993
**Teacher role in the whole language**

The teachers´ role in this approach is one of a facilitator in the learning process. S/He is “an active participant in the learning community, rather than an expert passing knowledge”. In this approach the lessons and activities are mediated by students and teachers; here students take an active role in the process, they construct their own knowledge while the teacher is a supporter.

**Students´ role in the whole language**

Students are collaborators, architects and evaluators of their own learning process. Guided by the teacher, they usually select the materials that are going to be used in class. Students are collaborators in the sense that they are active participants along the lectures, architects in the sense that they build their own knowledge based on their experience within the context and evaluators because they are aware of their own process so they can account for how their learning has grown.

**Materials role in the whole language**

These materials have to be authentic and have to advocate for a real-world use. Experts consider that it is better to use newspapers, storybooks and literature brought in by the students, rather than commercial material. A real world use is when they can compare
the materials with the context they are familiar with e.g. something approachable and easy for them to connect the materials with the knowledge to be learned.

**Vision of language**

Various theories have risen around the acquisition and development of language; these theories have responded to the political and cultural needs of the historical moment in which they were proposed thus giving new insights and perspectives. These perspectives have guided and led new studies whose results have improved the understanding of the physical and cognitive processes in this field. Considering the above and taking into account the purposes of this study, we now are going to mention the theories about language acquisition and development that suit the research needs:

**Theory of cognitive development:**

From constructivism which states that "people interpret their environments and experiences in light of the knowledge and experiences they already have" and that "People do not simply take in an external reality and develop an unchanged, exact mental copy of objects or events. Instead, they build (or “construct”) their own individual understandings and knowledge” (Littlefield, J. & Cook, G., 2007). Piaget proposed that the cognitive development in the child is divided into four stages or phases:

- Sensorimotor stage (Birth to 24 months)
- Preoperational stage (24 months to 7 years)
- Concrete operational stage (7 to 12 years)

- Formal operational (Adolescence through adulthood)

Each of these stages is characterized by certain behaviors and language manners and although Piaget did not place special emphasis on linguistic processes, he established the role and development these have on each of the stages.

Our research is aimed at second-grade students of the ages of seven and eight years who, according to Piaget's theory, would be found in the concrete operational stage. In this level of cognitive development the child starts to think about the world using objective rules of logic, freeing them from the misconception of intuitive thought long as all this world is linked to concrete materials, contexts or situations (Littlefield. J. & Cook, G., 2005). Here the child’s vocabulary and grammar increases. According to Anglin (1993), at 18 months the average vocabulary is about 22 words, at 2 years the child uses about 250 words, at 5 years the child uses more than 2,000, and by the end of the school years, recognition of vocabulary reaches about 40,000 words; this language development is based on “children’s mental representational ability”, which is defined as “their ability to let a symbol (e.g. a word) stand for an object in the environment” (2005). Also at this stage the child understands the double meaning of some words, which allows him to comprehend metaphors and the use of riddles and puns, the use of the passive voice expands and appreciation of subtle grammatical distinctions is supported by metalinguistic awareness.

Regarding the learning of another language, the child becomes bilingual by acquiring both languages at the same time in early childhood, or by learning a second language after mastering the first.
Social Interactionism Theory

From constructivism Bruner proposed a theory where Piaget’s and Vygotsky's theories converge. For him, the best way to learn is when the knowledge is discovered and his theory is based on the idea that learners construct new concepts considering their previous knowledge. He established three modes of representation which are determined by the age:

- Enactive (0 to 1 year)
- Iconic (1 to 6 years)
- Symbolic (7 years onwards)

Considering the population which was part of the study, we are going to define Symbolic modes. Symbolic is the mode “where information is stored in the form of a code or symbol, such as language” (McLeod. 2008) Here images and actions have a clear and fixed relationship with what they represent.

For Bruner, language is important mainly because the use of words “can aid the development of the concepts they represent and can remove the constraints of the “here & now” concept”, and also because for him the child does not acquire the grammatical rules from scratch; before they have to learn to speak, they have to learn to use the language in their daily relationship with the world, especially with the social world.

Although his theory is not the basis of our research, we consider it relevant to mention Stephen Krashen's theory of input hypothesis where the language is acquired through the understanding of the input, which is achieved with the help of context.
Vision of learning

Taking into account the purposes and the approach used in this research, we consider the Constructivist Theory to be the most suitable perspective to strengthen and fulfill the objectives of it. Bruner, J. (1960) considers that learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based on both their current/past knowledge. Students select and transform information, construct hypotheses, and make decisions, relying on a cognitive structure to do so. Cognitive structures (i.e. schema, mental models) provide meaning and organization to experiences and allow the individual to "go beyond the information given". As far as instruction is concerned, the instructor should try and encourage students to discover principles by themselves. The curriculum should be organized in a spiral manner so that students continually build upon what they have already learned, which means the Instruction must be concerned with the experiences and contexts that get students willing and able to learn (readiness).

Vision of teaching

Considering the focus of our research and its aims, we are going to mix two different theories of teaching: Meaningful Learning and Cognitive Developmental Theory of instruction. On the one hand, meaningful learning is a theory developed by Davis Ausubel and states that there is meaningful learning when students relate new information to knowledge previously assimilated. Some of the main characteristics of meaningful learning theory are the following:
- There is no arbitrary incorporation of new knowledge into cognitive structure.

- There is a deliberate effort to link new knowledge with higher order concepts in cognitive structure.

- The learning is related to experiences.

- There exists an affective commitment to relate new knowledge to prior learning (Hassard, 2003).

There are also three phases that teachers have to implement in order to create a meaningful learning environment: Advance organizer, presentation of learning task or material and strengthening the cognitive organization. This last phase includes the following:

- Clarify aim of the lesson

- Present the organizer.

- Relate organizer to students' knowledge

- Make the organization of the new material explicit.

- Make logical order of learning material explicit.

- Present material and engage students in meaningful learning activities.

- Relate new information to advanced organizer.

- Promote active reception learning. (Hassard, 2003)
On the other hand, Cognitive Developmental Theory of Instruction is a theory developed by Jerome Bruner. This theory consists of “leading the learner through a sequence of statements and restatements of a problem or body of knowledge that increase the learner’s ability to grasp, transform, and transfer what he is learning” (Bruner, 1966) Its objective is to encourage students to develop skills that will help them gradually to master the object of study. The author established four features of theory of instruction as follows:

1. Predisposition to learn: as its name indicates this feature emphasizes the need to create enabling environments where students cultivate a love for learning. Bruner emphasizes the influence of social, motivational, cultural and personal factors as well as early teachers and parents in the process.

2. Structure of knowledge: comprehension is the most important aspect. In order to present an understandable content the teacher has to organize it in an ordered and structured pattern; it meaning “that a body of knowledge must be in a simple enough form for the learner to understand it and it must be in a form recognizable to the student's experience” (1966). However, there is no a specific way to structure the information; it depends on the preferences of teachers and learners.


4. Effective sequencing: it is clear that there is no a specific sequence that suits each student; this is why in this process we have to be especially careful considering that the sequencing or lack of it can positively or negatively affect the learning process of a student.
**Pedagogical intervention as innovation**

This pedagogical intervention was an innovation in the context in which it took place. This group of students, according to their own words and their teachers’, had never in the past learned English by reading a tale. They had never in the past learned by reading a tale that was in a pop-up book on a big scale since the books that we designed were twice as big as a regular book (see Annex 1). The students, as the whole language theory claims, were collaborators in their own learning process since after each lecture students had the opportunity to talk about the tales and the new knowledge they were exposed to.

The following session, after the reading of a tale, was focused on a guided conversation and different activities related to the topic at hand; after this, students were given open instructions to start writing a text in English; another innovation to this context: these students had never in the past written a text in English based on a story/tale or any other learning instrument. The lectures themselves were a combination of different innovative elements.

**Relationship with research phenomenon and research question**

We decided to select this setting and population due to the fact that the phenomenon that was explained in the problem statement was found in a setting that resembles the one that was part of this research and a population of the same age range as this one. The choices made related to the approach and theories were based on our intentions for students to write texts that were as genuine as possible, providing them with open knowledge so
they could learn what was more relevant to them according to their own experiences and preferences. Also, the instructions to write the texts were as open as possible so they could have the least amount of influence from us; hence, we could find the interference phenomenon and from there analyze the exchange of information or the Interpersonal Metafunction in the most natural state as possible.

Teachable question and Objectives

Teachable Question

How does the whole language approach encourage the production of texts in second graders?

Instructional Objective

To apply the whole language approach to help students improve their writing skills in English

Learning objective

To encourage students to write a text in the foreign language (English) using vocabulary and structures learnt in the pedagogical Intervention.
Methodology

This pedagogical intervention, divided into two parts, was developed in the following way: the first part was a trial intervention in which the objectives were, on the one hand, to introduce the dynamics of the whole language approach to the English class and, on the other hand, to find topics that were familiar and interesting for the students so we could create an environment whereby students felt comfortable to write their own texts. The main intervention-- which was based on the trial intervention-- consisted of the presentation of the stories that were adapted from the educational page Raz- Kids followed by activities and discussions related to the topics of the stories. After this, students wrote their own texts depending on the topic that was studied in class.

Pedagogical intervention

The following charts provide a general view of the pedagogical intervention, presenting times, topic, activities developed by the teachers, activities developed by the students, instructional objectives and the materials that were used in each intervention.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week / Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activities developed by the teacher</th>
<th>Activities developed by Students</th>
<th>Instructional objective</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week: one</td>
<td>Animals and Numbers</td>
<td>➢ Teachers read to students the “Animals everywhere” tale.</td>
<td>➢ Students with teachers guidance discussed about the most remarkable words, facts and images they found in the story.</td>
<td>To introduce vocabulary related to animals and Numbers.</td>
<td>➢ Full size pop up-story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day: One</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Teachers showed students the Pop up book, following its activities (guessing some wild animals and counting insects.)</td>
<td>➢ Students draw the animal with whom they felt related the most.</td>
<td>Start an internal discussion with themselves about their own qualities.</td>
<td>➢ Images</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Flashcards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week: one</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Teachers reviewed the vocabulary approached in the previous class.</td>
<td>➢ Students reviewed the vocabulary and concepts approached in last class.</td>
<td>To encourage students to write a text in the English language using vocabulary they just learnt.</td>
<td>➢ Realia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day: two</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Teachers asked students to write down a text where they talked about and animal with whom they felt related.</td>
<td>➢ Students spent the rest of the class writing a text about an animal whom they feel related.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week / Day</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Activities developed by the teacher</td>
<td>Activities developed by Students</td>
<td>Instructional objective</td>
<td>Materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week: two</td>
<td>Day: one</td>
<td>The Earth and environmental Care.</td>
<td>Teachers read to students the “I love the Earth” tale.</td>
<td>Students with teachers guidance discussed about the kind of things people do in order to preserve Earth natural resources.</td>
<td>For students to be able to use words related to environmental care and natural places.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers presented to students a video where they saw how natural places have been damaged by Human beings.</td>
<td>Students with teachers guidance wrote a list of things that people should not do because they damage the Earth.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week / Day</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Activities developed by the teacher</td>
<td>Activities developed by Students</td>
<td>Instructional objective</td>
<td>Materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week: Three Day: One.</td>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>➢ Teachers read to students the “The mom’s Birthday” tale. ➢ Teachers started a conversation about the most special moments they have shared with their families.</td>
<td>➢ Students pointed out those occasions when people consider important to be with their families. ➢ Students acted out different occasions where they family celebrated together.</td>
<td>To introduce vocabulary related to family members and adjectives.</td>
<td>➢ Full size pop up-story ➢ Images ➢ Flashcards ➢ Realia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week: Three Day: two</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Teachers reviewed the vocabulary approached in previous class. ➢ Teachers asked students to write down a letter to a member of their family.</td>
<td>➢ Students reviewed the vocabulary and concepts approached in last class. ➢ Students write a letter where they expressed how important their families are to them.</td>
<td>For students to be able to use this vocabulary related to family members in a text produced by them in the English language.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week / Day</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Activities developed by the teacher</td>
<td>Activities developed by Students</td>
<td>Instructional objective</td>
<td>Materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week: Four</td>
<td>My favorite place</td>
<td>➢ Teachers read to students the “The little Owl and The little Bear” tale.</td>
<td>➢ Students selected the place in the world they wanted to visit someday also the person they will like take with them.</td>
<td>To introduce the use of who and where.</td>
<td>➢ Full size pop up-story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day : One.</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Teachers guided a conversation about the story and the places that were mention in the story.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week: Four</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Teachers reviewed the vocabulary approached in previous class.</td>
<td>➢ Students reviewed the vocabulary and concepts approached in last class.</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Flashcards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day : two</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Teachers asked students to write down an invitation to anyone the wanted to a place they selected.</td>
<td>➢ Students spent the rest of the class writing an invitation To a person and place they selected.</td>
<td>To encourage students to write an invitation to anyone the wanted in the foreign language (English).</td>
<td>➢ Realia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week / Day</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Activities developed by the teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week: Five Day: One.</td>
<td>A day in my life</td>
<td>➢ Teachers read to students the “Good night moon” tell. ➢ Teachers presented different moments of a day such as noon, evening and weather such as windy, rainy etc</td>
<td>➢ Students talked about the kind of things they do during these moments of the day and the weather they enjoy the most. ➢ Students draw themselves doing an activity specifying a time of the day and its weather.</td>
<td>To introduce vocabulary related to times of a day and the weather.</td>
<td>➢ Full size pop up-story ➢ Images ➢ Flashcards ➢ Realia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week: Five Day: two</td>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Teachers reviewed the vocabulary approached in previous class. ➢ Teachers asked students to write down a story where they have an adventure.</td>
<td>➢ Students reviewed the vocabulary and concepts approached in last class. ➢ Students spent the rest of the class writing their adventurous story.</td>
<td>For students to be able to use their imagination in a text based on the knowledge acquired on previous classes in the English language.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goals

**Saber**

Students are able to infer specific information from a story, name vocabulary related to family members, animals, numbers from 1 to 20, use verbs such as live, breathe, eat, jump, count, have, recognize natural places like woods, oceans, rivers, deserts, mountains and understand the use of who and when.

**Saber hacer**

Students are able to use vocabulary and structures learned from the tales in the written texts they produce.

**Saber ser**

Students are able to write down their opinions related to how they see themselves, information about their interaction with other animals, environmental issues and people who are close to them like their family members.

Criteria

The criteria we used in order to establish if the students accomplished the expectations of this pedagogical intervention were based on the whole language approach. Therefore, the interventions were open for students to participate and give their opinions in order to accomplish the instructional and learning objectives. The second part of the interventions comprised, firstly, a summary of the first class of the week and then the writing process; based
on this information, we decided that we should have two guidelines to determine whether or not the students achieved the objectives.

1. The student participated when the tale was read. S/He tried to use the vocabulary and structures learnt in class to express her/his ideas.

2. Within the texts S/He made use of the vocabulary and structures presented in class.

Within this chapter we made a broad description of how the pedagogical intervention was carried out highlighting the role of the participants, teachers, materials and the method used in order to accomplish the instructional objective. In the following chapter we explain how the research design was built based on the main objective of this research which is to answer the research question.
Chapter Four

Research Design

In the previous chapter we explained how the pedagogical intervention process was developed. As was previously explained this research is focused on the morphosyntactic interference between L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English) and how this interference affects the exchange of information between addresser and addressee labelled as the Interpersonal metafunction of language in the texts produced by the students. Based on the phenomenon we found and the theoretical foundations chosen by us, we established the research questions and objectives.

Research Question:

What characterizes the interpersonal metafunction of EFL 2nd graders’ written texts in terms of L1 and L2 morphosyntactic interference?

Main Objective:

To analyze the systemic and functional dimension of written texts produced by second graders

Specific Objectives:

To identify the grammar aspects of the mother tongue (Spanish) that interfere in the text production of the foreign language (English)
-To identify how the use of Spanish traits interfere with the exchange of information between addresser and addressee.

The decisions we made to build the research design were based on the research question and objectives; therefore, in this chapter we explain how we selected the research paradigm, approach and method. We present the profile of the participants and the setting justifying how they fit into this study and, lastly, we introduce the data collection instruments and procedures also explaining the reasons why they were chosen and how they are appropriate to accomplish the objectives previously explained.

**Type of Study**

This research aimed to observe the morphosyntactic interference between L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English) and how this interference affects the exchange of information or the Interpersonal metafunction in the texts produced by the students. In order to accomplish the objective we needed an open paradigm that did not follow a hypothesis, a paradigm that would allow us to conduct the study in a natural environment and also a paradigm that would allow the participants to experience an open participation where they could have the freedom to use the language in any manner they wanted to; therefore, we could later analyze the use of the interpersonal metafunction. As Lincoln claims, “Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that
qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”.

In this study we are joining two different components: the observation of the interference that brought the mother tongue (Spanish) into the texts produced in the foreign language (English) and an analysis on how this affects the exchange of information or the interpersonal metafunction; the analysis was structured from form to function which means that we needed an approach where we could go from form to function. As Flick claims, “The main part of the qualitative analysis of the material is formed by the coding process i.e. interpreting the analyzed text and attributing the meaning (of key words, notions, codes) to its individual parts” (1998:78). Besides, within this analysis we also conducted one semi-structured interview to learn participants’ perspectives on the production of written texts.

In order to try to find participants’ perspectives on writing texts and the decisions they made when they selected and alluded to other people in their texts we conducted an interview. The qualitative research allowed us to follow this type of instrument where we could take into account the participants’ thoughts and experiences within the process. “Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives.” (Denzim, 1994: 4)

The approach we applied is a multiple case study; this is “a case study research in which several instrumental bounded cases are selected to develop a more in-depth understanding of the phenomena” (Chimiliar. 2010: 582). We consider that this type of study fits efficiently
with the purpose of this research because it allows us to identify processes and outcomes, as well as specific conditions under which a finding might occur. A multiple or collective case study is divided into three modalities: exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. Considering our research question and objectives, we are going to use the descriptive multiple case study which, according to Robert Yin (2003), is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred; it also seeks to reveal patterns and connections in relation to theoretical constructs.

The research method that we applied was document analysis. Document analysis, according to G.A Bowen, is “An examination of the function of documents as a data source in qualitative research, with a discussion of document analysis procedure in the context of actual research experiences.” (2009) Taking into account that written texts are our main source of data, we selected this method since it is the only one that allowed us to analyze the interference mentioned before and therefore describe the exchange of information; besides, this type of method does not need the direct observation or participation of the researcher in order to analyze the data which meant that the texts were not manipulated by the researcher. According to Bowen, there are three primary types of documents; we selected personal documents.

With personal documents, the method selected, we could use topics and instructions where students could express their experiences, preferences and thoughts based on each day’s tale. Personal documents according to Labs are “First-person accounts of an individual’s actions, experiences, and beliefs. Examples include calendars, e-mails, scrapbooks, blogs,

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9 Op cit, 583.
Facebook posts, duty logs, incident reports, reflections/journals, and newspapers. The participants wrote their opinions and experiences in their texts.” (2011)

Setting

This study was carried out at Colegio San José Norte I.E.D., a public institution located in Engativá, in the northwest sector of Bogota, Colombia. This school has preschool, primary, secondary and middle school levels and during the last five years it has occupied the level "Muy superior" on the tests conducted by the ICFES of eleventh grade students. Its administrators are currently advancing processes to be part of the schools linked to the national program of bilingualism proposed by The National Ministry of Education. Our research project was implemented in a second grade class of elementary school. This level of education does not have teachers for each of the subjects; there is only one teacher per grade who is in charge of teaching almost all subjects, including Spanish and English.

This institution was chosen because of its public character. It belongs to the mean of public education. We were looking for an institution where we could develop the pedagogical intervention without restrictions and where we could also find the availability to complete the whole process in the sense that we could find the age-appropriate students and a natural environment where we could follow the pedagogical intervention.
Participants

A group of 30 second graders was selected to conduct this study. They were 17 female students and 15 male students who were 7 and 8 years old. In the first trial we observed that the students were able to read a text and create their own writings in their mother tongue. We selected a group of second graders because they had already started to read and write in their mother tongue (Spanish). As the Estandares Curriculares para Lengua Castellana [Curricular Standards for the Spanish Language] (2012) in the second grade states, “the student uses the linguistic code as an instrument to communicate and resolve the problems that appear within the construction of a text”. Also, according to these standards, students are able to understand and produce a text in a linguistic code. These students were able to produce texts by themselves, which was the instrument we used to answer the research question.

In this public institution the primary basic level does not have a specially trained teacher to teach English, so the knowledge this group acquires about English focuses specifically on vocabulary. The specific participants chosen for this research study were 4 students from the whole group. The 4 students attended the initial trial and then all of the pedagogical interventions where the students wrote texts. They were chosen based on purposeful sampling proposed by Michael Patton where the process “focuses on selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study”. According to Patton, there are several strategies to select for purposeful, information-rich cases. We selected Intensity Sampling since it fit the purposes of this study (2002, p. 230).

Intensity Sampling consists of finding “information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon of interest intensely (but not extremely).” The texts that were written by the four
participants we selected included the interference of the mother tongue (Spanish) in the texts written in the foreign language (English), but this interference was not present in every sentence of the texts. Patton claims that “the evaluator may select cases that manifest sufficient intensity to illuminate the nature of success or failure, but not at the extreme.” By selecting these participants we were able to answer the question of this research study by analyzing how this interference affects the exchange of information or the interpersonal metafunction.

**Ethics**

For the Ethical Standards of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) “It is of paramount importance that educational researchers respect the rights, privacy, dignity, and sensitivities of their research populations and also the integrity of the institutions within which the research occurs. Educational researchers should be especially careful in working with children and other vulnerable populations” (American Educational Research Association. 2002. Quoted by Drew, Hardman, & Hosp. 2007); for these reasons and in order to develop this research in an ethical manner we informed students, parents and administrative personnel about the purpose of the study and the outcome through a substitute consent form (Drew, C., Hardman, M., & Hosp, L. 2007). We asked parents or tutors for permission to use students’ information gathered in personal information, notebooks, interviews, artifacts, posters or any other material relevant for the research (See Annex 2).
Data collection techniques and instruments

Taking into account our research question and objectives, we found it necessary to use techniques and instruments in order to collect meaningful and reliable information that allowed us to find not only the grammatical interference of the mother tongue in the written production of the foreign language and how this interference affected the exchange of information or the interpersonal metafunction but also to find what students’ perspectives were concerning writing production (See annex 3). For this purpose we decided to use two techniques: participant observation and audio recording, and two instruments: students’ artifacts and interviews.

The first instrument used to collect data was students’ artifacts. Artifacts, according to Lankshear & Knobel (2004), are products made by the research participants that present relevant information related to the problem area being studied. This instrument was our greatest and only resource at identifying and describing the grammatical interference of the mother tongue in the foreign language and from this we were able to interpret the exchange of information or Interpersonal Metafunction; the artifact was made up of writings that students produced during our pedagogical intervention. The purpose of the artifact was to find in the texts that the participants wrote the interference of their mother tongue (Spanish) in the texts meant to be written in the foreign language (English) and therefore analyze the the exchange of information or the Interpersonal Metafunction. In order to accomplish this we needed data where we could see the interference physically. We chose written data because it could be
described and analyzed after the participants completed the process; also, it was data that the participants could produce without our direct intervention as teacher-researchers.

A second data collection instrument we decided to use was the interview that in its broadest sense is “a conversation with purpose and direction” (Barlow, 2010). This instrument is widely used among researchers to seek deeper understanding of a situation or phenomena; the interview can be conducted face to face, or by electronic media and is often audio- or videotaped. Even though our main instrument was the artifacts mentioned before we decided to use the interview as a support instrument so we could get an inside view from participants’ about what their perspectives related to written production are (See Annex 3). Considering there are different types of interviews we opted for the semi-structured interview in order to learn the students’ opinion about the activities developed in class, how these contributed to their writing production and also in order to understand how their experience in such activities fared taking into account that this was the first time they produced their own texts in English.

**Type of Data**

Considering that our research was based on the qualitative paradigm and that our purpose was to identify, describe and interpret the morphosyntactic interference of the mother tongue (Spanish) in the written production of the foreign language (English) in second graders, our data were qualitative. We decided to use as our unit of analysis the morphosyntactic interference of the mother tongue (Spanish) in the foreign language (English) shown
writings produced by the participants and from there analyze how it interferes with the exchange of information labelled as the interpersonal metafunction of language.

**Validity and Reliability**

The instruments mentioned above were selected and applied in order to identify and describe the morphosyntactic interference of the mother tongue in the written production of the foreign language and, furthermore, to account for this phenomenon the instruments also showed direct information of each individual informant, ensuring objectivity and accuracy of the information collected (Hidalgo, 2005).

The data were validated through triangulation (Flick, 2004) which took into consideration that several instruments were used to collect the information needed to address the research question: *What characterizes the interpersonal metafunction of EFL 2nd graders’ written texts in terms of L1 and L2 morphosyntactic interference?* This process allowed us to observe and validate the data collected thus giving us the opportunity to understand, more deeply, the studied phenomenon.

After the description of the research design, the next chapter narrates the data management and analysis. It also shows the process of analysis, categories, their corresponding conceptualization and findings.
Chapter Five

Data Analysis

The phenomenon that we studied within this research study was the interference between the mother tongue (Spanish) and foreign language (English), focusing on the morphosyntactic aspects of the language i.e. how the structures from the students’ mother tongue were present in their texts (see annex 4) and how this interference affected the use of the interpersonal metafunction of language. Considering that our research was based on the qualitative paradigm and our purpose was to understand the phenomenon presented above the type of data gathered for this study was qualitative. In order to gather the data, we decided to use two instruments: Students’ artifacts and interviews, students’ artifacts comprising the first-order data on which the analysis was done.

The theory used to analyze the data and thus understand the phenomenon was the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) proposed by Halliday. As we explained before (see page 20), SFL conceive language as a network of systems which, in turn, are resources to create meaning, so considering this we divided the analysis into two parts: the first part was the systemic, in which the analysis was focused on identifying and describing the morphosyntactic interference between the L1 (Spanish) and the L2 (English) in the texts produced by second graders. In this part we also used as an extra analytical tool a chart proposed by S.P. Corder in his theory of Error Analysis (EA) (see Annex 5). This chart helped
us to identify which type of morphological or syntactic error\(^{10}\) was committed and at what linguistic level. The second part was the functional vision of language which was focused on analyzing how the interference between L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English) affects the exchange of information or the interpersonal metafunction of language.

The data gathered were organized in a matrix (see Annex 5) in order to contrast the artifacts and the interviews that contained information about the artifacts (texts). These interviews were conducted in order to get an inside view of the students about the text they wrote; we based the comparison of this relationship on S.P. Corder’s Error Analysis Theory in which there are two ways to interpret what students wanted to communicate: authoritative interpretation and plausible interpretation. We selected the authoritative interpretation which, according to Corder, provides the researcher with an authoritative reconstruction which is based on the direct testimony of the author about what he or she intended to say in his or her mother tongue; this testimony can then be translated into the target language.

In order to give validity to our research we used the triangulation of data that according to Flick “combines data drawn from different sources and at different times, in different places or from different people” (2004, p. 178). This validity strategy helped us to reaffirm the usefulness of the artifacts and the interviews. Later we started with the analysis process in which we followed the steps proposed by Merriam (2009): consolidating, reducing and interpreting (pp. 175-176). The first step consists of displaying the data gathered in order to

\(^{10}\) Considering that the interference is conceived as “a conflict between rules and habits acquired in their native language, and structures of the foreign language” (Thiemer, 1980) and that this “leads to unacceptable production by standard norms of a language” (Aquino & Ribas, 2001, p. 121) we used the term error as “the result of the persistence of existing mother tongue habits in the new language” (Corder, 1981, p. 1)
find repeated patterns that are linked to the research topic. The second step involves reducing the repeated patterns into categories or themes giving them a name and a concept that specifies what this category or theme means within the research. The third and last step deals with the interpretation of the data based on what the researcher can see and on the theoretical perspective adopted in the study.

For the identification and description of the interference between L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English), we used a chart proposed by S.P. Corder in his theory of Error Analysis (see Annex 6). This chart helped us to identify which type of morphological or syntactic error\textsuperscript{11} was committed and at what linguistic level. From the analysis of the interference, different categories and subcategories emerged; these were divided into two parts: morphological and syntactical. It is important to clarify that even though we were focused on the description of the morphosyntactic interference, we could not set aside the interconnection that exists among the grammar aspects (morphology, syntax, phonology and semantic). These are the categories and sub-categories from each grammar aspect:

Morphological interference:

- Category: *The use of Phonological aspects of the L1 (Spanish) to compose words in the L2 (English)*

- Subcategory: *Phonological and semantic aspects of the L1 in the morphological composition of the L2*

\textsuperscript{11} Considering that the interference is conceived as “a conflict between rules and habits acquired in their native language, and structures of the foreign language” (Thiemer, 1980) and that this “leads to unacceptable production by standard norms of a language” (Aquino & Ribas, 2001, p. 121) we used the term *error* as “the result of the persistence of existing mother tongue habits in the new language” (Corder, 1981, Pp. 1)
-Category: *The substitution of English words for Spanish words*

Syntactical Interference:

-Category: *The use of grammar systems of the L1 to exchange written information in the L2*

-Subcategories: *Ellipsis of pronouns and Substitution of pronouns*

Considering SFL theory that focused on the interpretation of the syntax (and other linguistic levels) in texts that “are the concrete manifestation of the use of the language”, we decided to choose the syntactical category *The use of grammar systems of the L1 to exchange written information in the L2*, specifically the sub-categories *The use of Ellipsis of the subject*, *The use of Anaphoric ellipsis* and *Substitution of pronouns* which were the most frequent interference among participants and texts. Next we presented the analysis process and findings whose goal was to answer the research question: *What characterizes the interpersonal metafunction of EFL 2nd graders written texts in terms of L1 and L2 morphosyntactic interference?*

**The use of grammar systems of the L1 to exchange written information in the L2**

It is evident that the organization of grammar and structures of Spanish and English are different. One of the most common strategies during the learning of a foreign language is the use of known structures of the mother tongue adapted to the linguistic production in the foreign language; this constitutes the syntactic interference. Here it is going to be illustrated this type of interference which emerged from the analysis of the corpus produced by the
students, and later we are going to describe and interpret how this interference affects the exchange of information or the interpersonal metafunction in L2 text production.

**Text number 1:**

Previous to the production of texts, the participants listened to a tale entitled “The mom’s birthday” This presented vocabulary related to family members (Mother, father, brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather and pets), feelings (Sad, happy), adjectives (beautiful, delicious, good and beloved) and the introduction to verb to be and present simple. After this, teacher-researchers conducted activities in order to reinforce the vocabulary and structures studied in class. At the end teacher-researchers gave this instruction: “students, today you have to write a letter to your family. You can write whatever you want but using what we leant in class”. Participant N° 1 wrote the following text:

“Hello mother I love you, I respect you, I take care of you with all my heart and love. Well, you never ask for anything, you are very loving and because you take care of my cousin. From: Andre To: Lidis”

(Hello mother: I love you, I respect you, I take care of you with all my heart and love. Well, you never ask for anything, you are very loving and because you take care of my cousin. From: Andre To: Lidis)

In this text we observed the omission of pronouns in different phrases. Next we describe this interference.
Ellipsis of pronouns

There is a clear difference in the use of pronouns between Spanish and English. In Spanish the information about the subject, which is referred to, is included, generally, in the verb through one or more end morphemes which indicate person, time and number, for example:

Comemos  {com-} lexical root {-emos} suffix in first plural person in simple present

Come       {com-} ′′ ′′ {-e} suffix in third person in simple present

Como       {com-} ′′ ′′ {-o} suffix in first person in simple present

Comerán    {com-} ′′ ′′ {-erá} suffix in third person in future {-n} Plural suffix

As we can observe, different conjugations can be made starting from the root {com-} and adding different morphemes which contain different information about the person, number and time. In contrast, in English, verbs contain only information about the time in which they are set and in order to include information to explain more about the person and number it is necessary to use, explicitly, elements such as pronouns within the sentence. This fact can cause interference, as it is noticeable in the texts produced by the participant 1 in text N°1

“I love…” (I love you - Te quiero)

“…the respect…” (...I respect you...- te respeto...)

“...the take care…” (I take care of you...- te cuido)

“…never ask…” (...you never ask... - Nunca pides...)

“…very lovely…” (you are very loving...-Eres muy amorosa...)
Also it is possible to observe an interference in which the participant used a phonological and semantic aspect of the L1 in the morphological composition of the L2. The phonology of the native language interferes not only morphologically in the composition of words in English (sound and its graphic correspondence) but also it can lead to interfere morphologically, taking phonological and semantic aspects of Spanish, i.e., that some sounds can have semantic load in both languages so that the participant takes the meaning known in the native language and adapts it to the time of writing in the foreign language, such as in the case of the participant 1 in text 1, who wrote:

“…the respect…” (…I respect you… - te respeto…)

“…the take care…” (…I take care of you… - te cuido…)

“The: Andre Four Lidis” (From: Andre. To: Lidis - De: Andrea Para: Lidis)
In these phrases we want to highlight the uses assigned to the word "the". On the one hand, the sound [de], both in Spanish and English, has a specific semantic load. In English refers to the definite article, while Spanish is a preposition. In one of the examples presented\(^{12}\), it is shown the phonological interference, as the word "the", because of his phonic form, is being used with the meaning that this sound has in Spanish ([de] as a preposition). On the other hand, in the other examples\(^{13}\), the interference is not only phonological but also graphological as the "the" is being read by a monolingual speaker who reads it as [te], because in Spanish the letter h corresponds to no phoneme and this word, in this language, has a full semantic load (clitic)\(^{14}\)

\(^{12}\) e.g.: “The: Andre Four Lidis” (From: Andre. To: Lidis)
\(^{13}\) e.g.: “the respect”(I respect you); “the take care”(I take care of you)
\(^{14}\) In Spanish language, are grammatical particles whose main function is to replace noun phrases that are direct complements of verbal grammatical sentences. They work as Accusative complements of the verbal phrase, as the phrase they are referring to (me, te, la, lo, le, se, nos, las, los, les, os). (Author’s note)
En la lengua española, son partículas gramaticales cuya función principal es sustituir frases nominales que son complementos gramaticales directos de frases verbales. Funcionan como complementos acusativos de la frase verbal, al igual que la frase a la que hacen referencia (Darwich, 2007)
Taking into account the text previously presented is possible to identify the use of elements that interfere the exchange of information. These elements refer to the anaphoric ellipsis, ellipsis and substitution of the subject.

According to SFL ellipsis occurs when in a clause there is an unmarked subject. In this case the ellipsis occurs in the anaphoric element which is a word or group of words that assume the meaning of something that was previously mentioned. In this text the participant omitted the anaphoric element *you* (object pronoun)

As it is possible to observe the ellipsis of this anaphoric element (*you*) interferes with the message that the participant wants to provide. Here the reader cannot identify the subject the writer is referring to, it means he cannot identify the person or object he or she loves. This fact hinders the exchange of information between the addresser and the addressee.
In the following clauses (Chart 3-2 and 3-3) we could observe interference from Spanish to English causing ellipsis of the subject by substitution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The (I)</strong></th>
<th><strong>respect</strong></th>
<th><strong>(you)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>Complement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Substitution and ellipsis of the subject

Chart 3-2: Interpersonal Metafunction chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The (I)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Take care</strong></th>
<th><strong>(of you)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>Complement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitution of the subject</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anaphoric ellipsis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3-3: Interpersonal Metafunction chart

In these clauses the participant substituted the subject with the word *the*, which as we explained before it is caused by the interference of graphological-phonological and lexico-semantic aspects of Spanish in English words composition (see page 62)
This substitution interferes with the reader interpretation for him or her to identify who is the one making the action and who is the one whom the action relies on, since the word the in English is a definite article, which in this case it is used as a pronoun. This might cause confusion in the exchange of information.

Another example of the interference caused by ellipsis of pronouns is the text produced by Participant N°3 wrote the following text:

“I love much. You are me have much love. Father, mother, sister, grandfather, grandmother”

(I love you very much. You love me very much father, mother, sister, grandfather, grandmother.)

In this text is possible to observe omission of pronouns in the text produced by the participant N°1, however the interference occurs differently. When participant number 3 writes the phrase “I love much.” (I love you very much- Los quiero mucho) S/He omits the
pronoun *you*, presumably, because in Spanish the clitic *los* contains biunivocal\(^{15}\) information, i.e. the clitic *los* presupposes a relationship from *I* to *you* (*yo a ustedes*) (Chart 2-4).

![](chart2-4.png)

It is also possible to observe an interference of word ordering and lexical selection in order to imitate structures of the L1 (Spanish). Here the participant tried to express a phrase that is valid in terms of meaning in Spanish, translating it word by word, but that in English does not have an equivalent meaning:

![](chart2-5.png)

\(^{15}\) One morphological unit contains information of both the sender and the receiver
Taking into account the text previously exposed it is possible to identify the use of elements that interfere the exchange of information. These elements refer to the anaphoric ellipsis.

The participant used anaphoric ellipsis by omitting the anaphoric element *you*. The ellipsis of this object pronoun was caused because the participant imitated a structure of Spanish to write a clause in English.
This hinders the exchange of information since without the anaphoric element it is not possible for the reader to know who is the person or object the participant loves very much.

The previous were the results of the analysis applied to text N° 1. Here we could observe how the use of anaphoric ellipsis and the ellipsis of the subject by substitution caused by interference from Spanish to English hinders the exchange of information understood as interpersonal metafunction, according to the SFL theory. The following texts are part of the fourth intervention in which students were asked to write about and animal they identified themselves with; these presented morphosyntactic interference and elements that affect the exchange of information. Here are the results of the analysis and interpretation.

**Text number 2:**

Previous to the production of texts, the participants listened to a tale entitled “Animals everywhere” This presented vocabulary related to insects (ants, butterflies, flies, snails, ladybugs, beetles, crickets, slugs, fleas, spiders), Wild animals (Leopard, zebra, eagle, fish), Numbers (from one to ten) the use of the modal verb can and the use of the WH question what. After this the teacher-researchers conducted activities in order to reinforce the
vocabulary and structures studied in class. At the end the teacher-researchers gave this instruction: “students, today you have to write a text in which you tell us what animal you identify with and why. Please, don’t forget to use what we leant in class”. Participant N° 1 wrote the following text:

“I identify was rabbit beacause is pretty, jumper and my I like also can be strong. I love my animals”

(I identify myself with the rabbit because it is pretty, jumping and I also like it because it can be strong. I love my animals)

Here the participant omitted the reflexive pronoun myself. As it was explained before in Spanish the verb contains information of time, person and number, as it is possible to observe in the following example:

Identifico {identific-} Lexical root {-o} suffix in first person simple present

Identificar {identific-} ‘’ ‘’ {-ar} suffix in infinitive verb form

Identificamos {identific-} ‘’ ‘’ {-amos} suffix in first plural person

Identificas {identific-} ‘’ ‘’ {-as} suffix in second person simple present

The participant used this rule of Spanish in the composition of this English phrase “I identify was rabbit… (me identifico con…)”. While In Spanish the clitic me plus the suffix {-o} in the Spanish root identific- indicates that the subject is also the object of the verb, in English it is necessary to add the word myself to indicate that the subject is the object of the verb, i.e., the reflexive function of the pronoun. In other words, while in English the reflexive
pronoun is mandatory to express the whole sense of the phrase in Spanish the equivalent to *myself* can or cannot be used, but its presence can cause ungrammaticality by causing redundancy.

Also within the text it is possible to observe the omission of the pronoun *it* in the phrase “…also (it) can be strong…” which shows the interference of Spanish as in this language if you are talking about an entity and you don’t involve other it is understood that you are still referring to this entity along the text. Adapting this pattern to write in English causes interference because in English, it is necessary to explicit the entity to which the reference is made, according to Halliday and Mathiessen “every free clause in English requires a subject, because without a subject it is impossible to express the mood of the clause, at least in the usual fashion”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>también</th>
<th>puede</th>
<th>ser</th>
<th>fuerte</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>also</td>
<td>can</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it</td>
<td>also</td>
<td>can</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-7: Comparative utterances chart.
Taking into account the text previously presented it is possible to identify the use of elements that interfere the exchange of information. These elements refer to the anaphoric and deictic ellipsis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Graphological (Morphological) Phonological</th>
<th>Grammatical (Syntactic)</th>
<th>Lexico-semantic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflexive pronoun (Myself) Third person pronoun (It)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 1-5: Error classification chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Identify</th>
<th>(myself) Was (with a) rabbit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>Complement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deictic ellipsis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3-5: Interpersonal Metafunction chart
Deixis refers to the demonstrative or reflexive determiners or embedded possessive nominal groups, the ones we are referring to for this specific text is reflexive that “are pronouns that refer back to the subject of the sentence or clause” (myself, yourself, ourselves, himself, herself, itself, themselves). In the previous clause the participant used the deictic ellipsis by omitting the reflexive pronoun *myself*

This omission was caused by morphosyntactic interference from Spanish to English since in Spanish the verb contains information about person, time and number (for further explanation see page 69) this affects the exchange of information because the deictic ellipsis makes this clause ambiguous. This ambiguity might lead the reader to interpret that the writer identified a rabbit which actually is far from the original purpose that was to communicate that the writer identifies him or herself with a rabbit; this is why in English it is necessary the use of the reflexive pronoun to specify the connection between the subject and the verb.

In the following clauses the participant made use of the anaphoric ellipsis by omitting the third person pronoun and object pronoun *it*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>me</th>
<th>identifico</th>
<th>con el conejo</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>identify</td>
<td>was rabbit</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>identify</td>
<td>myself</td>
<td>with a rabbit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-8: Comparative utterances chart.
In the previous clause (Chart 3-6) the participant omitted the object pronoun *it*. This is an interference from Spanish to English since in Spanish it is not necessary to specify the entity referred because if it was mentioned before and there is no other entity involved, it is possible to infer that the writer continues talking about the same entity along the text.

In the following clause the participant made use of the ellipsis of the subject by omitting the third person pronoun *it*.
This omission was caused because the participant had mentioned the subject before the one he was referring to (“I identify was rabbit beacause is pretty, jumper and my I like also can be strong…” (I identify myself with the rabbit because it is pretty, jumping and I also like it because it can be strong)) Therefore the participant, taking as reference this Spanish linguistic mechanism, did not consider necessary to specify the subject again. (For further explanation see page 70)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Puede</th>
<th>ser</th>
<th>fuerte</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it</td>
<td>can</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant number 3 wrote the following text:

“I identify Ladybug: I like because is candie and is calm”

(I identify myself with the ladybug: I like it because is sweet and calm)
Here the participant omitted the reflexive pronoun *myself* (see page 69 for further explanation) and the third person pronoun *it* (see page 70 for further explanation).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Me</th>
<th>identifico</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>identify</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>identify myself</td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-11: Comparative utterances chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Me</th>
<th>gusta</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>like</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>like it</td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-12: Comparative utterances chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graphological (Morphological)</th>
<th>Grammatical (Syntactic)</th>
<th>Lexico-semantic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>Third person pronoun (It)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 1-6: Error classification chart.

Taking into account the text previously presented it is possible to identify the use of elements that interfere the exchange of information. These elements refer to the anaphoric and deictic ellipsis.
As we mentioned, in the text by participant number one, this omission was caused by morphosyntactic interference from Spanish to English since in Spanish the verb contains information about person, time and number (see chart 2-11 and 2-12). This clause is ambiguous since the reader can interpret it in two different ways: on the one hand the reader can understand that the participant, with a ladybug, identified something or, on the other hand, that the participant identified his or herself with a ladybug which was what the participant was trying to communicate.

The following clause shows the use of the anaphoric ellipsis by omitting the object pronoun *it*.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>identify</th>
<th>(myself) with ladybug</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>Complement</td>
<td>Deictic ellipsis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3-8: Interpersonal Metafunction chart
I like (it) because is candy (sweet) and calm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Finite</th>
<th>(it) because is candy (sweet) and calm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mood element</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Complement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anaphoric ellipsis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3-9: Interpersonal Metafunction chart

The used of the anaphoric ellipsis happened because the participant overgeneralized the rule of Spanish in which it is not necessary to specify the subject every time. (for further explanation see page 70)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Me</th>
<th>gusta</th>
<th>porque es…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish utterance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>like</th>
<th>because is…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>like</th>
<th>it</th>
<th>because is…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-13: Comparative utterances chart.

This anaphoric ellipsis might cause misinterpretation since the reader might not infer the person, animal or thing the writer likes. This affects the use of the interpersonal metafunction of language because the exchange of information might not be accurate.

Participant N°4 wrote the following text:

“I identify con leopard because I am brave, I like climb, I love to do like leopard, I am fast”
(I identify myself with the leopard because I am brave, I like climbing, I love to do like a leopard and I am fast)

Here the participant omitted the reflexive pronoun *myself* (see page 69 for further explanation).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Me</th>
<th>identifico</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>identify</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>identify</td>
<td>myself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-14: comparative utterances chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graphological (Morphological)</th>
<th>Grammatical (Syntactic)</th>
<th>Lexico-semantic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>Reflexive pronoun (Myself)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 1-7: Error classification chart

Taking into account the text previously presented it is possible to identify the use of an element that interferes the exchange of information. This element refers to the deictic ellipsis.
The participant omitted the deictic element *myself* overgeneralizing the use of the Spanish rule in which the verbs contain information about person, time and number therefore it is not necessary to add any other element to specify whom the person identifies with.

This deictic ellipsis interferes with the reader’s interpretation since it can be ambiguous. The reader might interpret it in the following ways: that the participant and a leopard identified something or that he or she identifies his or herself with a leopard which was what the participant wanted to communicate in the first place.

These texts contain different kinds of morphosyntactic interference that cause the texts to be ambiguous since, in most of the clauses presented, there are deictic and anaphoric ellipsis that should not be there because they hinder the effective transmission of the message.
wrote text about a place they would like to go as well as the analysis of the morphosyntactic interference and how it interferes with the interpersonal metafunction.

**Text number 3:**

Previous to the production of texts, the participants listened to a tale entitled “The little owl and the little bear” This presented vocabulary related to verbs (play, fly, read, eat), places (forest, playground) and nouns (book, food, ). Also the use of the modal verb *can* and the use of the WH questions *who* and *where* was introduced. After this teacher-researchers conducted activities in order to reinforce the vocabulary and structures studied in class. At the end teacher-researchers gave this instruction: “students, today you have to write an invitation, what does it mean? You are going to write a text in which you invite whoever you want to go with you to a place you like. Remember to use what we studied in the class”. Participant number 2 wrote the following text:

“Dear teacher:

I wish invitation to, viota, is climate hot, tooo go on river, to fish for lunch. Holl be one day, spectacular, cordial Lina Maria”

(Dear teacher:

I want to invite you to viota, the weather is warm to go on river and fish for lunch. It will be a spectacular day. Cordially: Lina Maria)
Here the participant omitted the personal pronoun you (see page 59 for further explanation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Graphological (Morphological)</th>
<th>Grammatical (Syntactic)</th>
<th>Lexico-semantic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal pronoun (you)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 1-8: Error classification chart.

It is also possible to observe interference in the words order; particularly, the use of adjectives in noun position and the use of a Spanish template to write a formal letter. While in Spanish the use of the adjective is commonly located after the noun in English the adjective is located before the noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>día</th>
<th>spectacular</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>day</td>
<td>spectacular</td>
<td>Participant's utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>spectacular</td>
<td>day</td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-16: Comparative utterances chart.

Taking into account the text previously presented it is possible to identify the use of an element that interferes the exchange of information. This element refers to the anaphoric ellipsis.
Since the anaphoric ellipsis was explained before, please refer to page 59 for further explanation. The use of the anaphoric ellipsis caused this clause to be erroneous since it is difficult for the reader to interpret what the writer was trying to communicate.

This text was addressing a specific addressee who was his or her teacher, therefore it was necessary for the participant to use the anaphoric element *you*; the participant did not use it so the clause changed its meaning: now the clause means that the participant desires and invitation instead of inviting someone, in this case the teacher.

The following text, produce by the participant number 3 shows the use of the ellipsis of the subject which we are going to be analyzed in the next pages:

“I invite you father, mother, sister and teacher

Because: because you love and are nice
And where: San Andres

Because: have a lot things fun’’

(I invite you father, mother, sister and teacher because you love me and you are nice. Where? To San Andres because it has a lot of things funny)

In this text it is possible to observe that the participant omitted the personal pronouns you and it (see pages 59 and 70 for further explanation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>…son</th>
<th>agradables</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…are</td>
<td>nice</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>are</td>
<td>nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-18: Comparative utterances chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Porque</th>
<th>tiene</th>
<th>muchas cosas…</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Because</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>a lot things…</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because</td>
<td>It</td>
<td>has</td>
<td>A lot of things…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-19: Comparative utterances chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Omission</th>
<th>Graphological (Morphological) Phonological</th>
<th>Grammatical (Syntactic)</th>
<th>Lexico-semantic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal pronoun (you) Third-person pronoun (it)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 1-9: Error classification chart
Taking into account the text previously presented it is possible to identify the use of an element that interferes the exchange of information. This element refers to the ellipsis of the subject.

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(you)</td>
<td>are</td>
<td>nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td>.........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>Complement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellipsis of the subject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3-12: Interpersonal Metafunction chart

Here the participant omitted the subject you which hinders the exchange of information since it is the one that let the reader know who the writer considers nice. The reader might understand the message of the clause by context but the ungrammaticality that this ellipsis causes in the clause may change its meaning. This was the analysis of the texts produced in the intervention number six. Next we are going to present the analysis and interpretation of the texts produced in our eighth intervention.

**Text number 4:**

Previous to the production of texts, the participants listened to a tale entitled “I love the earth” This presented vocabulary related to adjectives (bright, tall, green, high, long), verbs (love, adore, admire, go, see, climb, fly, walk, live, swim) and nouns (woods, trees, flowers, bees, hills, fox, mountains, bears, forest, rivers, fish) and also the use of present simple. After
this teacher-researchers conducted activities in order to reinforce the vocabulary and structures studied in class. At the end teacher-researchers gave this instruction: “Considering everything we learnt in class you have to write a text telling how you can take care of the earth”. Participant number 1 wrote the following text:

“Most take care he earth, the city theve the take care, the energy is take care, he scoohl theve students”

(We must take care of the earth; the city must be maintained, the energy must be maintained. The school has students)

In this text is possible to observe the omission of the personal pronoun we (for further explanation see page 59)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debemos</th>
<th>cuidar</th>
<th>la tierra</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>most</td>
<td>Take care</td>
<td>he earth</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>must</td>
<td>take care of the earth</td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-20: Error classification chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Omission</th>
<th>Graphological (Morphological) Phonological</th>
<th>Grammatical (Syntactic)</th>
<th>Lexico-semantic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal pronoun (we)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 1-10: Error classification chart
In this text produced by participant number 1 is also possible to observe interference caused by phonological aspects of the L1 (Spanish) to compose words in the L2 (English). It is well-known that Spanish is a “transparent language” which means that the correspondence between what is written and how it is pronounced is, in most cases, the same but the opposite happens in English in which the correspondence between what is written and how it is pronounced is different. For Halliday and Matthiessen:

The English script is not ‘phonemic’ if by that we understand a strict one-to-one correspondence between phonemes and letters. It never could be phonemic in this sense, because the criteria for identifying phonemes in English are internally contradictory: what are one and the same phoneme from one point of view may be two separate phonemes from another (P. 18)

This phonological interference is observable in the phrase:

“Most take care he earth” (We must take care of the earth)

Here we can observe how the word must is written in accordance with the phonology of the student’s native language, which in this case is Spanish. This same interference is present in the corpus produced by other participants and the examples are going to be displayed later.
Taking into account the text previously presented it is possible to identify the use of an element that interferes the exchange of information. This element refers to the ellipsis of the subject.

The participant omitted the subject *we* causing ungrammaticality, considering that in English it is important to specify the entity whom which the reference is made. Also it is relevant to mention that the word *must* was written taking phonological grammatical characteristics from Spanish (most) and this might produce a misinterpretation from the reader: he can interpret that most of the people or animals or objects take care of the earth when the intended message was that people, including the participant, must take care of the earth. In regards to the same activity the text produced by the participant number 2 presented
similarities with the text produced by the participant number 1; both presented ellipsis on the subject *we* and both presented phonological aspects of Spanish in the composition of words in English:

“We reclyse my scool because most take care and earth, most because she I lake we irry partners and I going and recycle ant earth and fich I and we most take care”

*(We recycle in my school because we must take care of the earth and we must do it because I like it. We, my partners and I, go and recycle because we must take care of the earth and the fish)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Porque</th>
<th>Debmens</th>
<th>Cuidar</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>because</td>
<td>most</td>
<td>take care</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>must</td>
<td>Authoriative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-21: Error classification chart.

For further explanation about the omission of the personal pronoun *we* refer to page---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Omission</th>
<th>Graphological (Morphological)</th>
<th>Grammatical (Syntactic)</th>
<th>Lexico-semantic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal pronoun (we)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 1-12: Error classification chart.
For further explanation about the ellipsis of the subject and what it might cause in the interpersonal metafunction, i.e. the exchange of information, see page 59.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(we)</th>
<th><em>Must</em></th>
<th><em>Take care of the earth</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellipsis of the subject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3-14: Interpersonal Metafunction chart

The previous was the analysis and interpretation done on the texts produced by the participants in our intervention number nine. Next we are going to present this process applied on the text produced in the tenth intervention by participant number 4, which was the only one that presented morphosyntactic interference.

**Text number 5:**

Previous to the production of texts, the participants listened to a tale entitled “a day in my life” This presented vocabulary related to daily routines (wake up, take lunch, do homework, take dinner, go to bed, sleep), moments of the day (sunrise, sunset, morning, midday, afternoon, evening, night), the weather (sunny, windy, cloudy, rainy) nouns (sun, clouds, stars, moon), the time and also the use of present simple. After this, the teacher-researchers conducted activities in order to reinforce the vocabulary and structures studied in
class. At the end teacher-researchers gave this instruction: “dear students, as we have worked for a while with different stories and we have learnt many new words and ways to express ourselves in English, today you are going to create your own story, for example an adventure you would like to have in a day of your lives. You can write what you want but don’t forget to use everything we have studied in class”. Participant number 4 wrote the following text:

“Hant adventure in Africa

A day I was in Africa and I see a leopard and I seer it leopard and find a tiger and had a foot hurt and I it help and it I help I take to I camp and it slip it. Finish”

(An adventure in Africa

One day i was in Africa and I saw a leopard, I slept it and I found a tiger and it had an injured paw so I helped him and it helped me, it took me to the camping and it slept with me)

In this text it is possible to identify interference caused by the omission of the third-person pronoun it (for further explanation see page 70)
Also we can see that this participant changed the order of the words to imitate Spanish structures translating them, word by word, a phrase that in Spanish has a semantic load but not in English:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>it</th>
<th>help</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yo</td>
<td>lo</td>
<td>ayudé</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>helped</td>
<td>it</td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-23: Comparative utterances chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>it</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Help</th>
<th>Spanish utterance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>ayudó</td>
<td>Participant’s utterance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It</td>
<td>helped</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>Authoritative reconstruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2-24: Comparative utterances chart.

Taking into account the text previously presented it is possible to identify the use of an element that interferes the exchange of information. This element refers to the ellipsis of the subject.
Here the participant omitted the subject *I* trying to imitate patterns and grammatical characteristics from Spanish causing ungrammaticality in the English clause, this ellipsis of the subject in the clause might cause misinterpretation by the reader because it can be ambiguous. Considering the text context, in which this clause is involved, the reader might interpret that was the leopard that found a tiger instead of the writer: “…I see it leopard and find a tiger…” (*I slept it and I found a tiger*). This fact might hinder the exchange of information because, as we mention before, there is ungrammaticality in the clause so the message changes its meaning.

This was the analysis applied to the texts produced by the participants selected along our intervention and the interpretation based on SFL theory, next we are going to present the findings based on the process previously done and considerations for further research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ellipsis of the subject.</th>
<th>find (found)</th>
<th>a tiger</th>
<th>Mood element</th>
<th>Residue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Finite</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>Complement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3-15: Interpersonal Metafunction chart
Conclusions

Once the analysis process was completed we could identify the aspects that allowed us to achieve the main goal of this research study, that is, to answer the research question: What characterizes the interpersonal metafunction of EFL 2nd graders written texts in terms of L1 and L2 morphosyntactic interference? In order to answer this question we are going to quote some of the examples presented in the data analysis. Considering the texts produced by the participants and the analysis done we could identify the aspects that characterize the interpersonal metafunction of EFL 2nd graders written text in terms on L1 and L2 morphosyntactic interference. First we classified the aspects into three main categories: the use of Phonological aspects of the L1 (Spanish) to compose words in the L2 (English), the substitution of English words with Spanish words, and the use of grammar systems of the L1 to exchange written information in the L2. Since the last category was the most common among participants we decided to focus on this one. Of the most relevant aspects is the use of the Spanish grammar system to compose words and produce texts in English. This grammar system interferes with text production and the exchange of information in the following way:

We could identify the anaphoric ellipsis, principally reflected in the omission of pronouns. They omitted not only personal pronouns but also reflexive pronouns and object pronouns, this interference can be explained and understood if we consider, as we mentioned before, Spanish grammar. In the following examples we can observe how this erroneous ellipsis was committed:
“I love…” (I love you - Te quiero)

“I love father a mother…” (I love you father and mother… - Los quiero papá y mamá)

“…because most take care…” (...because we must take care... - porque debemos cuidar)

“I love much” (I love you so much - te quiero mucho)

“I identify with…” (I identify myself with) (me identifico con)

After the previous explanation we came to the conclusion that what characterizes the interpersonal metafunction of EFL 2nd graders written texts in terms of L1 and L2 morphosyntactic interference is the misuse of the ellipsis of the subject and anaphoric ellipsis. These omissions were committed because the participants made an overgeneralization of Spanish rules; for instance, in the omission of personal pronouns they used the rule in which the information about the subject, which is referred to, is generally included in the verb through one or more end morphemes which indicate person, time and number. In the omission of reflexive pronouns, they used the rule of Spanish in which, for example in the phrase me identifico, the subject is explicit and in a reflexive function, in the clitic word me. These omissions not only affect the sentence because they cause ungrammaticality but also because they affect the communicative intention of the writer.

In this case we focused on the interpersonal metafunction of language or the exchange of information and from the analysis we could identify how the morphosyntactic interference previously mentioned affects these exchanges. When the participants used the ellipsis of the subject in order to follow Spanish rules in English text production, they were affecting the
interpretation of the phrases, sentences or texts and thus the message they want to transmit in that exchange of information. Taking into account the previous facts we were able to confirm the theory proposed by Santos (1992) around the phenomenon of interference. This author states that interference is “the phenomenon that occurs when an individual uses in a target language, a phonetic, lexical, morphological and syntactic trait, characteristic of his native language”, this led us to understand the importance and need of visible this phenomenon, not only from a linguistic point of view but also pedagogical in order to propose strategies that help the teacher to understand it and help the student to overcome it.

As we can observe it is important to understand the relevance of including grammatical elements in our lessons from an early age because students can start to understand the similarities and differences between both grammar systems. Also we consider it interesting to highlight how students use elements they know from their mother tongue to produce texts in English and how these texts are clear references of their contexts and their lives. After answering the research question and based on our experience conducting this study different suggestions emerged related to the pedagogical and investigative field which we are going to present in the following section.

**Implications for further research and pedagogical practice**

Based on the pedagogical intervention developed in this research there are three suggestions for the development of future pedagogical experiences: the first suggestion is to implement interviews or questionnaires where students´ voices can be heard and from there design pedagogical interventions. We learnt that when students´ preferences are taken into
account they feel motivated and willing to learn; therefore, the classroom becomes a place where the voices of all the participants are heard.

The second suggestion is to encourage students to develop activities that take them out of their comfort zone, assignments that they or other schools think they are not able to follow because they think it is better to keep using the approaches they have always used. These activities or assignments need to have a clear objective from the beginning in order for students to learn the topics that were proposed. The third suggestion is to create authentic material that help to create an innovative environment considering the context where they are going to be used. Next we are going to present possible research projects that are based on this one.

This research study focused on the systemic and functional dimensions in texts written in English and produced by second graders. It addressed external interference from Spanish to English in morphosyntactic aspects of the language. From there we analyzed how this interference affects the exchange of information labelled as the interpersonal metafunction of language. The data analysis helped us realize that future research can be developed on interference and also on the interpersonal metafunction. As we mention before from the morphosyntactic analysis done three different categories and two sub-categories emerged:

- Category: The use of Phonological aspects of the L1 (Spanish) to compose words in the L2 (English)

- Subcategory: Phonological and semantic aspects of the L1 in the morphological composition of the L2

- Category: The substitution of English words for Spanish words
Future research can be framed on phonological and phono-semantic interference and substitution of English words for Spanish words and how these affect the exchange of information or any other metafunction. Considering this, we constructed the following questions as a follow up for this project:

**What characterizes the interpersonal metafunction of EFL written texts in terms of L1 and L2 phono-semantic interference?**

**How does the substitution of English words for Spanish words interferes with the interpersonal metafunction of EFL written texts?**

Additionally, future research can be developed on other systemic functional dimensions. The use of the interpersonal metafunction has specific components that can be analyzed e.g. within the mood structure there are other elements such as the tenor role that study the choices the user made in order to compel his or her intentions when S/He is exchanging information with others. This research can help teachers and students to understand phenomena around the teaching and learning of a foreign language.
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Annexes

Annex 1: Tales samples

A DAY IN MY LIFE

ANIMALS EVERYWHERE

I LOVE THE EARTH

Once upon a time there was an owl who always asked the little owl who everybody. Who wants to fly with me? Who wants with me? Who wants to eat with me?

We can also find other kinds of animals that live in other places. Can you guess what are these animals? What kind of animal has these spots? A zebra has these thin stripes. It lives in the jungle. What kind of animal has these stripes? A giraffe has these smooth stripes. It lives in Africa.

A leopard has these spots. It lives in the jungle.

When I go to the woods I see tall trees. I love tall trees!

In the tall trees there is a squirrel. It climbs on the trees.

Next I see bright flowers. I adore the bright flowers!

In the bright flowers there are bees. They fly around the flowers.
Annex 2: Consent form
Annex 3: Interview protocolo

Interview Questions

1. ¿Cómo te llamas?

2. ¿Cuántos años tienes?

3. ¿te gusta escribir?

  3.1 ¿porque te gusta escribir? ¿Por qué no te gusta escribir?

4. ¿Qué crees que es lo más fácil de escribir?

5. ¿y qué crees que es lo más difícil de escribir?

6. ¿y cuando escribes sobre cosas que te gustan, sobre que escribes?

7. como te has dado cuenta en nuestras clases de inglés hemos venido leyendo historias y hemos aprendido vocabulario y algunas reglas para escribir en inglés con esas historias ¿Cómo te ha parecido esa forma de aprender inglés?

8. ¿y te ha gustado escribir en inglés?

9. ¿escribías antes en inglés?

  9.1 ¿si? ¿Sobre qué escribías?

10. ¿Te parece fácil o difícil escribir en inglés?

  10.1 ¿Por qué?
Annex 4: Samples of texts produced by the participants

Text Number 3, participant 2.

Dear teacher,
I wish invitation to visit is climate hot, go on river to fish for lunch, it be one day, spectacular, cordial, Liu, Macau.

Text Number 4, participant 1.

Most take care to Earth. The city there the take care, the energy is take care. He soon! their students.

Text Number 5, participant 4.

Hunt adventure in Africa. A day I was in Africa and I see a leopard and I see it. Find a tiger and had a foot in and I it help and it help. Take to a camp and it slip! finish.
Annex 5: Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Text N° 1</th>
<th>Text N° 2</th>
<th>Text N° 3</th>
<th>Text N° 4</th>
<th>Text N° 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>“The mother’s birthday”</td>
<td>“Animals everywhere”</td>
<td>“The Little owl and the Little bear”</td>
<td>“I love the earth”</td>
<td>“A day in my life”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N° 1

N° 2

N° 3

N° 4

N° 5

Annex 6: Corder’s error classification chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Graphological (Morphological)</th>
<th>Grammatical (Syntactic)</th>
<th>Lexico-semantic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>