English Native Speakers’ L2 Acquisition of the Spanish Clitic Se

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the joint degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
(Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition)

at the
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
2013

Date of final oral examination: 01/11/2013

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank to my advisors, professors Catherine Stafford and Yafei Li for all their valuable feedback and guidance during this process. Thank you professors of my dissertation committee: Diana Frantzen, Thomas Purnell, and Randolph Valentine, for always having the time to speak with me whenever we saw each other, if even in the most unexpected places. I want to further express my deep gratitude to Catherine Stafford, who has always been there mentoring me, and giving me moral support, gracias. From Cathy I learnt that even if you did not obtain the data results you expected, you will always have a story to tell. Right now, I am telling my story in this dissertation.

A heartfelt thanks goes out to Dr. Joseph Collentine and Daniel Serpas who welcomed me at Northern Arizona University. Without their support, my first pilot study would not have taken place. Also, thank you to their students who graciously participated in that pilot, and who were always excited to come to the sessions.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Douglas Hemken from Social Sciences Research Services, David Plastrik and Sagashus Levingston from the Writing Center, Dr. Grant Armstrong from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, and Dr. Rebecca Shield in the Department of Linguistics. Douglas was always available to help me with my statistical inquiries and provided valuable feedback for interpreting and furthering this research. David and Sagashus had the task of helping me with grammar corrections. During our sessions, I continued my English L2 learning process and no longer overuse the verb explain. Dr. Armstrong met with me and provided valuable suggestions for this research. Dr. Shields allocated some of her time to double check my syntactic trees for them to flourish in this dissertation.
Thank you to all the Spanish native speakers who participated in this research. I cannot make public your names, but you know who you are. Thanks for taking the time out of your busy schedules to provide grammaticality judgments for this research.

Also, thanks to my friends Blake Rodgers, Verena Thaler, and Laissa Rodriguez. Blake, you were always there listening to me, always making me smile and guiding me when things became tougher. Verena, you told me that I do not have to start at the beginning to start writing. I took this advice to heart and now, I am writing the last chapter in this dissertation process which will be the beginning of my whole research career. Laissa, you provided me accommodations, so I could have a place to stay during my data collection days. Those days were stressful but I also enjoyed and valued sharing the time with you.

Finally, I want to thank my family. First, I want to thank my mother, Noralba Rivera, who has always prayed for me from the distance. Next, I want to thank my parents-in-law, Diane and Terry Bailey, who have embraced me as one of their own. My sisters-in-law, Dawn and Danelle, and their spouses Morgan and Jim, for always accepting me with my ever present laptop at our family gatherings. Most of all, I want to dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Todd Bailey. You have always been there for me no matter what, during the good days and the bad days. Thank you for all the love you have given me over these years and for all the years to come.
ABSTRACT

This study investigated the acquisition of the Spanish clitic *se* by English native speakers in passive, middle, and impersonal constructions. Little research has been done on this topic in SLA within a UG framework (Bayona, 2005; Bruhn de Garavito, 1999). VanPatten (2004) proposed the Processing Instruction (PI) model arguing for the necessity of manipulating language input to help learners convert it into “intake” (Corder, 1967) facilitating integration of language structures into their interlanguage (IL). Sixty-three participants were randomly assigned to either a PI treatment group or a control group. The PI group received explanations and structured input activities (referential and affective) that focused on processing and interpreting *se*. To test the effectiveness of PI, both groups completed a pre-test and a post-test consisting of interpretation (subject identification), production (sentence completion and translation), a grammaticality judgment (GJ), and an adverb placement task. Quantitative data analysis showed that, regarding interpretation, PI helped with middle constructions since at post-test learners successfully identified the subject of these sentence types, but it did not help with passives and impersonals. Regarding production, learners correctly used the clitic *se* in middle and passive but not in impersonal constructions. Results of these tasks and the GJ task revealed a difficulty hierarchy: middle > passive > impersonal. Results of the adverb placement task showed that learners’ ILs have characteristics of both English (subject position) and Spanish (analyzing adverbs like adjectives in adjunct position).
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The goal of this dissertation is to investigate the acquisition of the clitic *se* by English native speakers who are acquiring Spanish as their second language (L2). During my teaching experience, one of the biggest challenges for students has been understanding *se* as a reflexive morpheme in constructions where it did not convey a reflexive meaning. This led me to focus on the acquisition process of the clitic *se* within the framework of generative linguistics and VanPatten’s model of Processing Instruction. Generative linguistics allows us to look at the syntactic placement in Spanish of this clitic as well as to explain L2 acquisition patterns in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research. In addition, Processing Instruction (PI) focuses on improving learner processing strategies. Combining generative linguistics as a theoretical framework and PI as a research methodology the present research aims to shed light on the processing difficulties and acquisition of the clitic *se*.

This research looks at the processing problems L2 learners have when acquiring the *se* in L2 Spanish in a classroom setting. Students receive limited input and explanations about *se*; typically, during the first semester of Spanish classes, they are introduced to reflexive verbs, where the only morphosyntactic element that makes a verb reflexive is the presence of the clitic. This overgeneralized definition reinforces the notion that *se* only marks reflexivity while overlooking its other functions: reciprocal, change of state, matization, impersonal, middle voice, and passive voice. I agree with Rodríguez and Butt (1996), who argued that limiting the role of the clitic to mark mainly reflexive verbs confuses learners, and that it is also necessary to teach
students about the different functions of *se*. Teaching all the functions of *se* during the first year would be too much information to assimilate; however, not explaining to students that *se* has different functions is equally counterproductive. Thus, this dissertation investigated the acquisition of other non-reflexive functions of the clitic *se*: impersonal, middle voice, and passive voice.

During the pilot study, participants reported that they prefer to know about the different functions of *se* instead of being taught that *se* is a reflexive pronoun and not understanding why in certain contexts it is not reflexive. They reported that such an approach would avoid the confusion that the clitic causes in their communication. In addition, learners criticized the fact that they were taught *se* as reflexive when in some instances this “did not make sense,” making it difficult for them to know when to use it correctly. If L2 learners are introduced to the functions of *se* early in their learning, they will be able to better communicate and comprehend Spanish. If learners cannot comprehend the functions of *se*, they will not be able to accurately produce it. Therefore, this research aims to address these concerns as well as to shed light on the L2 acquisition of the functions of *se*.

This dissertation uses PI in order to optimize L2 participants processing strategies to better interpret *se* in middle, passive and impersonal functions. These functions have the same surface structure, which makes it difficult to distinguish among them. During the PI treatment, learners received information regarding what strategies to avoid in order to correctly interpreting *se*; for example, *se* should not be interpreted as the subject of the sentence, nouns in Spanish can be in both pre-verbal as well as post-verbal position, and so on. In PI, the goal of such strategies is to increase the amount of input that is converted into intake to be integrated into learners’ InteElanguage. Thus, this dissertation tested the effectiveness of PI on learners’ interpretation and
production of *se* in middle, passive and impersonal functions, and looked at the IL representations that these learners have of *se*.

**Organization of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is organized in eight chapters as follows: Chapter 2 reviews research done on the acquisition of clitics within a Universal Grammar (UG) theory. This chapter summarizes studies on the object clitics which move to a specific position in a syntactic derivation (Uriagereka, 1995): the clitic *se* as a reflexive marker (Baaw & Delfitto, 2005), *se* in unaccusative constructions analyzed as a “become + verb” unit (Montrul, 1999), *si/se* as an element receiving nominative case in impersonal and passive constructions (Cinque, 1988), and *se* in passive, impersonal, and middle constructions (Mendikoetxea, 2002). Mendikoetxea (2002) details the characteristics differentiating the functions under study. Her analysis was used to create sentence lists to be used for this research. In addition, this chapter summarizes research on adverb placement (Bowers, 1975; Cinque, 1999; Pollock, 1989) since an adverb task was used in the present study to test where Spanish L2 learners tend to place the clitic *se*.

Chapter 3 summarizes relevant SLA research on the acquisition of the clitic *se* and acquisition of object clitics. Research on object clitics was included because English, the learners’ native language lacks, these morphemes; therefore, taking into account that *se* is also a clitic, research on clitics provides an overview on how L2 learners acquire clitics. Duffield and White (1999) investigated the object clitic placement, and VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) and VanPatten and Oikkennon (1996) investigated the acquisition of object clitics using Processing Instruction. Results of this present research showed that L2 learners are able to acquire a morpheme that is not present in their L1. Research on the acquisition of *se* within a UG
perspective (Bayona, 2005; Bruhn de Garavito, 1999; Temblay 2003) arrives at different conclusions regarding the accessibility of UG.

Chapter 4 evaluates research done from an SLA-UG perspective. UG is crucial for this analysis since I assume that L2 learners have access to UG in order to explain how L2 learners know when sentences are ungrammatical without receiving negative evidence from the input. Three positions regarding UG access in SLA are summarized: a) No Access: learners are not able to acquire an L2 past their critical/sensitive periods (Bley-Vroman, 1989; Johnson & Newport, 1989), b) Partial Access: UG is only available through L1 (Hawkin & Chan, 1997), and c) Full Access: UG is available for L2 acquisition (Bruhn de Gravaito, 1999; Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996). Spanish *se* constructions are ideal for testing access to UG in L2 acquisition because the surface structure of these functions is similar: in middles and passives, *se* is in sentence-middle position and in passives and impersonals, *se* is in initial position. Thus, for L2 learners, their functions are not easily distinguishable from the input.

Chapter 5 explores what Processing Instruction (PI) is. VanPatten (e.g., 1985, 2002, 2003, 2004) proposed the pedagogical model of PI claiming that focusing on input processing (and not production) maximizes intake, facilitating the integration of target structures into learners’ internal grammar. This section also presents research that compares PI with other teaching methodologies (Celik-Yazici, 2007; Collentine, 1998, etc.).

Chapter 6 describes the data collection procedure. First-year Spanish L2 learners were recruited out of 17 Spanish classes and were randomly assigned to either the treatment group or the control group. The treatment group received three days of PI instruction; each day focused on only one function of the clitic *se*. The instructional packets consisted of structured input activities. Both groups received a pre-test and a post-test composed of interpretation, production,
and grammaticality judgment, and an adverb placement tasks. Chapter 7 presents the results of each task for middle, passive and impersonal functions.

Chapter 8 discusses the results and presents conclusions. The results showed that PI was not effective for interpretation as tested in this research; however, PI did appear to facilitate improved production, but its effectiveness depended on the task. The grammaticality judgment results exposed a difficulty hierarchy among the se functions: middle > passive > impersonal. Results of the adverb placement task revealed that learners placed the clitic se in the specifier position of vP, and they analyzed adverbs as adjuncts in the syntactic derivation. It can be concluded from these results that learners were moving towards a more target-like use of the clitic se. However, more input and a longer treatment focusing on individual functions are needed to fully develop the correct form-meaning connections associated with all of the functions of the clitic se.
CHAPTER 2
LINGUISTICS

Literature Review

A significant amount of research has been done on clitics in Romance languages from a Universal Grammar (UG) L1 acquisition perspective. There are several analyses of clitics in Spanish (Campos, 1991; Contreras & Rojas, 1972; Dobrovie-Sorin, 1998; Klavans, 1982; Montrul, 1999, 2004; Schroten, 1980; Torrego, 1998; Zwicky, 1977); the clitic *se* in French (Barriere & Lorch, 2006); uses of the *se* in Spanish (A. Lujan, 1990; De Molina Redondo, 1974); and reflexivity (Baaw & Delfitto, 2005). Other analyses focus on object clitic movement in Spanish: Luján, M’s (1986, 1979) “Monta de clíticos.”¹ Contreras’ (1986) analysis of object clitics through clausal reduction, and Bordelois’ (1986) research on the restriction of object clitic climbing in causative constructions. The present investigation focuses on the clitic *se* and its function in the passive, middle and impersonal constructions. Although the present investigation focuses on the acquisition of the clitic *se*, the aforementioned research on object clitics is important because not only little research has been done on the L2 acquisition of the clitic *se* but also research carried out on the acquisition of object clitics is relevant to *se* acquisition (see Chapter 3 and 4). Thus, this chapter summarizes relevant research regarding this subject to better understand how it can be applied to the acquisition of Spanish as a second language.

Looking at the function of the reflexive clitics, Baaw and Delfitto (2005) suggested that, in Romance languages, reflexive clitics “have a non-argument status and are in fact used to

¹ “Clitic climbing” is a restriction in that clitic climbing is blocked by the presence of another personal clitic on the verb that attracts the clitic (M. Luján, 1986, p. 99) or by verbs that have clitics of their own (M. Luján, 1979, p. 5) among other restrictions on the matrix verb.
signal an operation of reflexivization” (p. 181). For Baaw & Delfitto, reflexivization is a relation and not a property since properties are marked in the lexicon. In order to account for the presence of only one argument in reflexive sentences, they claimed that reflexive structures are unaccusative sentences, as in (1):

\[
(1) \quad \text{Ana se} \quad \text{baña} \\
\text{Ana se.CLITIC take.a.shower-3SG.PRES}^2 \\
\text{‘Ana bathes’}
\]

In this sentence the verb \textit{bañar} ‘to bathe’ does not have a noun phrase (NP) object to assign its accusative case; thus, this verb becomes unaccusative. This is why the clitic \textit{se} is a non-argument marking a relation and not an accusative construction. Here, the verb comes from the lexicon with an interpretable reflexive feature that needs to be checked in the syntactic derivation. Therefore, Baaw and Delfitto (2005) proposed that the clitic \textit{se} checks the interpretable reflexive feature on the verb.

The advantage of this analysis is the use of a characteristic (i.e., unaccusativity) that is already present in other non-reflexive verbs. For example, a verb like \textit{break} can be accusative \textit{the tennis ball broke the window} or it can be unaccusative \textit{the window broke}. These cases of argument reduction can be applied to reflexive constructions to explain that syntactically the clitic \textit{se} marks the reduction of an argument. However, adopting this position has its shortcomings. For example, it implies that a reflexive feature must be present in the verb in the lexicon, as illustrated in (2):

\footnote{Abbreviations: 1 = First person, 3 = Third person, ACC = Accusative, CLITIC = Clitic, COMP = Complementizer, DAT = Dative, FEM = Feminine, GEN = Genitive, IMP = Imperfect, INF = Infinitive, NOM = Nominative, OBJ = Object, PAST = PAST, PL = Plural, PPLE = Participle, PRES = Present, PROG = Progressive, PRON = Pronoun, SG = Singular, SUBJ = Subject, TOP = Topic.}
El florero se quebró
The flower vase se.
CLITIC
break.3
SG.PAST

‘The flower vase broke’

The se in this sentence marks the beginning state of the NP florero (it is now in pieces), and it does not function as a reflexive marker. Baaw & Delfitto’s (2005) analysis assumes that there is a reflexive feature in the verb even though this sentence is not reflexive. Therefore, if the verb comes into the syntactic derivation with an interpretable reflexive feature, there is no morphology to check it causing the derivation to crash.

Montrul (1999) analyzed the clitic se in unaccusative constructions. Montrul stated that some unaccusative constructions alternate between transitive and intransitive forms as in (3) and (4) respectively:

(3) El cocinero derritió la manteca
The cook melt.3SG.PAST the butter
‘The cook melted the butter’

(4) La manteca se derritió
the butter se.CLITC melt.3SG.PAST
‘The butter melted (by itself)’ (Montrul, 1999, p. 194)

Example (3) is the accusative form of the unaccusative structure in (4). Montrul (1999) indicated that the se in (4) eliminated one of the arguments, in this case the agent argument.³ For these

³ Montrul (1999) states that not all unaccusative verbs have a transitive counterpart:

i. El genio apareció / Apareció el genio
The genie appear.3SG.PAST
The genie appeared

The genie appeared
cases, Montrul claimed that *se* is the overt realization of the predicate *become* in lexical semantics.\textsuperscript{4} In this analysis, verbs that have *se* need to be further decomposed into *BECOME* + *verb*. For example, sentences such as (4) have the structure as in Figure 1:

![Figure 1. Montrul’s Decomposition of *se* into BECOME + verb (1999, p. 198)](image)

In this structure, the verb *derretirse* ‘to melt’ is divided into the verb *derretir* and the clitic *se*. Analyzing *se* not as an argument clitic but as a verbal clitic allows it to be the head of its own verbal projection. Hence, *se* is a verbal clitic which attaches to the verb when it moves to Inflectional/Tense Phrase (IP/TP).

A benefit of this analysis is that it accounts for *se* in inchoative structures like (2). In this analysis, the inchoative forms show changes in the NPs. This analysis also considers the *se* as inchoative in unaccusative and unergative syntactic structures. The downside of this analysis is

\[
\text{ii. } \text{*Aladino apareció el genio} \\
\text{Aladdin appear.3SG.PAST the genie} \\
\text{‘Aladdin appeared the genie’} \quad (\text{Montrul, 1999, p. 196})
\]

In (i) the verb *aparecer* ‘to appear’ does not have a transitive counterpart. Montrul explained that there is no clear analysis in the literature regarding which verbs can alternate in intransitivity.

\textsuperscript{4}Montrul bases her analysis on the notion that the meaning of a verb is decompositional as proposed by Jackendoff (1987).
that in Spanish the NP can precede (5) or follow the verb (6) making it difficult to distinguish between a passive and an impersonal construction when the NP is in post-verbal position:

(5)  La mantequilla se derritió  
     the  butter  se.CLITC melt.3SG.PAST  
     ‘The butter melted’

(6)  Se derritió la mantequilla  
     se.CLITC melt.3SG.PAST the  butter  
     ‘The butter melted’

Sentence (6) has the same structure as (4) above. For sentences like (6), the possible structure would be as in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2. NP/DP in post-verbal position

In this structure the NP is after the verb. However, this structure is ambiguous since there is not a clear distinction between a passive and an impersonal construction.
In his analysis of Italian *si* in impersonal and passive constructions, Cinque (1988) proposed that the clitic *si* is a nominal element. For Cinque, *si* is an argument clitic that must be assigned Case because it is related to the NP. *Si* can have a [±arg(ument)] feature in impersonal and passive sentences, as illustrated respectively in sentences (7) and (8):

(7)   Qui, *si* mangia spesso gli spaghettis  
     here *si* eat-3SG often the spaghetti.PL  
     ‘Here, people often eat spaghetti’

(8)   Qui, gli spaghettis *si* mangiano spesso  
     here the spaghetti.PL *si* eat-3PL often  
     ‘Here, spaghetti is often eaten’  

(Cinque, 1988, p. 554)

In the impersonal sentence (7), the object is plural while the verb has singular agreement. The lack of agreement between the verb and the object means that *si* has a [-arg] feature because it is not related to the object NP. Therefore, *si* has nominative Case because it sits in the specifier of the inflectional head while *spaghetti* has accusative case. In the passive sentence in (8), the verb agrees with the object, then *si* has a [+arg] feature and receives nominative Case via its relation with the NP.

The benefit of this analysis is that it uses a characteristic of the argument reduction already present in the language. In reflexive constructions, the object NP is semantically related to the clitic *se* and syntactically shows that the subject and the object are the same entity. Cinque (1988) adapted this NP-*se/si* relation to explain the functions of *si* in impersonal and passive constructions in Italian. However, Cinque’s analysis is problematic because it overlooks the actual function of *si/se*. He assumed a feature analysis based on the agreement between the verb and the NP. Here, when the verb agrees with the NP then *si* is related to the NP (i.e., agreement
= passive sentence), but when the verb does not agree with the NP then *si* is not related to the NP (i.e., no agreement = impersonal sentence). However, in constructions where both the verb and the NP are singular, there is not a clear distinction between passive and impersonal sentences. Cinque’s analysis ignores the fact that *se* has other functions regardless of verbal agreement in other constructions. In addition, *se/si* receives nominative Case as a [+arg] or [-arg], which does not distinguish among the functions of *se* since it receives nominative Case in both instances.

Uriagereka (1995) offered another analysis for clitics. He proposed that languages have a Functional Phrase (FP) above inflectional phrase (IP) / tense phrase (TP) in the syntactic derivation. FP refers to the “point of view” (p. 93) of the speaker or the subject. Uriagereka claimed that FP can host a number of elements, including object clitics. This FP can be active or inactive depending on the language. For example, Spanish has an active FP while French does not. This is because clitics in French do not behave like they do in Spanish as shown in (9) and (10):

(9)  
Je vais **le** faire  
I go.1SG.PRES 3SG.OBJ.CLITIC make.INF  
‘I am going to do it’

(10)  
Lo **voy** a hacer  
3SG.OBJ.CLITIC go.1SG.PRES to make.INF  
‘I am going to do it’

In these cases, the clitic in Spanish is in FP because it is higher than the verbal unit *verb + infinitive*. The French FP is inactive because the clitic is not higher than the verbal unit, but
rather in the middle of it: *verb + clitic + infinitive*. In order to account for the position of the object clitic, Uriagereka proposed that FP is higher than IP/TP as shown in Figure 3 below:

![Figure 3. Uriagereka’s representation of FP (1995, p. 100)](image)

Applying this structure to sentences (9) and (10), the clitic in Spanish sits in F and the verbs are below F. In contrast, French clitics are hosted in the Agr(eement) phrases but not in F, because there is no place for the verb to move higher than FP.

Uriagereka (1995) also proposed that one of the characteristics of these object clitics is that they license a null *pro*, as seen in Figure 4:
Figure 4. Uriagereka’s clitic licensing a null pro (1995, p. 81).

A clitic licenses a pro because both elements are specific, referential, and non-deictic. This is why the clitic is the head of the Determiner Phrase (DP) as illustrated in Figure 4 above and in examples (11) to (14):

(11) \text{Lo}_i \text{ amo a \'{e}l}_i \\
OBJ.CLITIC love.1SG.PRES to him \\
‘I love him’

(12) *\text{Lo}_i \text{ amo a uno}_i \\
OBJ.CLITIC love.1SG.PRES to one \\
‘I love one’

(13) *\text{Me} \text{ gusta lo sombrero} \\
OBJ.CLITIC.1SG want.1SG.PRES OBJ.CLITIC hat \\
‘I like it’

(14) \text{Me} \text{ gusta esta camisa} \\
OBJ.CLITIC.1SG want.1SG.PRES this shirt \\
‘I like this shirt’

In sentence (11), the clitic is specific because it can only refer to a specific \'{e}l ‘him;’ it cannot refer to an unspecific NP like uno ‘one’ as in (12). In sentence (13), the object clitic lo cannot function as a deictic element like esta ‘this’ seen in (14). Given that pro shares these
characteristics, Uriagereka concluded that they are related. Given that direct objects are referential, specific, and non-deictic, they move out of the base-generated position in DP to F in order to license a *pro* as its trace.

The advantage of this analysis is that the clitic moves directly to FP since there are no features to check in the movement process. It accounts for sentences like *la vi en la escuela* ‘I saw her in school’ where the object clitic *la* ‘her’ is the first phonologically overt element in the sentence. A drawback of this analysis is that Uriagereka claims that any element that embodies the subject/speaker point of view can be in FP, regardless of their grammatical function. Therefore, since different elements can be in FP, this implies that FP is a multifunctional position. If Uriagereka’s (1995) analysis is adopted for the clitic *se*, every *se* could potentially move to this position. For example, sentences like (15) and (16) will have a possible structure as illustrated in Figure 5:

(15) \[ \text{Se} \quad \text{come} \quad \text{bien en Italia} \quad \text{(impersonal)} \]
\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{se.C} \text{LITIC} & \text{eat.3SG.PRES} \\
\text{well in Italy} & \text{‘People eat well in Italy’}
\end{array}
\]

(16) \[ \text{Se} \quad \text{escribieron} \quad \text{las cartas} \quad \text{(passive)} \]
\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{se.CLITIC} & \text{write.PAST.PL} \\
\text{the letters} & \text{‘The letters were written’}
\end{array}
\]
Figure 5. Representation of passives and impersonals using FP

As Figure 5 shows, the impersonal and the passive constructions in Uriagereka’s analysis will have exactly the same syntactic structure without distinguishing between these constructions. Uriagereka claimed that clitics have different positions depending on the language. However, it is not clear where a possible base-generated location for this clitic would be in these structures, especially if they represent different functions. In addition, in passive, middle, and impersonal construction the clitic *se* does not have the same characteristics as an object clitic (mentioned above); therefore, it cannot leave a *pro* behind, then it is unclear what triggers the movement of *se* to FP, to check what features specifically? The only possible explanation would be to account for the fact that *se* precedes the verb by moving to this FP head; however, this is not enough to trigger movement of this element to this position. This is why it is important to do further research regarding the position of *se* and its functions.

Chomsky (1995) proposed that clitics are syntactically defined as non-branching elements (i.e., ambiguous X0/XPs). As a result, clitics can be analyzed as a head and a phrase at
the same time. Taking this into account, Boškovic (2002) concluded that “clitics are located in the specifier positions of separate phrases” (p. 334). He postulated that clitics left-adjoined to the verb when it moves out of VP, and before moving to other landing sites. In addition, Duffield and White (1999) claimed that the different positions of Romance clitics are due to the presence of functional projections (e.g., FP in Uriagereka, 1999) or specific language features (i.e., movement). In general, many analyses have addressed object clitics but few have addressed the clitic se and its different functions.

Mendikoetxea (2002) discussed different constructions with the clitic se in Spanish: passive voice, middle voice and impersonal constructions. In these constructions she claimed that se cannot be considered as a subject pronoun because there is syntactic evidence to refute such an analysis:

(17) No se leerán estos libros
No se.CLITIC read.3PL.FUT these books
‘These books will not be read’

(18) Yo no leeré estos libros
I no read.1SG.FUT these books
‘I will not read these books’

(19) ¿Se leerán los libros?
se.CLITIC read.3PL.FUT the books
‘Will these books be read?’

(20) Leerás tú los libros
read.2SG.FUT you the books
‘You will read the books’
In example (17) the clitic *se* follows the negation while a subject pronoun precedes it as in (18). In example (19) the clitic *se* cannot invert position with the verb while a subject pronoun can as in (20). Therefore, *se* cannot be analyzed as a subject pronoun; which is one of the processing strategies that L2 learners are taught to avoid during the Processing Instruction treatment as seen in Chapter 5. In her article, Mendikoetxea thoroughly analyzed the characteristics that distinguish each of the three functions of *se* and offered a classification for them. The remainder of this chapter summarizes the main points of her analysis.  

**Passive Voice**

Both Spanish and English have passive voice expressed in different ways. The active voice shows the typical order where the grammatical subject is the agent of the verb and the object is the patient as in (21):

(21) The president wrote the letters

In a passive voice construction the notional subject is demoted and the notional object becomes the grammatical subject of the sentence. Here, the verb takes the form of *to be* + *past participle* as in (22):

(22) The letters were written by the president

---

5 For the purposes of the present research, I took into account Mendikoetxea’s classification as a basis to recognize and group the sentences targeted for investigation.
In (22) the notional object *the letters* is the grammatical subject, and the agent *the president* is demoted to be the complement of the preposition *by*. This structure is called a periphrastic passive. English has only the periphrastic form while Spanish has the periphrastic and a passive formed with the clitic *se*.

In passive constructions with *se* the notional object is the grammatical subject of a transitive verb and the agent is omitted, as in (23). In contrast, the periphrastic passive has the structure *ser* ‘to be’ + *verb in past participle* and the agent is introduced by the preposition *por* ‘by’ as in (24):

(23)  

\[
\text{Se escribieron las cartas a mano}  \\
\text{se write.PAST.3PL the letters by hand}  \\
\text{‘The letters were written by hand’}
\]

(24)  

\[
\text{Las cartas fueron escritas por el presidente}  \\
\text{the letters be.PAST.3PL write.PPLE.FEM.PL by the president}  \\
\text{‘The letters were written by the president’}
\]

The difference between these two constructions is that in (23) the agent is omitted and in (24) the agent is identified by the preposition *por*. The commonality between these passive constructions is that the grammatical subject *las cartas* was the notional object in the active voice construction. Mendikoetxea claimed that since the grammatical subject is the notional object, passive *se* constructions indicate that the situation is external to this grammatical subject.\(^6\)

\(^6\) Mendikoetxea (2002) also explained that not all periphrastic passive sentences can be used in a *se* passive construction, as illustrated below:

i.  

\[
\text{Una periodista de TVE fue agredida (por un futbolista)}  \\
\text{a journalist of TVE be.3SG.PAST attack.PPLE by a soccer.player)  \\
\text{‘A journalist was attacked (by a soccer player)’}
\]
The passive *se* implies that there is a non-overt agent present whose intentionality is still perceived in the structure thanks to a prepositional phrase as in (25):

(25)  *se quemó*  el bosque *para acabar con la plaga de orugas*

se burn.3SG.PAST the forest for put.an.end with the plague of caterpillar

‘The forest was burned to put an end to the caterpillar plague’

(Mendikoetxea, 2002, p. 1643)

Mendikoetxea (2002) claimed that the agent is not mentioned in (25) because it is the verbal action that is important in this construction and not who did the action.

Another trait of the passive *se* relates to the characteristics of the NP. Mendikoetxea (2002) stated that the NP can be in post-verbal position, as in (26) and (27), or in pre-verbal position as in (28). In addition, there is a distinction between inanimate and animate NPs. Inanimate NPs can appear without a determiner (26) or with a determiner (27)-(28); but animate NPs can appear without a determiner (29) or with an indefinite determiner (30):

(26)  *Se vendieron libros*

se.CLItic sell.3PL.PAST books

‘Books were sold’

(27)  *Se vendieron los libros*

se.CLItic sell.3PL.PAST the books

‘The books were sold’

---

ii.  #Una periodista se agredió

a journalist se.CLItic attack.3SG.PAST

‘A journalist was attacked’

(Mendikoetxea, 2002, p. 1637)

Sentence (i) is a grammatical periphrastic passive voice. Sentence (ii) shows that when this sentence is changed into a *se* construction, it is interpreted as reflexive. Mendikoetxea does not offer an explanation for the cause of this restriction. This matter is beyond the scope of this dissertation topic.
(28) Los libros se vendieron
‘The books were sold’

(29) Se necesitan vendedores
‘Sellers are needed’

(30) Se necesitan unos vendedores
‘Sellers are needed’

(31) *Se necesitan los vendedores
‘Sellers are needed’

(32) *Libros se vendieron
‘the books were sold’

(33) *Vendedores se necesitan
‘Sellers are needed’

Examples (26) and (27) show that the inanimate NP is in post-verbal position and it can be either specific or non-specific. Sentences with animate NPs are grammatical, as in (29) and (30), but are ungrammatical with a definite determiner (31). Examples in (32)-(33) show a restriction with NPs in preverbal position: they cannot appear without a determiner. Mendikoetxea (2002) proposed that the NP cannot be specified in (26) and (29) in post-verbal position since, in deep structure in Spanish syntax, the object DP is in post-verbal position.
Another characteristic of the NP in passives, as explained by Mendikoetxea (2002), is that it cannot be introduced by the preposition *a*:

(34)  *Se avisaron a los bomberos*  
     se call.3PL.PAST to the firemen  
     ‘The firemen were called’

This type of sentence is ungrammatical because the preposition *a*, in this example, is the personal *a* which marks a direct [+human] object in Spanish. The presence of the *a* indicates that the sentence has a notional object as its grammatical object but not as its grammatical subject. Therefore, this construction is subjectless.

Mendikoetxea (2002) discussed a restriction on verbs in passive constructions: intransitive verbs cannot appear in a periphrastic passive:

(35)  Juan vive en la casa  
     Juan live.3SG.PRES in the house  
     ‘Juan lives in the house’

(36)  *En la casa es vivido Juan*  
     In the house be.3SG.PRES live.PPLE Juan  
     Juan is living in the house

(37)  *Se vive*  
     se.CLITIC live.3SG.PRES  
     ‘*lives’
Example (35) shows an intransitive sentence. This same sentence cannot be expressed as a periphrastic passive, as in (36), and the intransitive verb cannot be used in a passive sentence with se as in (37). This follows immediately from the restriction that passive voice constructions (and middle voice below) can appear only with transitive verbs since the notional object becomes the grammatical subject.

In passive se constructions, there is not a restriction on verbal aspect: It can be either perfective or imperfective:

(38) El año pasado se construyó un puente sobre el río Guadalix
the year last se.build.3SG.PAST a bridge over the river Guadalix
‘Last year, a bridge was built over the Guadalix river’
(Mendikoetxea, 2002, p. 1655)

(39) Estos libros no se venden porque no están en las vitrinas
these books no se.sell.3PL.PRES because no be.3PL.PRES in the shelf
‘These books are not sold because they are not in shelf’

---

7 Mendikoetxea (2002) explained that there are certain cases where the passive voice with se is preferred over the periphrastic form:

i. Se hacen visitas a los enfermos
   se.make.3PL.PRES visits to the sick
   ‘People visit sick people’
   (Mendikoetxea, 2002, p. 1671)

iii. *Visitas son hechas a los enfermos
    be.make.PPL.3PL.PRES visits to the sick
    ‘sick people is visited’

This preference is due to the fact that certain NPs are linked with specific verbs. In example (i) the NP visitas is not used with another verb but with hacer. Other examples are: “dar [una patada/un consejo/los buenos días]; tener {hambre/celos/cuidado/ganas}; hacer {la maleta/preguntas/una visita}, etc.” (Mendikoetxea, 2002, p. 1671). Literal translation: ‘give {a kick/an advise/the good morning}; to be {hungry/jealous/careful/anxious}; to make {the luggage/questions/a visit}, etc.
The sentence in (38) is in perfective aspect while the sentence in (39) is not. This shows that there is no aspecual restriction in passive constructions while other constructions do have this restriction, such as in the middle voice, below.

**Middle Voice**

The middle voice expresses that the action conveyed by the verb affects the grammatical subject which is the notional object in the active voice sentence. Middle voice marks an inherent quality of the grammatical subject of the sentence. English and Spanish express middle voice differently. In Spanish, the middle voice uses the clitic *se* while English lacks overt morphology for this function. For example, in Spanish, the notional object in the active voice (40) becomes the grammatical subject followed by the clitic *se* in a middle voice construction (41). English has the same process except that the clitic *se* is not present (42):

(40)  María lava los pantalones con un detergente suave.
     Mary wash.PRES.3SG the pants with a detergent mild
     ‘Mary washes the pants with a mild detergent.’

(41)  Los pantalones *se* lavan con un detergente suave
     The pants *se* wash.PRES.3PL with a detergent mild
     ‘The pants are washed with a mild detergent.’

(42)  This bread cuts easily

In example (41), *los pantalones* do not refer to specific pants. Mendikoetxea (2002) stated that the NPs in middle voice constructions represent a class or a concrete group. This is why the NP *los pantalones* refers to a class or group of pants, not only to the pants that Maria is washing in
Example (42) shows that the bread has the quality or characteristic to be cut in an easy manner.

Other characteristics of the middle voice can be seen in the sentences above. First, in Spanish as well as in English, the NP is in pre-verbal position. In Spanish, if the NP is in post-verbal position it is interpreted as a passive voice and not as a middle voice sentence. Mendikoetxea (2002) claimed that the notional object NP has moved to a pre-verbal position because it is a topic NP referring to a class/group, making this NP information already known by the participants of the discourse. Second, the NP needs to have a definite determiner. Without a definite determiner, the NP loses its class/group characteristics rendering the sentence ungrammatical. Taking into account that the NPs are generic in these constructions referring to a class or a group, a middle voice function is needs to be modified by a manner adverb qualifying how these notional object NPs are affected by the verb, since they are “stative proposition, of generic aspect” (Mendikoetxea, 2002, p. 1641).

Sánchez López (2002) stated that *se* in Spanish middle voice constructions marks internal processes that happen without an external agent overtly present as in (43):

(43) En épocas de sequía, los bosques se quemaban fácilmente 'During drought seasons, forests burned easily'

---

8 Landau (2007) claimed that, in English, the NPs move to subject position due to the Extended Projection Principle (EPP) syntactic requirement. EPP is a strong feature present in the specifier of Tense/Inflection Phrase which requires an overt NP to move or merge into this position. This explains why English requires its subjects to be overt and in preverbal position, contrary to Spanish, where this EPP feature is weak, explaining why subjects can be in post-verbal position as well as non-overt (i.e., *pro*).

9 Translations in this section are my own.

10 Original quote: “proposición estativa, de aspecto genérico”
This sentence implies that there is intervention of an external agent. Moreover, this sentence describes an inherent property of the forest, that due to the draught, the forest was dry and therefore burned easily.

In addition, as previously mentioned, middle voice denotes states which render it incompatible with punctual actions. For examples (41)-(43), Mendikoetxea (2002) explained that middle voice can appear with present and imperfect tenses, which do not anchor the action to the moment of speech but rather refer to a typical action and a general aspect of properties/characteristics of the NP. In addition, Mendikoetxea (2002) observed that middle voice sentences cannot appear with progressive tense (44) or iterative present (45):

(44) #esta camisa se está lavando bien
    this shirt se be.3SG.PRES wash.PROG well
    ‘*This shirt is washing well’

(45) #esta camisa se lava bien todos los días
    this shirt se wash.3SG.PRES well every the days
    ‘*This shirt washes well every day’

Examples (44) and (45) do not refer to properties of the shirt, which is the function of middle voice. Rather, they can be interpreted as if the shirt is washing itself, which is semantically anomalous. Therefore, Mendikoetxea (2002) concluded that middle voice sentences are stative sentences requiring imperfective aspect.

**Impersonal Sentences**

An impersonal sentence is used when the agent of the action is not relevant or cannot be mentioned. In English as well as in Spanish, impersonal sentences are expressed with
impersonal nouns such as *la gente* ‘people’, *uno* ‘one’,\(^1\) *alguien* ‘someone,’ etc. as in (46) and (47):

(46) People buy used cars

(47) La gente compra autos usados
    the people buy.3SG.PRES cars used
    ‘People buy used cars’

(48) Se compara autos usados
    se buy.3SG.PRES cars used
    ‘People buy used cars’

Sentences (46) and (47) have the same meaning and the same characteristic of having an overt subject NP. Sentence (48) shows that Spanish has a second impersonal construction which uses the clitic *se*. Even though sentences (47) and (48) have the same meaning, they differ in that in (47) the subject is present while in (48) the subject is implicit. The verb in the impersonal sentence with an overt subject agrees with the subject while the verb in impersonal *se* constructions is always in third person singular.

Sánchez López (2002) claimed that even though the impersonal constructions lack an overt agent, an agent is still implicit in the sentence. The presence of *se* in this construction signals the action of a particular group:

(49) Aquí se come la comida cruda
    here se.CLITIC eat the food raw
    ‘We eat raw food here’

\(^1\) Sánchez López (2002) explained that even though the clitic *se* in impersonal sentences can be interpreted like the impersonal NP *uno*, there is still a difference between these two elements: *uno* implies a direct experience from the speaker while *se* does not. This difference is beyond the scope of this paper.
This sentence does not imply the action of a specific person, but rather an action that is characteristic of a group. It can be interpreted as a universal or generic as long as it refers to an implicit subject (Mendikoetxea, 2002).

Impersonal *se* constructions can be used with both transitive and intransitive verbs. Mendikoetxea (2002) argued that constructions with *se* with intransitive verbs can only be analyzed as impersonal:

(50)  
 Se trabaja mucho aquí

*se work.*3SG.PRES a.lot here

‘people work a lot here’

The verb *trabajar* ‘to work’ is an intransitive verb that does not take a direct object, and its interpretation with *se* can only be impersonal. With transitive verbs, the object can be preceded by a preposition, as in (51) to (52):

(51)  
 Se necesitó de mucho dinero para construir esta casa

*se need.*PAST.3SG of a.lot.of money to build.*INF this house

‘A lot of money was needed to build this house’

(52)  
 Se contó con su ayuda para resolver este problema

*se count.*PAST.3SG with his/her help to solve.*INF this problem

‘His/her help was counted on to solve this problem’

In these examples, the objects of the sentences are introduced by a preposition independently of the animacy of the object. Mendikoetxea (2002) claimed that in cases where
the verb allows prepositional as well as nominal complements their meaning can alternate between impersonal and passive voice depending on the presence or absence of the preposition:

(53) Se discutió sobre varios asuntos (impersonal)
se discuss.3SG.PAST about several topics
‘People discussed several topics’

(54) Se discutieron varios asuntos (passive)
se discuss.3PL.PAST several topics
‘Several topics were discussed’

(Mendikoetxea, 2002, p. 1689)

In (53), the notional object is the grammatical object of the verb *discutir* ‘discuss’ and is introduced by the preposition *sobre* ‘about.’ The preposition blocks agreement between the verb and the NP. Thus, the verb is in third person singular and the resulting construction is interpreted as impersonal. In (54), the notional object of the passive voice becomes the grammatical subject; it lacks a preposition allowing agreement between the NP and the verb. Mendikoetxea (2002) also noted that in impersonal sentences, when the verb has its object introduced by the personal preposition *a* as in (55) below, this object can be replaced by a clitic object pronoun allowing the structure *se + object pronoun + verb*:

(55) Se les entrega los premios a los ganadores
se 3.PL.CLITIC.DAT give.3SG.PRES the prizes to the winners
‘Someone gives the prizes to the winners’

(Mendikoetxea, 2002, p. 1700)

(56) #Se los entrega los premios a los ganadores
se 3.PL.CLITIC.ACC give.3SG.PRES the prizes to the winners
‘Someone gives the prizes to the winners’
In example (55), the pronoun *les* ‘to them’ mirrors the syntactic function of the NP as an indirect object. This is why the NP can be replaced by an object pronoun. Mendikoetxea (2002) concluded that the presence of this pronoun allows for this sentence to be interpreted as impersonal. Examining example (56), if the direct object *los premios* ‘the prizes’ is replaced by the direct object clitic *los*, the sentence loses its impersonal interpretation because 1) *se* is interpreted as the spurious se, and 2) if the verb changes to plural agreement, it is still interpreted as the spurious *se*. Perlmutter (1970) asserted that pronominalizing a direct object in these constructions is ungrammatical since it does not maintain the impersonal reading. In both of these situations, given that Spanish is a pro-drop language, the spurious *se* implies that there must be a subject *pro* present for verbal agreement, as seen in (57) below:

\[(57)\] pro se los entregó a los ganadores
\[\text{pro 3.PL.CLITIC.DAT 3.PL.CLITIC.ACC give.3SG.PAST to the winners}\]

‘She/he gave them (the prizes) to the winners’

In example (59), the null subject pronoun *pro* needs to be present for verbal agreement reasons. Without the clitic *se*, this sentence loses its impersonal interpretation, and its subject is interpreted from the discourse. For examples (58) and (59), Sánchez López (2002) claimed that *se* cannot be analyzed as a subject pronoun since *se* cannot be separated from the verb but an overt subject can:

---

\(^{12}\) Spurious *se* in Spanish is a phonological change that the indirect object clitic undergoes when it precedes a direct object clitic: *María le dio los cuadernos a Juan*

María 3.SG.CLITIC.DAT dar.3SG.PAST the notebooks to Juan

‘María gave him the notebooks (to Juan)’

Direct object pronoun → *María le los dio; Spurious se → María se los dio"
In example (59), *se does not have similar characteristics to the overt NP subjects in (58). *Se cannot be analyzed as an element that carries nominative case. In these constructions, *se is only a generic marker whose interpretation is obligatorily [+human].

Mendikoetxea (2002) and Sánchez López (2002) observed that unaccusative verbs can appear with impersonal constructions with a predicate:

Example (60) shows that the unaccusative verb *llegar ‘to arrive’ can appear with a complex predicate; but it is ungrammatical in an impersonal *se construction without it (61). Mendikoetxea (2002) stated that sentences like (60) express a quality that has a universal reading which can be interpreted as something that people generally do.

To review, Table 1 summarizes the main characteristics that Mendikoetxea (2002) discussed for each of the three functions of the Spanish clitic *se presented above:
Table 1

*Characteristics of se in Passive, Middle and Impersonal Constructions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Passive</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Impersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verb</strong></td>
<td>Transitive</td>
<td>Transitive/Intransitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NP</strong></td>
<td>Pre-verbal or post-verbal</td>
<td>Agrees with verb</td>
<td>Post-verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No agreement with verb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Object</strong></td>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With prepositions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>Generic reading</td>
<td>Verb is in third person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restricted to imperfective aspect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These characteristics are used as a guide for sentences to be employed in this research.

**Adverb Placement**

A characteristic present in all the functions is that neither an adverbial element (62) nor negation (63) can appear between the se and the verb, as illustrated in (62) and (63):

(62) *Se siempre llega tarde*  
    se always arrive.3SG.PRES late  
    ‘people always arrives late’
Looking closely at example (58) above (repeated as 64 below), with an overt NP subject, adverbs can occur between this NP and the verb. In contrast, adverbs cannot interfere between the clitic se and the verb in any of the three functions analyzed here.

Thus, adverbs can be used to test where se is located in a syntactic derivation. Pollock (1989) used adverbs and negation as a test to explain the position of the verbs in English and French:

\[(64)\]

\[\text{Ana/Uno/Él no llega } \text{tarde}\]
\[\text{Ana/one/he no arrive.3SG.PRES late}\]
\[\text{‘Ana/one/he does not arrive late’}\]

It is necessary to remember that English uses the dummy “do” to host negation. In this example “does” is not the main verb but “like” is.
(66) a. \[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{[TP Jean embrasse; [VP souvent t; Marie]]} \\
\text{John kisses often Mary}
\end{array}
\]

b. \*Jean souvent embrasse Marie

c. \[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{[TP Jean (n’)aime; [NegP pas [VP t; Marie]]} \\
\text{Jean loves not Mary} \\
\text{‘Jean does not love Mary’}
\end{array}
\]

d. \*Jean (ne) pas aime Marie

(Pollock, 1989, p. 367)

In English finite clauses the verb stays inside VP as shown in sentence (65a) and (65c) since the verb follows the adverb and the negation. If the verb moves to TP then it becomes ungrammatical as in (65b) and (65d). On the contrary, in French the verb moves to TP (66a) and (66c) preceding the adverb and the negation, and it is ungrammatical if it stays inside VP as in (66b) and (66d). Pollock (1989) stated that the placement of the adverbs and negation in (65) and (66) help to test verb placement and movement (i.e., its base-generated position or how high it moves in the derivation).

Another adverb study was carried out by Cinque (1999), who looked at adverb placement across languages and proposed a universal adverb hierarchy. Adverbs are syntactically situated depending on how they interact with other elements in the sentence. Cinque claimed that adverbs are located in the specifier position of functional phrases as shown in Figure 6 below:
Figure 6 illustrates that adverbs are placed in different syntactic phrases showing that adverbs cannot move above other adverbs that are syntactically higher as in (67) and (68):

(67) John probably ate his dinner completely

(68) *Completely, John probably ate his dinner

---

14 This figure was taken from a handout posted on-line by professor Grohmann (see reference).
The epistemic (i.e., hypothetical, probability) adverb probably is higher than the completive adverb completely, as shown in (67). Therefore, following Cinque’s (1999) proposal, moving the completive adverb above the epistemic one is ungrammatical as in (68) because it violates the adverbial hierarchy.

Tortora (2006) used Cinque’s hierarchy to test object clitic positions in the Borgomanerese dialect of Italian. In her analysis, Tortora looked at the position of clitics with respect to adverbs. She found that clitics attached to negation and some—but not all—adverbs. She presented the Borgomanerese adverbial hierarchy as follows (see also Figure 7): mija ‘negation’ > già ‘already’ > piö ‘anymore’ > sempri ‘always’ > bej ‘well.’

Figure 7. Tortora’s adverbial placement representation (2006, p. 740)
Tortora (2006) claimed that adverbs are in the specifier position of phrases. This derivation in Figure 7 shows that the clitic is in a fixed functional phrase (ZP) since it always appears after *mija* ‘negation’ > *già* ‘already’ > *piò* ‘anymore’ and before *sempri* ‘always’ > *bej* ‘well.’ Thus, Tortora concluded that the object clitic is in a specific position in the syntax.

Within his research on adjectives, Bowers (1975) also offered an analysis for adverbs. Bowers (1975) observed that adjectives can have sentences as their complements; in examples such as “*Bill is so tall that he can see over everybody’s head*” (p. 530), the adjective *tall* has a relative clause as its complement. Adverbs show the same behavior; in examples such as “*Harry ran so quickly that he got there in no time*” (p. 545), the adverb *quickly* has a relative clause as its complement. Furthermore, adverbs and adjectives are related due to the morphological traits they share because many adverbs are derived from adjectives. For example, in English the morpheme –*ly* and in Spanish the morpheme –*mente* are added to adjectives to change their lexical category to adverbs (*rápido* ‘quick’ (adjective) to *rápidamente* ‘quickly’ (adverb)). Therefore, on the basis of the claim that the same syntactic rules that apply to adjectives apply also to adverbs, Bowers (1975) proposed the AP category which brings both adjectival and adverbial phrases together due to their parallelism.

In addition, relevant to this present research, within his analysis of Predicate Phrases (PredP), following Stowell (1981) and Travis (1988a), Bowers (1993) claims that the PredP is

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15 Bowers (1993) proposed the PredP to account for the presence of small clauses. In *I consider John crazy/a fool* (p. 591), *consider* takes a PredP *John crazy/a fool* as its complement: [IP they consider [PrP John [Pr [Pr [X[AP crazy]]]]]] (p. 591). PredP structure is shown below:

```
  (subject) NP    Pr
   Pr'       X'P (predicate)
```

For more details, I refer the reader to his article since this topic is beyond the scope of this present research.
necessary to account for manner adverbs in adjunct position. Here, some adverbs can co-occur with other adverbs, but their position is not interchangeable since they are licensed by different heads. Evidence for this constraint comes from *perfectly*-like adverbs which can only appear in post-verbal position, as in (69), with other adverbs present, or before or after prepositional complements, as in (70), but not between the verb and the direct object. Bowers claimed that these facts are explained under a syntactic representation that contains a PredP. *Perfectly*-like adverbs are adjuncts of VP since they can only appear post-verbally, while adverbs such as *quickly* are adjuncts of PredP which explains why it can appear either in sentence final or in preverbal position, as illustrated in the representation of sentence (69) in Figure 8 below.

(69)  John will (quickly) learn French *perfectly* (quickly) (Bowers, 1993, p. 607)

(70)  John spoke (*intimately) French (intimately) to Mary (intimately) (Bowers, 1993, p. 610)

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Earlier researchers that claimed adverbs to be in adjunct position are: Pollock (1989), Iatridou (1990), Stroik (1990), among others.
Taking into account that Bowers analyzes adverbs in adjunct position, Figure 8 also represents the possible places where other adverbs can be placed in adjunct position in a syntactic derivation.
The analyses presented above have in common that adverbs are licensed by different heads in a syntactic derivation but there is no consensus as to whether they are in the specifier or in the adjunct position of these licenser heads. However, given that adverbs can be licensed in different positions, this can be used to test the syntactic placement of the Spanish clitic *se*. Movement of the clitic *se* across adverbs will help to determine where it is placed in Spanish L2 syntax. As is further developed in Chapter 8, results revealed that Spanish L2 learners placed adverbs in adjunct position. Taking into account that learners have been exposed to Spanish structures where adjectives are in adjunct position, if they analyze adverbs like adjectives, this will support Bowers' (1975, 1993) analysis that these two lexical categories are indeed related not only morphologically but also syntactically.

The present study investigates whether controlled exposure\(^\text{17}\) to structures with the clitic *se* in L2 Spanish facilitates learners’ acquisition of the different functions of *se*. Selinker (1972) proposed to analyze L2 learner errors as typifying a developmental stage towards full acquisition of the L2; this stage is called *Interlanguage* (IL). Selinker (1972) noted that IL has its own rules, is systematic, and has been shown to include characteristics which sometimes are not present in either the L1 or the L2, but which are nevertheless UG-constrained. Students’ performance in an L2 does not necessarily give the full picture of the mental representations or the stage of their acquisition process. However, Strozer (1991) claimed that L2 learners know information about the L2 that goes beyond their L2 exposure. Braidi (1999) supported this view explaining that L2 learners “do arrive at UG-constrained IL grammar” (p. 65). Dekydtspotter (2009) stated that both L1 and L2 acquisition are constrained by UG and that their IL representation emerges after sufficient L2 exposure. Therefore, UG offers a principled way to look at language as a system.

\(^{17}\) During the Processing Instruction treatment, learners were exposed to input that specifically targets structures with the *se* and its functions. This will be further developed in Chapter 5.
while also allowing the comparison of the characteristics that are similar or different between the L1 and the L2;\textsuperscript{18} thus, using UG as the framework, this research investigates the acquisition of the clitic \textit{se} by English learners of L2 Spanish since their IL is constrained by UG. The following chapter reviews previous research regarding the acquisition of clitics in general from an SLA-UG perspective.

\textsuperscript{18} It is important to clarify that this view implies neither that L1 and L2 acquisition are the same nor that L2 learners need to be compared to L1 native speakers. What this study aims to investigate is whether learners place the \textit{se} in different positions in their IL syntax. This in turn could provide answers on possible positions that \textit{se} might have in Spanish.
CHAPTER 3
UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR AND SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

UG and SLA

The purpose of linguistics as a field is to contribute to our understanding of how languages behave, what their characteristics are, and how languages are generated. Chomsky (1957) proposed the theory of Universal Grammar (UG), which assumes that human beings are born with an innate capacity to acquire language. UG aims to explain linguistic competence, looking at how our internal grammars are generated. The present research is situated within this generativist theoretical framework. According to UG, natural languages are constrained by universal principles and parameters. Principles refer to characteristics that all natural languages share, while parameters refer to characteristics which are language-specific and allow variation among languages.

UG was proposed to explain how speakers know all that they know about their native language (L1) in spite of the impoverished input to which they are exposed. UG also seeks to account for how the L1 grammar is generated and represented in native speakers’ minds to better understand how they know when sentences are ungrammatical without receiving negative evidence from the input. Second language acquisition (SLA) research based on UG theory seeks to determine whether or not second language grammars are also constrained by UG (Bley-Vroman 1989; Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996; White, 2003). In SLA, researchers use learners’ access to UG to explain how they come to know L2 structures that they have not received directly from the input and how they know when certain L2 structures are not possible. There
are different views about the accessibility of UG in L2 acquisition: No Access, Partial Access, and Full Access. These views are summarized below.

**No Access to UG**

According to this view, after an L1 is acquired, UG is no longer available for L2 acquisition; thus, after puberty adults are not able to acquire an L2. Lenneberg (1967) proposed that an L1 can only be fully acquired within a critical period which expands from childhood to puberty. Within this view, children are able to acquire all aspects of a language without any kind of limitation. However, Long (1990) proposed that instead of a critical period, there are sensitive periods where the age effect varies for different components of the L2. For example, children acquiring an L2 outperform adults in phonology while adults can outperform children in morphology and syntax; however, children will eventually outperform adults in all parts of L2 acquisition. Long (1990) claimed that phonology is susceptible to an earlier sensitive period than morphology and syntax for L2 acquisition and that children are more likely to attain native-like proficiency in an L2 than adults showing that different language aspects are maturationally constrained. SLA researchers who align with the no access to UG position claim that after puberty, if a parameter setting is not present in the L1, learners will not be able to acquire it even if it is present in the L2 (Bley-Vroman, 1989; Johnson & Newport, 1989). In other words, parameter resetting is not possible, as Bley-Vroman (1989) and Johnson and Newport (1989) concluded, as summarized below.

Bley-Vroman (1989) proposed the Fundamental Difference Hypothesis which posits that the observed differences between child and adult SLA are attributed to cognitive differences related to brain maturation and the consequent unavailability of UG. The adult already has an L1
when s/he is learning an L2; therefore, s/he has a grammar system in place at the outset of SLA. Moreover, due to her/his mature cognitive state, the adult uses problem solving strategies such as analogy and hypothesis testing in order to acquire the L2. Therefore, for adults, knowledge of a previous language as well as cognitive abilities “compensate for the loss in adults of the child’s knowledge of Universal Grammar” (Bley-Vroman, 1989, p. 54). Bley-Vroman concludes that adult L2 learners cannot achieve nativelikeness in the L2. However, I consider that even if L2 learners do not attain nativelikeness, this does not mean that they cannot reset their L1 parameters or that their interlanguage (IL) is not constrained by UG. In what follows, I summarize arguments against the premises of the Fundamental Difference Hypothesis.

Bruhn de Garavito (1999) argues against the view that adult learners use problem solving strategies. If L2 learners use a problem solving strategy such as pattern learning of surface structures then they will not be able to differentiate among forms that have identical surface structure but differ in function. Bruhn de Garavito investigated the acquisition of L2 Spanish reflexives, passives and impersonal constructions by English learners, constructions which all have the same surface structure $se\ V\ NP$. She concluded that learners were able to differentiate among these structures. Contrary to Bley-Vroman’s view, if learners used pattern learning, they would not have been able to differentiate these constructions. Bruhn de Garavito’s (1999) research is further detailed in Chapter 4.

Similar to Bley-Vroman, Johnson and Newport (1989) align with the No Access to UG position. They researched whether L2 acquisition is influenced by maturational factors. Participants were 46 adult Chinese or Korean$^{19}$ native speakers who had lived in the United States for a minimum of three consecutive years and whose age of arrival to the United States

$^{19}$ The author did not provide information about the proportion on Korean and Chinese participants in the study.
ranged between 3 and 39 years old. Half of these participants arrived to the US before age 15 ("early arrivals," n = 23) and half after age 17 ("late arrivals," n = 23), and their average years of residency in the United States was 9.8 years. Participants were given an oral grammaticality judgment test in their L2, English. The test assessed participants’ knowledge of English morphological and syntactic features such as third person singular, past tense, plural, present progressive, among other English rules. Johnson and Newport found that there is a strong, statistically significant relationship between the age of arrival and acquisition of the L2 features tested. Participants who arrived to the US before 15 years old were able to distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical sentences, scoring higher than those participants who arrived after this age. Therefore, Johnson and Newport (1989) concluded that there is a critical period for L2 acquisition.

Johnson and Newport (1989) made a further division between these adult participants to compare those who arrived to the US before and after age 7. They found that adult participants who arrived before age 7 attained both syntactic and morphological native-like proficiency in the L2 while there was a decline in proficiency for those adults who arrived to the US after the age of 7. Therefore, Johnson and Newport (1989) concluded that, instead of a critical period, the ability to acquire an L2 gradually declines from age seven until adulthood; given that the participants who came as children successfully acquired the L2, contrary to those who came as adults who could not attain a native or near-native level in an L2 due to maturational

\[20\text{All the features that were tested are as follows: determiners, plural, subcategorization, past tense, pronominalization, past participle, auxiliary, third person singular, WH-questions, yes/no questions, word order and gerund.}\]
If adults had access to UG, they should have been able to acquire an L2 like children do. However, Johnson and Newport claimed that their results suggested otherwise.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to take into account that, in Johnson and Newport’s (1989) research, some of the older participants successfully acquired certain aspects of L2 English. Johnson and Newport explained that some rules appeared to be more difficult (determiners and plurals) to acquire than other ones (word order and present progressive). Nonetheless, some older learners successfully acquired certain L2 grammatical aspects. Many of the Chinese and Korean participants (39 out of 43) were able to provide correct grammaticality judgments for the present progressive, past tense and word order in L2 English even though these L2 rules differ from those of their L1s. These post-pubescent learners were mainly exposed to naturalistic input, providing positive evidence for possible sentences but not impossible ones. Thus, if there was no access to UG, these learners would not have been able to reset their L1 parameters and give the correct grammatical judgments for these L2 parameters.

### Partial Access

Within the partial access view, some parts of UG are no longer available and the L2 system is accessible only through the L1, that is, if the parameters of the L2 are different from the parameters of the L1, learners will need to use problem solving strategies rather than UG to acquire them. According to the hypothesis of partial access to UG, after the sensitive/critical period has passed, even though there is no parameter resetting, the IL is still sensitive to UG principles.

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21 However, it is necessary to point out that researchers such as Birdsong (1992) and White and Genesee (1996) have argued against this conclusion.
Hawkins and Chan (1997) proposed the Failed Functional Features Hypothesis which posits that L2 learners do not have access to the features of the complementizer, inflection/tense, and determiner phrases (i.e., functional categories)\(^{22}\) of the L2. They argued that features of the functional categories cannot be reset after the critical/sensitive period has passed. In their study, these researchers investigated how Chinese and French L2 learners acquired relative clauses in English. The participants were 147 adult Chinese and 113 French learners of L2 English living in Hong Kong, a control group of 32 native English speakers was included as well. Participants’ ages ranged from 12 to 21 years. L2 proficiency levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced) were similar between groups, and were determined by the results of the Oxford Placement test given to participants prior to the study. All participants had been exposed to English for a minimum of six years in a classroom setting but some of the Chinese participants had started learning English as early as age six. Participants were given a grammaticality judgment test for which they rated sentences in four categories: A = definitely correct, B = probably correct, C = probably incorrect and D = definitely incorrect. They were also asked to correct the sentences they rated as C and D. On the one hand, given that French and English are similar with regard to relative clauses, the authors hypothesized that French speakers would not have problems acquiring relative clauses in English since these parameters are also present in their L1. On the other hand, since relative clauses in Chinese and English are different, they hypothesized that Chinese speakers would not be able to reset their L1 parameters for relative clauses. This difference in language parameter is briefly explained below.

\(^{22}\) Functional categories are the base for the grammatical structure of the sentence (i.e., the frame of the sentence). These categories are contrasted with lexical categories, which are the word elements of the language (i.e., the language dictionary). These lexical categories are: nouns, adverbs, adjectives, verbs and prepositions.
Following Chomsky’s (1986) analysis of English relative clauses, Hawkins and Chan (1997) explained that the head of the Complementizer Phrase (CP) can be overt or null in English. In example (2), the word *who* moves to the specifier of CP leaving a trace *t* in its original position. In sentence (3), the relative clause is introduced by either *that* or a null element sitting in the head of CP. These sentences are illustrated in Figures 3 and 4 respectively.

Hence, the functional category of CP in English has a [±wh] feature: a [+wh] feature is when the wh-word sits in the specifier position of CP while the head does not have an overt element. A [-wh] feature is when the word *that* or the null element is in the head of CP.

\[(3)\] the girl \[\text{[CP who e [I like t]]} \] is here

\[(4)\] the girl \[\text{[CP OP that e [I like t]]} \] is here \hspace{1cm} \text{(Hawkins & Chan, 1997, p. 190)}

\[\text{CP}\]
\[\text{\hspace{1cm} who \hspace{1cm} C}\]
\[\text{\hspace{1cm} C}\]

*Figure 1.* WH-word in the specifier of CP.

\[\text{CP}\]
\[\text{\hspace{1cm} C}\]
\[\text{\hspace{1cm} C}\]
\[\text{\hspace{1cm} that / } \emptyset\]

*Figure 2.* That and null element in the head of CP.
Similar to English, French follows this same pattern for relative clauses. In contrast, Chinese differs from English in that its CP head has an obligatory element *de* as illustrated in (5) below.

\[(5) \quad [[\text{Wo xihuan} \ de] \ neige nuhai] \]
\[\quad \begin{array}{c}
I & \text{like} & C & \text{the girl} \\
\end{array}
\]
\[\quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{‘The girl who I like’} \quad \text{(Hawkins & Chan, 1997, p. 192)}
\end{array}
\]

Therefore, while the functional category of CP in English and French has a \([-\text{wh}]\) feature, Chinese CPs lack this feature.

Statistically significant results showed that Chinese speakers in the beginner level of English were not able to accurately identify the grammaticality of the sentences than the other groups, showing that they could not reset their L1 parameters. Hawkins and Chan stated that the participants’ performance improved with their level of proficiency since advanced Chinese participants did better than beginner ones when identifying the grammaticality of relative clauses. However, in general, the Chinese speakers scored lower than the French speaker group. The authors explained that the Chinese speakers learning L2 English have a mental representation of [wh-word...pronominal *pro*] which is different from the English representation [wh-word...*t*], however, the former representation is possible within UG parameters. These representations are illustrated respectively in the sentences below:

\[(6) \quad \text{The girl } [\text{CP who, I like pro}] \text{ is here} \]
\[(7) \quad \text{The girl } [\text{CP that, I like t}] \text{ is here} \quad \text{(Hawkins & Chan, 1997, p. 217)} \]
Contrary to English native speakers in (7) where the representation shows *that* binding a trace variable *t*, the Chinese speakers were still using their L1 features in English relative clause constructions since *who* was binding a *pro* as seen in (6). Hawkins and Chan (1997) concluded that age is a big factor for acquisition for the functional categories in an L2; in this case, Chinese learners of English still used Chinese feature specifications for English relative clauses because they had passed the critical period.

Hawkins and Chan’s research is important because it shows that learners’ IL is still constrained by UG, even though it is not the same as the L2. This shows that out of the UG possibilities, learners do not produce odd grammars that do not have characteristics of natural languages. A limitation of their analysis is that it is somewhat difficult to attest that Chinese learners have a wh-word binding a pronominal *pro* because the pro does not have overt phonological representation, making it impossible to know that the pro is in fact present in these learners’ grammar representations. This, it is possible also to suggest that instead of a *pro*, the wh-word binds a *t* trace in Chinese, since both of them are inaudible elements in these constructions. If this is the case, then it is possible that the Chinese speakers reset their L1 parameters to have a CP with a [+wh] feature. Another limitation of Hawkins and Chan’s study is that the authors claim that Chinese speakers did not have access to UG, which appears to be misleading. The fact that advanced Chinese learners performed better than the beginner ones shows that they were able to reset their L1 parameters. Therefore, this confirms that L2 acquisition is a gradual process; this does not mean that L2 learners do not have access to UG.
Full Access

According to the full access hypothesis, UG is available for L2 acquisition at any age (Duffield & White 1999; White 2003). White (2003) claimed that L2 learners show L2 knowledge that they have not been taught explicitly which means that their grammars must be constrained by UG. Learners are able to reset their L1 parameters to those of the L2 and their resulting IL grammar is constrained by UG; thus, UG is available to learners acquiring an L2 as it was when they were acquiring an L1. Likewise, Strozer (1991) claims that L2 learners know things about the L2 that go beyond the input to which they have been exposed and Braidi (1999) also claimed that L2 learners arrive at ILs constrained by UG. Studies that support this view include Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) and Flynn (1996). These studies are summarized below.

Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) proposed the Full Transfer / Full Access (FT/FA) Hypothesis. FT means that the initial state of the IL is the final state of the L1, and FA refers to the fact that IL restructures thanks to L2 input and it is constrained by options within UG. Given that the beginning of the L1 and L2 are different; their end points differ as well. For this reason, it is necessary to analyze the IL not in comparison to the L2 but as a language system of its own. Furthermore, Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) stated that it is inappropriate to compare the IL to the L2 because, given that these two systems have different initial and final points, there is no guarantee that the IL will converge on the L2 grammar. However, regardless of the differences between the IL and the L2, Schwartz and Sprouse claimed that there is no reason to assume that the cognitive processes present in L1 acquisition are not present during L2 acquisition. Taking into account that the IL is a system of its own, Schwartz and Sprouse (1996)

Selinker (1972) proposed to analyze L2 learner errors as typifying developmental stages towards native-like competence in the L2. Selinker proposed that a learners’ IL has its own rules, is systematic, and has been shown to include characteristics which do not necessarily follow L1 or L2, but which are UG constrained.
explained that we cannot expect L2 learners to produce grammatical sentences during the initial stages of acquisition. Given that L2 learners come with different L1s, they all are going to have different ILs. In addition, ILs are constantly restructuring; thus, learners will indeed differ in their acquisition paths. Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) reanalyzed data from other studies (White, 1990, 1991, 1992a, 1992b; Trahey & White, 1993) to argue against the Vainikka and Young-Scholten’s (1994, 1996) Minimal trees hypothesis and Eubank’s (1993/1994) Weak Transfer Hypothesis.24 Taking into account this reanalysis, Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) concluded that the variation among learners’ ILs is due to their different L1s and not because of the input since the latter always remains constant (i.e., constant meaning that learners are mainly exposed to positive input.)

Another analysis that supports the full access hypothesis is Flynn (1996) who maintained that L2 learners successfully acquire L2 parameters; however, when the L1 and L2 differ in parameters, it can delay the acquisition process. Flynn considered it problematic that UG can explain the acquisition of the L1 but not of the L2, because if UG cannot explain L2, then it provides only an incomplete explanation of language acquisition. Flynn claimed that the same language faculty available for L1 must also be available for L2.

Flynn (1996) summarized several studies and concluded that there is different evidence supporting the full access hypothesis. On the one hand, L2 learners are able to acquire parameters that are not instantiated in their L1s. Alluding to her own previous findings (1987), Flynn (1996) claimed that Japanese L2 learners of English switched their L1 parameters from head final to the L2 English parameter of head initial (this type of structure was illustrated in Figures 3 and 4 in above). On the other hand, L2 learners were able to correctly identify different parameters that are not instantiated in their L1s. Alluding to her own previous findings (1987), Flynn (1996) claimed that Japanese L2 learners of English switched their L1 parameters from head final to the L2 English parameter of head initial (this type of structure was illustrated in Figures 3 and 4 in above). On the other hand, L2 leaners were able to correctly identify different

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24 I redirect the reader to the original article for a more in depth discussion on their reanalysis.
degrees of grammatical acceptability for specific structures in the L2. For example, according to the findings of Martohardjono’s (1993) study of Chinese speakers of L2 English learning wh-questions in relative clauses, Chinese speakers correctly identified the grammaticality of wh-question extraction from adjunct and relative clauses in L2 English.\(^\text{25}\) Thus, Flynn (1996) claimed that if UG was not accessible, then these Chinese speakers would not have been able to distinguish grammaticality of these L2 English structures because this knowledge could not have come from their L1 but from UG.

In her own research, Flynn (1996) investigated the acquisition of functional categories by Japanese L2 learners of English. Thirty-three children (6-10 years of age) and 18 adults\(^\text{26}\) (graduate students) enrolled in a low-intermediate ESL class in a university in the United States were evaluated using an elicited imitation test. The functional categories tested were Inflectional/Tense Phrase (IP) and Complementizer Phrase (CP). Some examples of the sentences used for these categories are shown below:

(9) IP: The little girl can see a tiny flower in the picture

(10) CP: Which young girl erases the tiny picture in the notebook?  

(Flynn, 1996, p. 146)

\(^{25}\) Extraction of a wh-question out of a relative clause or an adjunct/adverbial clause is not possible in English as seen in (ii) and (iv) respectively:

(i) Mary left the house after Tom screamed at her  
(ii) *Who did Mary leave the house after t screamed at her?  

(Flynn, 1996, p. 139)

(iii) John broke the window that Terry had repaired  
(iv) *Who did John break the window that t had repaired?  

(Flynn, 1996, p. 138)

Sentences (i) and (iii) show the initial structures that had the wh-question extracted. Sentences (ii) and (iv) illustrate that this kind of extraction is ungrammatical in English.

\(^{26}\) The authors do not provide information regarding the age of this group.
The sentence in (9) tests the functional category of IP since the modal *can* sits in the head of IP and (10) tests CP since the wh-question *which young girl* moves to the specifier of CP. Participants heard 12 sentences testing IP structures and 10 sentences testing CP structures.27

The results showed that the English learners were able to produce the sentences using the functional categories tested. However, there was a difference between IP and CP categories in that IP appeared to be easier than CP. Flynn (1996) argued that this contrast can be explained in terms of movement, since movement to IP is shorter than movement to CP. Thus, this does not mean that L2 learners lack knowledge of the functional categories, but rather that differential performance was a matter of distance between the phrase moved and the landing site. Flynn concluded that learners were able to analyze the input and to produce the correct functional categories, showing that even at an early stage of L2 acquisition L2 learners are responsive to the parameters of the L2. Therefore, children and adults are equally constrained by UG when acquiring an L2.

The strength of Flynn’s research is that it shows that L1 parameters do not seem to block the acquisition of an L2. It provides evidence that L2 acquisition is constrained by UG. Some drawbacks of Flynn’s research are that there is no information regarding the participants and their language background including how long they have received formal English instruction and for how long they had been in the US. Also, there was no control group or information about the test procedure. In addition, there are certain questions that arise when using an elicitation task. Learners had to repeat exactly the same words; however, if there was an unknown word, were they allowed to replace it by another one close in meaning? Or were they allowed to give a

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27 Flynn (1996) does not specify if the learners heard one sentence at time, or if they heard a couple of sentences that tested the same function. Also, it is not clear if the participants had to reconstruct the sentences orally or write them down.
sentence close in meaning? If they correctly repeated the sentence once, would this have shown that they had this structure in their IL? If they incorrectly repeated the sentence, maybe having one more chance to repeat it, they would have actually shown that they were looking for possible correct structures in their IL. Unfortunately, none of these points was specified in Flynn’s article.

In conclusion, taking into account these three UG accessibility positions, the present research aligns with the full access hypothesis regarding the acquisition of the Spanish clitic *se*. Students’ performance in an L2 does not necessarily give the full picture of the mental representations or the stage of their acquisition process. The underlying assumption is that UG is available for acquiring an L2 allowing L2 learners to reset their L1 parameters. The basic assumption for the present study is that L2 learners, with greater exposure to Spanish, have access to rich input which gives information about the language within an UG principled way triggering the resetting of parameters to the appropriate L2 values. However, it is necessary to take into account that the acquisition of the L2 would not be like that of a native speaker of the L2 since the IL has its own rules. Nevertheless, I agree with Ervin-Tripp’s (1978) claim that “if the human brain is specially competent to deal with language learning, there is no reason to suppose this ability would confine itself to the first language” (p. 193), supporting the view that UG is fully accessible in L2 acquisition. The present research relies on UG to look for ways to explain learners’ linguistic competence and to help determine whether their ILs draw from UG options.

This present research aims to contribute to our understanding of the second language acquisition and how L2 learners build syntactic mental representations. UG offers a principled way to look at language as a system. However, it is necessary to point out that, given that L1
and IL grammars are both systems allowed by UG. We cannot conclude that if the IL differs from the L1 grammar then there is no access to UG. As White (2003) claimed, it is not necessary to show that the learner’s IL and the native speakers’ grammar are exactly alike in order to demonstrate that the IL representation is constrained by UG. By using UG as the framework, this research investigates the acquisition of the clitic se by L1 English learners of L2 Spanish.

The following chapter reviews previous SLA research that has been carried out regarding the acquisition of the clitic se as well as other clitics. English and Spanish differ in the presence of the clitic: Spanish has clitics pronouns while English does not.\(^28\) Spanish has the clitic se in middle voice, passive voice and impersonal constructions. Middle voice can be accomplished in Spanish only through the presence of the clitic se. In contrast, the passive voice has both a periphrastic form and a se form and the impersonal function is expressed with words such as uno and with a se constructions (see Chapter 2). Given that English does not have clitics with these functions that can mirror those of Spanish, the clitic se is a good way to test if English L2 learners of Spanish can indeed reset their L1 parameters to those of Spanish L2.

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\(^{28}\) In English certain forms that are phonologically reduced are also called clitics. Examples (i) through (iii) show some of these forms:

(i) \(\text{She is crazy} \rightarrow \text{She’s crazy}\)
(ii) \(\text{I have been working a lot} \rightarrow \text{I’ve been working a lot}\)
(iii) \(\text{I do not like those shoes} \rightarrow \text{I don’t like those shoes}\)

This phonological reduction of the verb to be, the auxiliary verb to have and the negation not into n’t (among other forms) is considered a form of cliticization because these forms cannot stand alone; they need a host phrase. This type of cliticization is not addressed in this investigation.
CHAPTER 4
SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND SE

Literature Review

Research on Object Clitics

This section summarizes previous research that has been done from a UG theoretical perspective regarding the acquisition of clitics by L2 learners of different L1 backgrounds. Taking into account that little research has investigated the acquisition of the clitic *se*, some research done on other clitics (Duffield & White, 1999; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993) will show to be relevant for this present line of investigation. In addition, this chapter presents research done specifically on the clitic *se* (Bayona, 2005; Bruhn de Garavito, 1999; Tremblay, 2006); however, this research has used different methodologies and yielded different results about the acquisition of this clitic. These studies are further detailed below.

Many SLA studies have focused on reflexives and object clitics (Santoro, 2007; Solan, 1987; Baaw et al., 2006), but little research has been done in SLA regarding the acquisition of the different functions and syntax of *se* by L1 English speakers learning Spanish. Given this paucity of research, following is a summary of other studies that are related to this research, in that they investigated the acquisition of clitics present in the L2 but not in the L1. Duffield and White (1996) looked at the acquisition by native speakers of English and French of object clitics in Spanish L2. English does not have clitics but French does; however. The clitics in French behave differently than clitics in Spanish. In Spanish as well as in French, in finite sentences the clitic appears before the conjugated verb, as in (1); in non-finite sentences, in Spanish the clitic is
suffixed to the infinitive verb or it precedes the verbal unit (2) while in French it precedes the infinitive verb as in (3); and with modal verbs, in Spanish the clitic precedes the modal verb or follows the verb (2), while in French the clitic is between the modal and the verb, as in (3):

(1)    Yo la                     veo          (Spanish)
      Je   la                      vois       (French)
    OBJ-3SG.FEM  see-1SG.PRES
“I see her”

(2)    Puedo         verla             / la     puedo          ver
      can-1SG.PRES see-INF-OBJ-3SG.FEM / OBJ-3SG.FEM can-1SG.PRES see-INF
“I can see her”

(3)    Je peux          la                   voir          (French)
      I   can-1SG.PRES OBJ-3SG.FEM see.INF
“I can see her”

Duffield and White investigated the acquisition of the object clitics because they have different parametric properties, i.e., the syntactic position of the clitic within a sentence is different in both Spanish and French, as shown in the examples above.

The participants were 28 English and 27 French native speakers who were learning Spanish in Canada; 15 Spanish native speakers served as a control group. Some participants had learned Spanish in high school and some had learned it in college, and Spanish was their third language since they already knew French and English. Their ages ranged between 18 and 22 years. Participants were divided into intermediate and advanced levels on the basis of proficiency test results. The data was gathered through grammaticality judgments and sentence matching. White (1989a) explained that a grammaticality judgment task shows if learners are able to discriminate between possible and impossible forms in an L2. Duffield and White (1999)
claimed that a sentence matching task would allow them to tap learners’ knowledge of grammaticality without recurring to grammaticality judgments. During the sentence matching task (which was timed), the participants compared pairs of sentences and decided if they were identical or not. The grammaticality judgments task consisted of 224 pairs of items combining grammatical and ungrammatical sentences. These sentences represented seven conditions, which are summarized in Table 1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>clitic + v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>clitic + aux + v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>clitic + aux + v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>clitic + rest v + inf v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>rest v + inf v + clitic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>clitic + caus v + inf v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>caus v + inf v + clitic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conditions on Clitic Placement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Juan la encuentra (*la) completamente estupida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Mario los ha (*los) asesinado dentro de un auto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Mario los ha asesinado (*los) dentro de un auto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Martha las quiere (*las) comprar con cheque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Martha quiere (*las) comprar las con cheque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>El profesor los hace (*los) escribir mucho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>El profesor los hace escribir (*los) mucho</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Adapted from Duffield and White, 1999, p. 140. Abbreviations: aux = auxiliary, caus = causative, inf = infinitive, rest = restructuring, and v = verb.*

Duffield and White (1999) found that learners’ grammaticality judgments differed from those of native speakers. In addition, conditions A-C were less problematic for learners than conditions E-H in both tasks. For conditions E-H, Duffield and White explained that learners’ IL
do not allow clitic climbing since they would prefer the clitic attached to the lower verb; thus, the clitic in lower position must be grammatical at some underlying level in their IL. Overall, learners were able to distinguish grammatical and ungrammatical sentences in L2 Spanish. In their grammaticality judgments, learners were able to identify the ungrammatical sentences and also to correct them accordingly to L2 Spanish parameters. Given these results, Duffield and White concluded that L2 Spanish learners successfully acquired L2 clitics regardless of their L1 parameter. Their results support the view that L2 learners have full access to UG.

Duffield and White (1999) research sheds some light on the possible position that L2 learners have for clitics (underlyingly attached to lower verbs in restructuring and causative structures, i.e., conditions E-H). However, there are two limitations related to the research method. First, it is unclear how the sentence matching task was administered: were the same two sentences used for participants to spot the difference?; or were there two different sentences related in meaning that needed to be matched? Also, Spanish was the participants’ third language; they already knew French, which is a language that already has clitics. It is thus unclear how much of the results could be explained by French language interference.

VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) investigated the acquisition of object clitics in L2 Spanish by English native speakers. The purpose of this study was to check if Processing Instruction (PI) was more effective than traditional explicit instruction (TI) in helping learners acquire these clitics. As will be further detailed in Chapter 5, the focus of PI is to tap into how learners process L2 input and to make them aware of these processes in order to enhance intake. The participants were students in three randomly-selected second-year Spanish classes.

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29 Corder (1967) makes a distinction between input and intake. Input is the amount of language to which learners are exposed in a naturalistic or academic environment. Intake is the subset of input that is actually processed in an elaborated way such that it is available for internalization.
One class was assigned to the TI group, the second to the PI group, and the third class received no instruction (NI) on this subject. The NI and PI groups had 17 participants each and the TI group had 15 participants. Participants received a pre-test, treatment and three post-tests. The treatment for the TI group consisted of explicit explanations, a paradigmatic chart and descriptions regarding the position and form of the direct object pronoun as well as practice that focused on production (i.e., output). The PI group received explanations on the difference between subjects, objects, and object pronouns and on points to keep in mind about the position of object pronouns. They also received structured input activities (see Chapter 5), completing listening and reading activities that focused on input, and they were required to respond by choosing between “agree” and “disagree.” This group did not do any kind of production activity during the treatment. All the pre-tests and post-tests included interpretation and production tasks.

For the interpretation tests, participants were shown sentences like those in (4) and (5):

(4) Al chico lo saluda la chica
to.the boy-OBJ him-OBJ.CLITIC greet-3.SG.PRES the girl-SUBJ
‘The girl greets the boy’

(5) Lo saluda la chica
him-OBJ.CLITIC greet-3.SG.PRES the girl-SUBJ
‘The girl greets him’

(VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993, p. 49)

There were five sentences in the form of (4) which is Object Noun-Object Clitic-Verb-Subject, five in the form of (5) Object Clitic-Verb-Subject and another five distractor sentences in the form of Subject-Verb-Object. Participants were shown two pictures per sentence and they were
required to match the sentence with the correct picture. The production tasks included five sentences similar to (6):

(6) El chico piensa en la chica y entonces ______________
The boy think.3SG.PRES about the girl and then
‘The boy is thinking about the girl and then ______________’
(VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993, p. 49)

Each sentence was accompanied by a picture illustrating the content of the sentence. The authors expected the pictures to lead participants to complete the sentence using an object clitic.

The results for the interpretation post-tests showed that the PI group significantly outperformed the other groups. For the production tasks, the PI and the TI groups’ performances were not significantly different from each other, but they both outperformed the NI group. VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) explained that PI helped the developing system of these learners because although the PI group did not complete any production activities during treatment, PI helped not only production but also modified the way learners processed L2 input affecting their IL and what they can access for production. This is in contrast with TI, which helped participants’ production but not their interpretation. VanPatten and Cadierno concluded that instruction is better when focused on how learners perceive and process input.

VanPatten and Cadierno’s (1993) study showed that learners can acquire an L2 when focusing on how they process information. One strength of their study is the use of two additional groups, the TI and the NI, which allowed the researchers to test if in fact PI was effective compared to other teaching methods. This study demonstrates that PI also helps to improve production even though learners complete no production tasks in PI. The drawback of this article is the lack of information provided on the treatment activities. There is no
explanation on how much time the activities took, if students had a specific time to do the
activities, if after giving them the answers participants had the opportunity to correct their
incorrect answers or if they were allowed to review the explicit information sheet in order to
understand why their incorrect answers were incorrect. If students did not have the opportunity
to check their answers, how did they know what their mistakes were? In the present research,
the PI activities were not timed; however, participants were not allowed to move to the next
activity until everybody was done with the activity at hand. This was done in order to avoid the
possible scenario that learners who had not finished the activity would hear the correct answers
provided to the learners who had finished early. This issue is further developed in the
methodology chapter.

Even though these studies described above focused on the acquisition of object clitics,
they both show that learners are able to acquire a morpheme and word order not present in their
L1. In addition, VanPatten and Cadierno’s (1993) study is the pioneering study on Processing
Instruction which is the methodology used in the present research. These studies are also
relevant for the present research because it focuses on a morpheme not present in participants’
L1: the clitic se. As was shown in depth in Chapter 2, the constructions with se have different
structures and underlying characteristics depending on their function. The clitic se is present in
reflexive, change of state, reciprocal, matization, middle voice, passive voice and impersonal
constructions. The focus of this research is on acquisition of the last three of these functions by
L1 English Spanish learners. When learners encounter these constructions, it is difficult to
differentiate among them because they all have se as well as the same surface structure (NP se V
or se V NP). Little research has been done on the L2 acquisition of impersonal, middle and
passive voice constructions, which is partly what motivated me to focus on these structures.
These structures are interesting to analyze from an L2 acquisition because Spanish L2 learners are exposed to these structures in the input, but they are not formally taught the intricacies of the differences among them. Therefore, they are a good way to test the accessibility of UG. Studies such as Bayona (2005), Bruhn de Garavito (1999), and Temblay (2006) are among the few studies that have focused on the acquisition of these constructions, and each of them arrived at a different conclusion about the accessibility of UG. These studies are summarized below.

**SLA Research on Se**

Bayona (2005) looked at the acquisition of the clitic se in Spanish middle voice by English learners of L2 Spanish. She tested whether Spanish L2 learners were able to differentiate between middle and reflexive constructions and between middle and [+perfective] aspect constructions. Perfective aspect indicates the structure of the verb with relation to time; i.e., whether the verb has an end point [+perfective] or not [-perfective]. Bayona explained that middle constructions are [-perfective] because they refer to inherent characteristics of the noun, which does not imply an end point. Bayona proposed that looking at the [-perfective] aspect of the middle voice is a good example of poverty of the stimulus because this feature is neither formally taught nor transparent in meaning in natural contexts. Bayona, assuming that learners do not have access to UG, hypothesized that learners would not be able to reset their L1 parameter related to middle voice or to recognize the syntactic and semantic environments for middle voice. The prediction of failure to reset the L1 parameter was made on the grounds that English lacks a morpheme to mark middle voice while Spanish uses se.
Participants in Bayona (2005) were 15 adult L2 Spanish learners whose L1 was mainly English and 15 Spanish native speakers were the control group. The L2 learners had been exposed to Spanish in a classroom setting (five hours/week) for two academic years. Half of the participants were advanced and half were high-intermediate. The participants took a grammaticality judgment test and a truth value judgment test. The grammaticality judgment task targeted the syntactic placement of the clitic *se* while the truth value judgment task targeted the semantics of this clitic since in a context-dependent task (described below). The grammaticality judgment test consisted of single sentences that learners rated from -2 to +2 on an acceptability scale. These sentences tested the specificity of the NP, the presence of *se* in middle constructions and *se* with stative verbs, as seen in the examples below:

(7) *Algún condimento se digiere bien* (middle)  
Some spice *se* digest-3.SG.PRES well  
‘Some spice digests well’

(8) Yo compro blusas de seda porque *se* lavan fácilmente  
I buy.1SG.PRES blouses of silk because *se* wash.3PL.PRES easily  
‘I buy blouses of silk because they wash easily’

(9) María posee una finca (stative)  
Mary have.3SG.PRES a farm  
‘Mary owns a farm’

(10) *El dinero quiere frecuentemente* (stative)  
The money want.3SG.PRES frequently  
‘The money is wanted frequently’  
(Bayona, 2005, p. 5)

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Bayona (2005) specified that there were 15 participants: 12 English native speakers, one Korean, one Russian and one French.
In example (7), the NP has the requirement of being specific in the middle voice construction. Thus, this sentence is ungrammatical because the quantifier algún ‘some’ is unspecified. In sentence (8), the NP blusas de seda ‘silk blouses’ represents a specific group of blouses of a particular type are affected by the action of the verb lavar ‘wash’. With certain stative verbs, if the se is not present the sentence is grammatical as in (9) and in some cases if it is not present then it will make the sentence ungrammatical as in (10).

The truth value judgment test consisted of sentences accompanied by a paragraph that provided context which forced the middle voice interpretation. The participants had to choose between two grammatical sentences (a middle and a non-middle); they needed to choose which one was more appropriate, taking into account the paragraph given.

(11) Ana se dio cuenta de que su saco estaba mojado y lo colgó a la sombra porque:
    ‘Ana realized her jacket was wet and she hanged it in the shadow because’:
    i. La lana se seca a la sombra. (Expected answer [-perfective])
       ‘Wool has to be dried in the shade’
    ii. ‘La lana se secó a la sombra’ (Unexpected answer [+perfective])
       ‘The wool got dried in the shade’ (Bayona, 2005, p. 7)

Example (11) illustrates that the expected answer is (i) [-perfective] because one of the characteristics of wool is its delicate material that needs to dry in the shade contrary to answer (ii) [+perfective] which shows the end of the drying action.

The results for the grammaticality judgment task showed that advanced learners and Spanish native speakers preferred the middle voice sentences (with the clitic se) while intermediate learners chose both sentence types (middle and non-middle). Regarding the acceptance of stative verbs, both native speakers and L2 learners accepted stative sentences in general and strongly rejected stative sentences without the clitic se. Bayona explained that
learners considered middle voice as stative since they are durative in nature. Learners also preferred middle voice sentences with a specific NP. The results of the truth value judgment task showed that learners were not able to differentiate the contexts accurately in order to choose between non-middle and middle contexts. For middle context vs. [+perfective] contexts, learners preferred the latter because they were easier to recognize than the middle voice context.

Bayona (2005) concluded that both sets of tasks yielded contradicting answers regarding UG access. On the one hand, she claimed that the results of the grammaticality judgments task support the UG full access hypothesis because learners were able to recognize the syntactic characteristics of the middle voice constructions. In addition, this task showed that L2 acquisition was developmental since native speakers and advanced learners were similar in their answers about middle voice, while the intermediate learners had a higher degree of variability. On the other hand, Bayona (2005) claimed that the results of the truth value task support the no access to UG hypothesis because it showed that semantics was more difficult to acquire. Participants were not able to reset their L1 parameters, showing that they had problems processing the middle voice constructions because their answers varied greatly when distinguishing middle voice constructions from reflexive or [+perfective] constructions. Bayona (2005) claimed that learners had difficulty making the correct form-meaning connection revealing a mismatch between the syntactic and the semantic knowledge of this clitic.

Bayona’s study is important because it shows that the syntax and the semantics of language are not necessarily acquired at the same time. Bayona’s results indicated that semantics had a higher degree of difficulty than syntax. The semantically-oriented task require knowledge and understanding of the pragmatic context to be able to choose between one sentence or the other one, while the syntax-oriented task involved movement and checking of
features. One drawback regarding Bayona’s conclusion is that it claims that there is no access to UG since learners were unable to differentiate between middles and non-middle contexts. First, given that learners considered middle sentences to be [-perfective], it can be predicted that they are going to have problems with the truth value task because it asked them to choose middle sentences and [+perfective] sentences in contexts where both sentences are closely related in meaning and are syntactically the same. A closer look at Bayona’s study reveals that the performance of Spanish native speakers was not significantly different from the Spanish L2 learners performance since they were not able to categorically identify the difference between the middle and [+perfective] choices, either. This illustrates that if native speakers had difficulty with the semantic difference in these contexts, then this difficulty is even higher for the L2 learners who did not have the L2 pragmatic background to differentiate between these semantic contexts. Second, no access to UG argues that if a feature is not present in the L1, then that feature will not be acquired even if it is present in the L2. However, perfective aspect is a verbal feature present in English as well as in Spanish. Therefore, the difficulty that learners had with this task can be explained by the fact that it was highly context-dependent in nature (which was difficult for both native speakers and L2 learners) and not due to the lack of parameter resetting since this feature is already present in their L1. Another drawback is the small number of participants. Of the 15 participants, only 12 were English native speakers and three were from other language backgrounds; therefore, a generalization cannot be made that includes these three participants. In addition, with only 12 participants, there is not enough data to arrive at a more definitive conclusion and generalization regarding L2 acquisition.
Bruhn de Garavito (1999) investigated the L2 acquisition of Spanish impersonal, passive and inchoative \(^{31}\) structures. These three structures have the same surface form: \(se\ NP\ VP\); their difference lies in the behavior of the NP as follows: a) in passives the NP agrees with the verb and has subject-like characteristics, as in example (12); b) in impersonals the NP is an object which does not agree with the verb, as in example (13); and c) in inchoatives the NP agrees with the verb and behaves like a subject, as in example (14).

(12) Ayer se vendieron los helados (passive)
yesterday se sell-3PL.PAST the ice creams
‘Yesterday the ice creams were sold’

(13) Se vendió los helados (impersonal)
se sell.3SG.PAST the ice creams
‘The ice creams were sold’

(14) Los helados se derritieron (inchoative)
the ice creams se melt-3PL.PAST
‘The ice creams melted’

(Bruhn de Garavito, 1999, p. 253)

Bruhn de Garavito (1999) argued that verbal agreement with the NP is due to the strength of the head of the Agr(eement) O(bject) functional category in Spanish illustrated in Figure 1 below:

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\(^{31}\) Inchoative verbs express processes of beginning or becoming: to finish, to achieve, to become...
While in Spanish AgrOP is available, this functional category is not present in English and French. In the tree in Figure 1, the se for impersonals and passives is sitting at the head of AgrOP. AgrOP in passives is [+strong], triggering agreement between the NP and the verb, while in impersonals is AgrOP is [-strong]. For inchoative constructions, se is located in the Aspect Phrase (AspP), making AgrOP unnecessary. Therefore, impersonals, passives and inchoatives test UG accessibility because they involve resetting of agreement parameters between the verb and the NP. While the structures have the same surface structure, they differ in the behavior of their NPs and in the feature values of AgrOP; no natural input makes these characteristics transparent to the L2 learners. Bruhn de Garavito claimed that the successful L2 acquisition of these constructions demonstrates that parameters can be reset.

Bruhn de Garavito (1999) claimed that in order to test if Spanish L2 learners have access to UG it is necessary to look at their ultimate L2 attainment, because it is possible that the end state of learners’ IL closely relates to native speakers’ grammar, and this IL can be constrained
by UG. Therefore, looking at ultimate attainment in L2 learners can shed light on the resetting of parameters in functional categories in the L2. The participants in her study were 10 French and 10 English near-native speakers of Spanish and a control group of 11 Spanish native speakers. Participants had their first contact with Spanish when they took foreign language classes around age 16. The English speakers’ ages ranged from 30 to 62 years and participants had lived in a Spanish speaking country for between two months and 30 years. Three participants were living in Madrid and seven participants were living in Montreal at the time of the study. The French speakers’ ages ranged from 26 to 60 years old and they had lived in a Spanish speaking country for between two months and three years and they were living in Montreal during this study. The control group’s ages ranged from 18 to 45 years old and these participants were living in Montreal at the time of the study. The researcher followed the ACTFL OPI guidelines to interview the participants (for a period of 20 minutes to one hour and a half) in order to assess their Spanish language proficiency level.

Participants completed a grammaticality judgment task consisting of 50 grammatical and 40 ungrammatical sentences. Sentences tested agreement between the NP and the verb, the NP position (pre-verbal or post-verbal), whether or not the NP could be replaced by a pronoun, and whether or not the NP could be dropped. In order to make a clear distinction among passives, impersonals, and inchoatives, Bruhn de Garavito included prepositional phrases (PP) in the test sentences. For impersonal and passive sentences, purpose prepositional phrases were used, as in (15) and (16), for inchoative sentences, natural cause phrases were used, as in (17):

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32 The author does not provide any information regarding details of these classes or for how long these learners took them.
(15) Se construyó unos edificios para vender
‘Some buildings were built to sell’
(Bruhn de Garavito, 1999, p. 269)

(16) Unas casas se construyeron para vender
‘Some houses were built to sell’
(Bruhn de Garavito, 1999, p. 270)

(17) Se quemaron unos edificios en el incendio causado por el temblor
‘Some buildings burned in the fire caused by the earthquake’
(Bruhn de Garavito, 1999, p. 269)

The results suggested that learners were able to reset L1 English and French parameters to Spanish settings, because they accepted verbal agreement with passive and inchoative sentences but not with impersonal sentences. In UG terms, results were consistent with participants’ acceptance of movement of the NP to AgrOP (passives and impersonals) and AspP (inchoatives) to check the [±strong] features of these heads. Even though these sentence types have the same surface structure pattern se V NP, learners did not rely on this pattern; if this were the case, they would not have been able to correctly differentiate among the three structures. Bruhn de Garavito (1999) concluded that there was no difference between the performance of the near-native and the native speakers of Spanish. She claimed that her results support the full access to UG hypothesis because L2 learners were able to acquire the characteristics of these se constructions, showing that their grammars are constrained by UG.

One strength of this research is that Bruhn de Garavito used three functions that have identical surface patterns. Structures that are identical in their surface form are an excellent tool to test if L2 learners rely on pattern formation or if they can differentiate between these structures, which are not obvious from the input. Her analysis allowed testing whether L2
learners relied on pattern formation (since the constructions have the same surface structure) or if they provided the correct grammaticality judgments on these structures showing access to UG. Her results showed that both groups of L2 learners were able to reset their L1 parameters and did not rely on pattern formation since they treated the NPs in all three constructions differently (i.e., NPs could be replaced by a pronoun or dropped) and this difference is not clear from the input to which they have been exposed. Thus, the author claimed that learners’ knowledge did not come from the input but came from UG. A drawback of Bruhn de Garavito’s research is that learners took only a grammaticality judgment tests. Employing a wider variety of tasks may help to provide a more complete picture of how learners’ internal grammars are structured. Therefore, for the present study, in addition to grammaticality judgments, learners completed a range of tasks. Finally, Bruhn de Garavito focused only on passive sentences with post-verbal NP; even though she mentioned that passive voice also has the surface structure NP se V, she did not address this type of structure in her results. Therefore, her results shed only partial light on the passive sentences that Spanish L2 learners acquire. This is why passives with pre-verbal and post-verbal NPs were included in this dissertation research in an attempt to account for both positions.

Another study of the acquisition of the clitic se by L2 Spanish learners is a replication study of Bruhn de Garvito’s (1999) research undertaken by Tremblay (2006). Similar to Bruhn de Garavito’s study, Tremblay analyzed impersonal se and the passive se structures, but not the inchoatives. Participants were students at Ottawa University enrolled in third-year Spanish courses; thus, they were classified as advanced L2 learners. In order to account for the difference in instructional input that her participants received versus the naturalistic input in Bruhn de Garavito’s analysis, Tremblay reviewed the Spanish textbooks and consulted with the
teachers in order to verify that these L2 learners had not received any kind of formal training on these *se* constructions. There were 13 L1 English and 16 L1 French native speakers in two experimental groups, and 27 Spanish native speakers from Spain in a control group. The test consisted of a 64-item grammaticality judgment test with 20 grammatical, 28 ungrammatical and 16 distractor sentences. To complete the task, participants rated the grammaticality of each sentence on a 5-point scale. Similar to Bruhn de Garavito, Tremblay tested the overt agreement between the noun and the verb, the presence of the personal *a*, and the presence of PP in the sentence; however, in contrast to Bruhn de Garavito’s research, the PPs in this study did not express purpose (*para* ‘to / in order to’) but rather were an agentive PP introduced by the preposition *por* ‘by.’

Tremblay (2006) found that both experimental groups performed differently from the control group. Unlike Bruhn de Garavito’s results, in which L2 near-native learners correctly identified the grammaticality of the *se* structures, Tremblay’s L2 learners were not able to consistently distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical *se* sentences. One of their biggest difficulties was with personal *a* constructions, they accepted as grammatical the passive voice and impersonal sentences that had *a* + NP in post-verbal position, a construction which in a passive sentence is ungrammatical. Contrary to Spanish, neither English nor French marks the accusative case for animate NPs with this morpheme. Tremblay claimed that it is possible that the personal *a* does not have any function in the learners’ IL because they incorrectly identified passive and impersonals.

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33 Spanish marks a [+human] direct object with the preposition *a*. In example (i), the [+human] direct object *Juan* is preceded by the personal *a*. The sentence would be ungrammatical if the personal *a* were absent.

(i) Ana vio *(a) Juan
Ana see.3SG.PAST to Juan
‘Ana saw Juan’
In addition, results indicated the L1 French speakers outperformed L1 English speakers on passive sentences. Since passives required agreement between the verb and the NP, Tremblay explained that French speakers would be expected to do better on passive constructions due to the rich agreement morphology of French as compared to that of English. The learnability problem for the Spanish clitic *se* for each group of learners in her study is that the English system does not have passive and impersonal constructions with a clitic, and French has only passive constructions with a clitic. However, both L2 learner groups performed worse than the L1 Spanish control group. Tremblay (2006) claimed that the mismatch between her results and Bruhn de Garavito’s (1999) is due to the level of L2 proficiency of the participants. Tremblay’s participants were advanced L2 learners who had been exposed to Spanish only through foreign language classes in Canada, while Bruhn de Garavito’s participants were near-natives who had lived in a Spanish speaking country. Tremblay (2006) concluded that her study’s advanced L2 learners had not yet acquired characteristics of these *se* constructions. Regarding UG access, unlike Bruhn de Garavito’s study, Tremblay found that L2 learners were not able to acquire L2 properties that were not instantiated in their L1. Thus, her findings support the no access to UG hypothesis.

One of the advantages of this replication study is that it offers different results on the same language structure. Since learners were not able to reset their L1 parameters in this research but they did in Bruhn de Garavito’s study, it shows that there is still a lot of research to be done regarding this topic. One drawback of Tremblay’s study is that it does not consider the IL as a system. Analyzing their mistakes only by contrasting them to native speakers’ judgments ignores the fact that the structures that they already have are constrained by UG. Taking into account that Tremblay explained that the personal *a* is not part of their IL, this means that the
underlying structure of their IL is different than the grammar of the native speakers; therefore, the IL needs to be analyzed as its own system rather than being considered a failed system.

In conclusion, Bayona (2005), Bruhn de Garavito (1999), and Tremblay (2006) are likely to have arrived at different conclusions regarding the accessibility of UG because they investigated different participants at different stages of their L2 development, and used different tests and different functions of *se*. Regarding the latter, Bayona tested perfective aspect and the acceptance of stative sentences in middle *se* constructions, while Bruhn de Garavito and Tremblay tested the same surface structure of *se VP NP* as well as the behaviour of the NP in passives and impersonals (plus inchoatives in the case of Bruhn de Garavito). Regarding their test tasks, Bayona used both a grammaticality judgment task and a truth value judgment task while Bruhn de Garavito and Tremblay only used a grammaticality judgment task. Regarding their participants, Bruhn de Garavito’s participants were L2 near-native speakers, Tremblay’s were advanced L2 learners, and Bayona’s participants were high intermediate and advanced L2 learners. Bruhn de Garavito’s objective was to investigate ultimate attainment in L2 Spanish, which explains her selection of near-native Spanish speakers as participants. Many of her participants had been exposed to large amounts of natural input before the study; therefore, they had the opportunity to restructure their internal grammars for a long period of time. For Bruhn de Garavito, if native-like attainment is possible then UG is accessible because the end state of L2 grammar is constrained by UG. In contrast, Tremblay’s purpose was to investigate whether the learnability problem of the *se* structures could be overcome by L2 learners; her results showed that her advanced learners were unable to do so. Tremblay’s participants had been exposed to input in a classroom setting for three years, which is rather limited in contrast to Bruhn de Garavito’s participants, who had lived for extended periods of time in a Spanish
speaking country. It could be concluded, therefore, that the ILs of Tremblay’s participants were still in the process of restructuring. In contrast, Bayona’s participants had been exposed to Spanish for just five hours a week for two years in a classroom setting before the time of the study. This amount of input would be considerably lower than that to which Tremblay’s and Bruhn de Garavito’s participants had been exposed. With only two years of classroom instruction, Tremblay’s participants likely did not have enough time to restructure their internal grammars. These differences in amount of input and competence level can explain why the researchers arrived at different conclusions regarding UG access.

Previous SLA research has focused mainly on object clitics, reflexivity, impersonals, passive voice and middle voice individually, but to my knowledge, no research has addressed how learners acquire the passive voice, middle voice and impersonal *se* as a group while attempting to resolve the processing problems that learners might have with these constructions. Thus, the present study aims to provide new insights on this matter by focusing on 1) the acquisition of the clitic *se* in passive, middle voice and impersonal constructions by one group of Spanish L2 learners, 2) their processing problems, and 3) whether or not they can reset their L1 parameters to those of the L2.
CHAPTER 5
PROCESSING INSTRUCTION

This chapter explains why PI is relevant for the present study. It is divided into three sections: The first section presents what PI is, its purpose and the PI principles for L2 acquisition. It also gives details of why learners are not required to produce the target form during PI treatment and the activities learners do in order to further their L2 acquisition. Additionally, this section addresses why PI is a good fit as a teaching method for the classroom and for this study. The second section evaluates previous research that has been carried out regarding the effects of PI compared to other instructional methods. The final section details the processing difficulties that Spanish L2 learners may have when acquiring the clitic se.

What is Processing Instruction?

After Krashen (1982) proposed the Input Hypothesis stating that comprehensible input is necessary for L2 acquisition, the notion of input has become a crucial topic in SLA. Krashen’s Comprehensible input hypothesis (i.e., $i+1$) refers to the language input that is ideally made available to L2 learners without going too far beyond their current language skill. In this hypothesis, $i$ is the current level of L2 learners’ language and $+l$ is the input above this that can be helpful for learners to advance in their L2 proficiency. Research has been carried out addressing to what extent input helps the acquisition of an L2 (Krashen 1982; Corder, 1967; Long 1996), how it is processed (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993; VanPatten & Oikkenon, 1996; VanPatten, 2002a), and how it is integrated into learners’ interlanguage (IL) (Selinker, 1972; VanPatten, 2002a). Corder (1967) argued that not all input will become part of learners’
grammar since input is "what goes in’ and not what is available for going in… it is the learner who controls this input, or more properly his intake” (p. 165). This means that learners potentially receive high volumes of information in the input, but this does not mean that any form present in the input is automatically integrated in the learner’s developing grammar. *Intake* is then a step between input and IL; it is the process that allows input to be further processed which may in turn lead to integration into the learners’ developing system. Neupane (2009) states that intake is a part of filtered input that the learners process and integrate into their language. Taking into account the importance of input and intake, VanPatten (2002a, 2002b, 2003 and 2004) proposed the pedagogical model of Processing Instruction (PI). He claims that it is necessary to manipulate how input is processed in order to maximize intake to facilitate the integration of target structures into learners’ internal grammar.

PI is a pedagogical intervention designed to encourage learners to focus on form-meaning connections. PI research, which is an input-based model, focuses on how L2 learners process input by making them aware of their own processing strategies and pushing them to make the correct form-meaning connections for structures to which they are exposed in the input. VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) explain that PI focuses on the input and targets the intake process by maximizing the amount of input that gets converted into intake. This intake may go to the developing system to restructure it, thus directly affecting the internal grammar. Therefore, PI is a good fit for this study within a UG framework because PI aims to maximize intake for L2 acquisition which consequently helps to restructure L2 learners’ grammar. In UG, the input is the most important factor for a human being to acquire their language. Applying this same line of reasoning, research (Krashen, 1982; Long, 1996) has shown that input is an important factor for L2 acquisition. However, given that not all input is integrated into the L2
learners’ grammar, it is necessary to draw on research that attempts to help L2 input to become intake for it to be integrated into L2 learners’ IL, and PI is a pedagogical tool that helps to maximize L2 intake.

VanPatten (2004) and Lee and Benati (2007) emphasize that the goal of PI is to modify the processing strategies that learners use in order to increase their attention to linguistic forms. By modifying their processing strategies, learners can make the correct form-meaning connections, and increase the amount of intake that is integrated into their IL, thus helping them in their L2 acquisition process. Throughout his research on how learners processed language (Van Patten, 1984; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993; VanPatten & Oikkenon, 1996; VanPatten, 1996; VanPatten, 2002a, 2000b, 2003, 2004, etc.), VanPatten has proposed PI principles, which he claims are necessary to consider when looking at language acquisition processes.

These PI principles focus on the predominance of meaning over form. During communication, learners attend more to the message than to the specific morphological form of the message. For example, the morpheme for past tense –ed is redundant if lexical words such as yesterday are present in the sentence. The fact that the past tense morphology is not processed does not interfere with the comprehension of meaning since learners rely more on content words like yesterday than on the grammatical morphemes. Furthermore, VanPatten (2004) also suggests that, since the human mind is limited by the amount of attention it can pay simultaneously to different elements, content words are processed before grammatical forms. If learners already know the vocabulary in the message, then the processing of novel forms is not as demanding as if each word in the message was new. This allows for their attention to be available for processing other elements, including grammatical forms, facilitating language processing. This is why one of the characteristics of PI is to focus on one form at a time. In
addition, VanPatten (2004) also states that it is important to consider for the position of a targeted form in the sentence. Learners tend to better process elements in initial position since it is the most salient position of the sentence. For example, VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) found that in sentences with object-subject-verb order, as in *lo llama la chica* ‘the girl calls him,’ learners interpret the object pronoun ‘*lo*’ as the subject because it is in initial position. Thus, it is important to check where the target form is in the sentence in order to avoid incorrect language processing. All of these principles have the purpose of pinpointing aspects of language processing to be considered when using PI as an instructional method.

Given that PI focuses on input processing, learners do not need to produce in the L2 the grammatical element being taught at any point during instruction. Wong (2004) states that “output practice is not a component of PI simply because PI is concerned with input processing, the process responsible for converting input into intake” (p. 37). However, VanPatten (2004) states that “a focus on input does not suggest that there is no role for output in acquisition” (p. 6). He explains that PI focuses on input because learners get linguistic data mainly through input rather than output. For VanPatten, learners restructure their IL because of processing input. This is why learners do not have any kind of output practice during PI exercises, rather, they receive structured input with explicit explanations about the target form and what processing strategies to avoid. Therefore, PI focuses more on manipulating and increasing the amount of input that learners receive in order to increase the chances that the input will become intake. In order to increase this intake, in PI it is important to modify the input that learners receive through explicit information about the target form as well through the use of input-based activities.

During PI, learners are provided with explicit information about what strategies are most relevant in order to appropriately process the grammatical structure at hand. Learners receive
explicit information explaining what form to focus on, how it functions in the language, how it could be problematic, how it differs from other forms in their L1, and what they need to pay attention to regarding this form. In addition, learners receive information about what processing strategies can help them and which ones to avoid in order to maximize intake. For example, in the present study, learners received a sheet of explicit information explaining the function of the clitic *se*, why this form tends to be difficult for Spanish L2 learners, and what they could do to process the clitic in more appropriate ways (this is further developed in Chapter 6). However, explicit information is not sufficient since correct processing of the target form needs to be further practiced. Hence, explicit information about the target form is followed by Structured Input (SI) activities. SI is manipulated input that has the purpose of leading learners to process the target structure correctly. It encourages learners to make appropriate form-meaning connections, pushing them to pay close attention to the target form in order to interpret its meaning.

Wong (2004) agrees with VanPatten (2004) that SI activities are mainly communicative. SI activities use the target in a context where learners have to attend to meaning in order to make the correct form-meaning connection. In addition, SI activities are presented in both aural and written modalities, so that learners receive different kinds of input. SI is composed of two types of activities: referential and affective. Referential activities require interpreting the target form such that correct form-meaning connections are made. These activities have a correct or an incorrect answer which is always verified for the learner. Affective activities require a learner to give an opinion or some other affective response while they process the target form within a context related to the real world. Contrary to the referential activities, affective activities do not have a correct or incorrect answer. Learners express an opinion, which pushes them to be
actively engaged in processing information while at the same time receiving more exposure to
the target form. The referential activities are given before the affective activities because the
purpose is for learners first to make form-meaning connections and then receive more meaning-
based input (including the target form) with the affective activities.

Given that the purpose of PI is to maximize the amount of input converted into intake, it
is a good instructional method to use in an input-limited environment such as a classroom
setting. It is important to point out that classroom time offers only a limited amount of time
where learners receive more controlled input in the form of formal instruction. When using PI in
classrooms, the language input can be further maximized by helping students avoid processing
strategies that can interfere with their language acquisition since learners would allocate their
attention to incorrect processing strategies. With PI, this process is more effective since learners
focus on strategies that increase the likelihood that the input will become intake.

Ellis (1985) claims that formal instruction has a positive effect on the rate of success of
SLA. For him, “classrooms foster more rapid development because they constitute ‘intake
environments’, whereas…natural settings only afford ‘exposure environments’” (p. 232). Ellis
sees formal instruction as necessary for the development of implicit knowledge. In a classroom
context, the purpose of instruction is for the learner to practice the form in meaningful ways as
much as possible, so that the amount of time spent on a target form is maximized when the
learners receive controlled input magnifying this L2 form. VanPatten and Oikkenon (1996)
claimed that PI helps to modify the processing strategies, which in turn may result in higher
grammatical intake. For that reason, using PI in a classroom setting can help maximize the
amount of intake when learners are exposed to a more limited amount of input than they would
be under naturalistic conditions. In this study, PI was implemented as a way to help learners
focus on the processing difficulties that they might have when acquiring the clitic *se*. The PI was designed to help learners avoid processing strategies that are ineffective and to focus on strategies that can help with the L2 acquisition process.

As stated previously, very little research has been done on the L2 acquisition of *se* in passive, middle voice and impersonal constructions. In addition, no research has been done using PI to promote the acquisition of *se* and these three functions. Taking into account that PI research (e.g., VanPatten, 2004) suggests that it is necessary to focus on one form, the present research focuses on one form; however, this form is not transparent because it has many different functions. As shown previously in Chapters 2 and 4, the middle, passive, and impersonal functions of this clitic have the same surface structure; thus, the PI treatment in this study sought to alter learners’ processing strategies to help them more effectively connect the clitic *se* with its three targeted meanings. For example, learners tend to overlook *se* because of its syntactic position and its unstressed quality. Thus, during the PI treatment, *se* was placed in a salient position and activities were created to help learners to make the correct form-meaning connection between *se* and these three functions.

The section below summarizes previous studies that have compared PI with other instructional methods. Even though these studies arrived at different conclusions about the effectiveness of PI compared with other instructional methods, they all agree that PI is indeed helpful for L2 acquisition.

**Processing Instruction vs. Other Methods**

This section analyzes how PI differs compared to other instructional methodologies in order to investigate the effectiveness of PI.
As summarized previously in Chapter 4, VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) presented the first study comparing the effects of PI with Traditional Instruction (TI). They looked at the acquisition of object pronouns by L2 learners of Spanish. The results showed that PI was more effective for improving learners’ interpretation. Even though PI does not have output practice, the PI group performed as well as the TG group in the production task. VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) concluded that addressing learners’ processing strategies helped them improve performance in both interpretation and production.

An advantage of VanPatten and Cadierno’s study is that it shows that focusing on how learners process input can help with their L2 acquisition. The drawback of this article is the lack of information about the treatment. The authors do not offer information about how long the L2 learners took doing the activities. It also does not provide information about whether or not participants could correct their incorrect answers or if they reviewed the explicit information sheet in order to understand why they answered the way they did after they were given the correct/incorrect answers feedback. If students did not have the opportunity to check their answers, how could they have understood their mistakes? In the present study, participants were also required not to talk amongst themselves in order to avoid possible grammatical explanations from their treatment peers. In addition, in the few instances when they had an incorrect answer, they were allowed a few moments to reflect on why their answer was incorrect; however, this was done in silence with no further explanations, neither from the researcher or their peers.

There are also two drawbacks in VanPatten and Cadierno’ (1993) study, as well as my own, regarding the number of items tested and treatment time. In their study, of the 25 items present in the tests (15 interpretation and 10 production) only 5 of the interpretation tasks had the syntactic order object-verb-subject which was the focus of their study, and it was unclear how
many items in the production task tested this order. This small number of items is not enough to make a strong claim about the effectiveness of PI, but it can offer insight on what PI can offer for L2 acquisition. Regarding the treatment time, in VanPatten and Cadierno’ study, learners had two days of instruction, and in the three post-tests given to them, there was more variability on the interpretation than on the production test results. In my present study, learners had one day of PI instruction per treatment, which also yielded different results per function. This is further discussed in Chapter 7. Given the complexity of these se functions, it is then necessary for future research to provide more treatment days per function to help L2 learners to better discriminate among them. After VanPatten and Cadierno’s study, other research has tested the effects of PI compared to other instruction methods. Some of these studies are summarized below.

VanPatten and Oikennon (1996) followed VanPatten and Cadierno’s (1993) study design to test if the positive effects of PI were due to the explicit information or to the SI activities. They also looked at the acquisition of object pronouns by Spanish L2 learners. 59 Spanish students at an American high school were divided into three groups: 1) 22 participants received only explicit information (EI), 2) 20 participants received only SI activities, and 3) 17 participants received processing instruction (PI) as originally presented by VanPatten and Cadierno (1993). The PI group received explicit explanations, SI activities and feedback as to whether their answers were correct or incorrect without further explanations. The EI group received the same explicit explanations as the PI group, however no practice was provided. The SI group received the same activities as the PI group but no explicit explanations were provided. The study lasted a week and included a pre-test, treatment and an immediate post-test.
In both tests, the interpretation section had 10 target and 12 distractor sentences. Learners selected one of two pictures that better illustrated the sentence. The production section had five target and five distractor sentences. Learners looked at two pictures that provided a visual context designed to push them to write an object pronoun in their sentence. For example, learners saw a picture of a man thinking about a woman and a second picture where he was calling her. Learners needed to fill in the gap of the sentence *el hombre piensa en la mujer y entonces ___ (llamar)* ‘the man is thinking about the woman and so ____ (to call)’ with the correct direct object *la* ‘her.’ The results showed that the SI group outperformed the EI group in both interpretation and production but performed the same as the PI group. The EI group showed some improvement on the production task after the treatment. Taking into account that SI activities were part of both the SI only instruction and the PI instruction groups, then, the researchers claim that it was the SI activities that helped to improve both interpretation and production. Also, given that the EI group had some improvement in their production task, the authors do not deny that the explicit explanation part played a role in improving production. However, they considered this role to be not significant since the SI group outperformed the EI group in this task, even though the former group did not receive explicit explanations.

An advantage of VanPatten and Oikkenon’s (1996) study is that it compared the SI activities and EI, which are the main components of PI, and PI as a whole to test if they yielded different results. Their results showed that both PI and SI have the same benefits for interpretation and production for L2 learners. In addition, learners had four days of treatment compared to VanPatten and Cadierno’s (1993) original study, in which they only had two. VanPatten and Cadierno’s PI group outperformed the traditional group in interpretation but not in production, while VanPatten and Oikkenon’s PI and the SI groups outperformed the EI group.
in both interpretation and production; thus, more treatment days seemed to be also beneficial for learners. One of the drawbacks of VanPatten and Oikkenon’s (1996) study is that their elimination percentage (70%) does not seem to be low enough for as cut-off point in the pre-test. Participants who scored 70% or higher in the pre-test\(^{34}\) were removed from the study. It is not clear if a learner who scored 69% would have had some benefit if s/he was in the PI group. A 70% limit raises the question of how much of their previous knowledge would have been an intervening factor. During my pilot study, students did not score higher than 60% and this number seemed to be a stricter limit to test the effect of PI. With a high cut-off point of 70%, it is possible that some of the results of this study were due to learners’ previous knowledge. Another drawback of VanPatten and Oikkenon’s (1996) study is that there were two pictures for the interpretation sections in their tests. This is problematic because it gave a 50% probability of being correct. A third picture would have been beneficial to lower this percentage to 33% in order to observe if learners could still choose the correct answer among multiple options.

Another study comparing the effects of PI with those of TG was Collentine’s (1998) research contrasting PI to output-oriented instruction (OI) for Spanish subjunctive in adjectival clauses. Participants for this study were three intact second-semester Spanish classes at an American university (N=54). Their L1 was English and they did not receive any kind of Spanish input at home. Participants were randomly assigned to three groups: 18 to the PI group, 18 to the OI group and 18 to a control group. Before the study, the groups were tested on their

\(^{34}\) VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) did not provide information regarding the score that learners needed to have on the pre-test in order to participate in the study. VanPatten and Oikkenon (1996) removed participants with more than a 70% on their pre-test based on the information that they gathered from their own pilot study.
performance on a proficiency test, a vocabulary test and an oral interview. No significant
difference was found among the three groups.\(^{35}\)

The materials for the Collentine’s (1998) PI group consisted of explanations of the
subjunctive form in adjectival clauses, an introduction to the difference between
indicative/subjunctive mood in adjectival clauses (declarative and interrogative sentences) and SI
activities. The materials for the PI group consisted of explanations about the distinction between
the indicative and the subjunctive in both adjectival declarative and interrogative clauses, and SI
activities (matching of sentences with situations, a question writing task which required the
interpretation of the mood of a clause,\(^{36}\) and identifying the appropriateness of a sentence). The
materials for the OI group included explanations about the adjectival clause, the difference
between the indicative and the subjunctive, and activities that ranged from mechanical (fill in the
blanks and “dehydrated” sentences\(^{37}\)) to open-ended (teacher-led question/answer and pair
work). The control group received implicit and explicit instruction, as well as input-based and
output-based activities on the *por/para* ‘for’ distinction and sentence constructions with *gustar*
‘to like’ and similar verbs. All groups received a pre-test three days before the treatment and a
post-test a day after the treatment. The tests were composed of 20 items: 10 oral and 10 written
sentences. Within each modality, 5 sentences tested the subjunctive and 5 the indicative mood.
The results of this experiment showed that there was not a significant difference between the PI
and OI groups. Both PI and OI led to improvement in interpretation as well as production.

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\(^{35}\) All groups were taught the subjunctive in imperative sentences in order to familiarize them with the subjunctive
inflection before the actual study.

\(^{36}\) Collentine (1998) explains that this production task did not require the learners to produce the subjunctive.
However, the way it is presented in his article, the task instructions are confusing.

\(^{37}\) Dehydrated sentences are sentences that require the learners to reconstruct a sentence with the elements provided.
For example, a dehydrated sentence such as *yo / querer / comer / cena / casa / 8pm,* ‘I / want / have / dinner / home / 8pm,’
can be reconstructed as in *yo quiero comer la cena en casa a las 8pm* ‘I want to have dinner at home at 8pm.’
Collentine (1998) concluded that, even though there was no difference between using PI or OI for both interpretation and production, teachers could include PI materials for teaching subjunctive since learners could indeed benefit from the PI materials.

An advantage of Collentine’s (1998) study is that he used adjectival clauses that required subjunctive, but this subjunctive function was required by the context and not due to the presence of a specific marker. Another advantage is that his research focused on verbal inflections which carry information signaling person, number, as well as mood in Spanish. Within PI, the form presented to L2 learners needs to be in a salient position; however, this is a difficult task with inflectional morphology since it cannot be separated from the verb. Another advantage is that Collentine integrated in the OI materials the communicative value of the subjunctive in order to help students to make form-meaning connections when possible. This showed that L2 learners do benefit from using activities that focus on form-meaning connections even though they are out-put based activities. A drawback of this analysis is that the control group received instruction on structures unrelated to the Spanish subjunctive form. Comparing the results of this group to the PI and the OI is inequitable since they are not being compared on the same grounds, in the sense that it probably would have been better to have a control group exposed to some kind of natural input where this function was used. Consequently, it was expected that this group was not going to perform at the same level than the experimental groups, putting this group at a great disadvantage.

Celik-Yazici’s (2007) study also yielded different conclusions about PI. She compared the effects of PI and TG on the acquisition of wh-questions by Turkish L2 learners of English. The L2 and the L1 parameters differ since wh-questions move in English while they stay in-situ in Turkish. The participants were 56 Turkish learners of L2 English in two pre-intermediate
level English classes in a foreign language center. Their ages ranged between 18 and 23 years. The two classes were randomly assigned either to the PI group (n=28) or to the TG group (n=28) and learners were given a pre-test, treatment and a post-test. The PI group received explicit grammatical information regarding wh-question formation and auxiliary inversion, processing information about the target form, and SI activities. The TG group received only the explicit information regarding wh-questions but no information about auxiliary inversion, and activities that moved from mechanical to meaningful output-based practice. The pre-test and the post-test consisted of an interpretation task (grammaticality judgment task) and two production tasks (a translation sentence and a picture cued task). Results showed no post-treatment difference on any task between the PI and TG groups. The author concluded that both types of instruction helped the learners in their L2 acquisition.

Celik-Yazici’s (2007) conclusions are similar to those of other studies in which PI and TG were found to be equally effective such as Collentine’s (1998) study, for interpretation as well as for production. Both studies showed that focusing either on input or output improves interpretation and production, and that input-based as well as output-based practice are helpful for improving L2 performance. A drawback of Celik-Yazici’s (2007) study is that it does not state how many items were used for each the three wh-question patterns during the treatment and the tests. It is not clear if there was more practice for long-distance and embedded wh-questions which are more complex than simple wh-questions. Another drawback is that the study does not address on which types of wh-questions the learners improved their performance and on which ones they did not. Since the three patterns of wh-question have different levels of difficulty, they

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38 It is unclear when the pre-test and the post-test were given since they were following the foreign language center’s timetable. In addition, the researcher does not mention for how long the treatment was administered and if it was done during class time or outside the classroom setting.
cannot be grouped together and analyzed as if they were representing the same level of complexity for English wh-questions.

Morgan-Short and Bowden’s (2006) study also arrived at different conclusions about the effectiveness of PI as an instructional method. They compared the effects of PI and Meaningful Output-Based Instruction (MOBI) on the L2 acquisition of object pronouns in Spanish. The authors explained that comparing these two types of instruction was more relevant for looking at the effects of PI because both types of instruction include explicit explanations of the target form as well as information about learning processing strategies, but they only differ in that PI has SI activities and MOBI has output-based activities. The participants were 45 students in the first semester of Spanish who were randomly assigned to three groups: 15 to the PI group, 15 to the MOBI group and 15 to a control group. Additionally, treatments were computer-based in order to avoid potential bias of having different instructors for the three groups.

All groups completed a pre-test, treatment, an immediate post-test and a one-week delayed post-test. There were three treatment sessions over a three-week period. The control group was exposed to the target form only through reading texts and comprehension questions about the text. All groups had the same number of exposures to the target form. Both experimental groups received feedback on their answers; however, the PI group received feedback on whether the answers were correct or incorrect while the MOBI group received feedback only if the answer was incorrect. The control group received no feedback.

The tests included interpretation and production. Each test consisted of 20 sentences: 12 tested the object pronoun and 8 were distractor sentences. For the interpretation test, learners listened to pre-recorded sentences and chose which one of three pictures best depicted the sentence. For the production test, learners wrote a sentence based on two pictures showing a
situation that pushed learners to use the object pronoun. The statistically significant results showed that both PI and MOBI groups performed equally and both outperformed the control group in the interpretation and production tasks. Even though the MOBI group’s scores declined on the delayed post-test, Morgan-Short and Bowden (2006) maintained that there was no difference between PI and MOBI. They concluded both methods helped learners’ linguistic development.

An advantage of this study’s design is that it compared two types of instruction that were similar in the type of explicit information they provided to learners but different in their practice mode. All the activities were the same but PI’s practice was input-based while MOBI’s was output-based. The fact that the PI group also improved on production parallels the results of previous research. However, the fact that the MOBI group performed better than the PI group on the immediate production task can be explained by the fact that MOBI had more production practice than PI. Another advantage in this study’s design is the inclusion of a control group that was exposed to the target form, unlike Collentine’s (1998), above in which the control group was exposed to structures completely unrelated to the target form. Another advantage is that Morgan-Short and Bowden’s (2006) study was computerized, which equalize level the amount of feedback that participants received for their answers. In a classroom setting, any feedback from the instruction of peers during output-base practice in a MOBI paradigm would have been almost impossible to control. Programming the computerized treatment to give feedback only for incorrect answers helped the learners to still receive some individualized input, similar to what they would likely receive in a classroom context. A drawback of the study’s conclusion is that it is misleading. Even though the PI and MOBI groups showed significant improvement on both interpretation and production from pre-test to delayed post-test, there was a significant
difference between both groups’ post-tests scores. On the one hand, on the interpretation post-test, the PI group scored 67.38 and MOBI 71.21; however, on the delayed post-test the PI group scored 62.22 and MOBI 46.43. On the other hand, for production, the PI group scored 30.88 on the post-test and the MOBI group scored 69.93; for the delayed post-test the PI group scored 26.26 and the MOBI group scored 31.55. It is important to notice that PI only dropped a few points while MOBI plunged more than 20 points for interpretation as well as for production. Therefore, the overall results suggest that the effects of PI are possibly more stable and long lasting than the effects of MOBI.

Another study that compared the effects of MOI\textsuperscript{39} and PI was Farley and Keating’s (2008) investigation of the acquisition of object pronouns by Spanish L2 learners. The researchers extended Morgan-Short and Bowden’s (2006) study by comparing the effects of PI and MOI with a third instructional method: meaning-based drills instruction (MDI). The PI and the MOI groups received explicit explanations regarding Spanish object pronouns, information on processing strategies, and SI activities. SI activities in the PI group were input-based while the SI activities in the MOI group were the output version of the PI activities. The MDI treatment consisted of production activities that were in a meaningful context; however, the activities reinforced the notion of the first noun being the subject since the forms used were SOV. The authors stated that the structured input received in PI and MOI may have accounted for comparable performance by the experimental groups in Morgan-Short and Bowden’s (2006) study. Thus, they included MDI to test if having no input or feedback would also have some kind of effect on interpretation and production. Both MOI and MDI are output-based methods and include communicative activities. However, MDI focuses on explicit information about the

\textsuperscript{39}Farley and Keating (2008) used the acronym MOI while Morgan-Short and Bowden (2006) used MOBI; however, both acronyms refer to the same instructional method.
target structure and practice moves from focusing on forms towards more communicative output practice while MOI gives information about processing strategies and provides SI modified in output activities. MOI provides explicit information about the target structure as well as SI activities like PI, but unlike PI, its practice activities are output-based. The participants were 87 English native speakers who were beginner-level Spanish L2 learners and did not use other languages at home. They came from eight intact Spanish classes and were randomly assigned to one of the three groups: 3 sections to PI (n=36), 2 sections to MOI (n=25), and 2 sections to MDI (n=26).

Participants received a pre-test one or two days before treatment, and the treatment lasted for two class periods. They completed four post-test sessions: one immediately after treatment, and one administered a day, a week and a month later. The tests included a picture-matching interpretation task (10 target forms and 5 distractor sentences), a production task (completing 5 target sentences based on two pictures) and a distractor task. During treatment, the PI group completed 10 SI activities; the MOI group completed 10 output activities which were an adapted version of the PI activities, and the MDI group completed output practice consisting of meaningful and communicative activities that reinforced the subject-object-verb order for Spanish object pronouns. The results of this study showed that the PI group performed better than the MDI group but equal to the MOI group on the interpretation task. They attributed the comparable performance by the PI and MOI to the SI activities present in both instructional methods. On the production task, the MOI and MDI groups performed similarly and both outperformed the PI group. They attributed superior production performance by the MOI group to the fact that it had more output practice than the PI group. Regarding MDI, the researchers
suggested that the fact that the MDI activities were all meaning-based explains why this group did better than the PI group on the production task.

A strength of Farley and Keating’s (2008) study is that it compares three instructional methods that have meaning-based activities. These three instructional methods have similar characteristics: The MDI and MOI treatments are output-based, and the MOI and PI treatments have SI activities and give information about processing strategies; more importantly, they all have in common that the activities embedded the target form in meaningful contexts. Even the MDI group improved in the interpretation of the target forms, showing that it is important to always have meaning at the core of any instructional activity. One of the drawbacks of this study is that the MOI learners had the opportunity to read their sentences out loud and this could have also counted as additional input. Another drawback is that the MOI and the MDI group had more opportunities to practice the target forms in output activities. Thus, they already have the tools to do better in a production task than in an interpretation one. Taking into account that MOI and MDI are output-based, it is not surprising that they outperformed the PI group in the production task. In addition, the fact that MDI did better than PI may be because the MDI group had more opportunities to practice production rather than interpretation compared to PI which focused only on interpretation. Table 1 summarizes the results of the studies reviewed above:
Table 1

*Processing Instruction vs. Output-Based Instructional Methods*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Target Form</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VanPatten and Cadierno (1993)</td>
<td>Spanish object pronouns</td>
<td>PI &gt; TG</td>
<td>PI = TG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VanPatten and Oikkenon (1996)</td>
<td>Spanish object pronouns</td>
<td>(PI = SI) &gt; EI</td>
<td>(PI = SI) &gt; EI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collentine (1998)</td>
<td>Spanish subjunctive in adjectival clauses</td>
<td>PI = OI</td>
<td>PI = OI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan-Short and Bowden (2006)</td>
<td>Spanish object pronouns</td>
<td>PI = MOBI</td>
<td>MOBI &gt; PI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farley and Keating (2008)</td>
<td>Spanish object pronouns</td>
<td>PI = MOI</td>
<td>(MOI=MDI) &gt; PI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PI &gt; MDI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* EI = Explicit Instruction, MDI = Meaning-Based Drills Instruction, MOBI / MOI = Meaning Output-Based Instruction, OI = Output Instruction, PI = Processing Instruction, SI = Structure Input, and TG = Traditional Grammar.

Although all the studies above arrived at different conclusions about PI compared to other instruction methods, their results show that PI has some benefit for L2 learning. Even if the PI group performed comparably to TG, OI, MOI, and MOBI, the researchers concluded that PI does help with interpretation as well as production even though PI does not include output practice as part of the instructional treatment. During PI, learners do benefit significantly from
input; if they are able to make the correct form-meaning connections, this increases their intake, which in turn provides for restructuring of their IL. Therefore, using PI as an instructional method, embedding the target form in meaningful and communicative contexts while at the same time raising learners’ awareness of the helpful and unhelpful processing strategies, may have beneficial effect for the learners’ developing system. A closer look at these studies shows that all the instructional methods that were compared with PI are output-based methods. This output-based instruction helped learners to improve both their production and interpretation. However, PI also helped learners to improve their production even though the SI activities never included any kind of production practice.

DeKeyser (2008), Ellis (1985, 2002), Hulstijn and Graaff (1994), and Neupane (2009) have claimed that instruction is beneficial for L2 acquisition. Ellis (2002) claimed that instruction is necessary for increasing the saliency of forms that are complex in structure and meaning. When explicit instruction focuses on structures that are problematic in the target language, this helps learners to pay attention to forms that otherwise might be overlooked in the input. The target form in this study, the clitic *se*, is almost inaudible in medial position in a sentence. Thus, the explicit instruction afforded through PI may help learners to focus their attention on the functions of the clitic and to its syntactic position. Therefore, PI can be a useful tool to make learners aware of the nuances of the various functions of the *se*. In PI, learners receive explicit instruction, including input which highlights the communicative value of *se*, and specific information that exposes learners to more efficient processing strategies for interpreting *se*. Then, in the SI activities the clitic is embedded in meaningful and communicative contexts, pushing learners to make appropriate form-meaning connections.
To summarize, the studies discussed above show that focusing on input can help with the acquisition of an L2. PI, as an input-based instructional method, enhances the target form in the input that learners receive, increasing intake necessary for subsequent restructuring of learners’ IL. In PI, the explicit information and raising learners’ awareness of processing strategies may help with the acquisition of the target form and the SI activities increase the amount of input becoming intake. Previous research has shown that input is a crucial element of language acquisition whether it is L1 acquisition (as posited in UG) or L2 acquisition (Krashen, 1982). Therefore, given all these factors, PI was chosen as the instructional method for this study.

The following section focuses on the research questions that guided this present study which investigates the effectiveness of PI for L2 interpretation and production as well as its effect on IL. In addition, this section also explains the possible processing difficulties that Spanish L2 learners have when acquiring the clitic *se*.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

As summarized above, previous research has shown that PI might be beneficial for L2 acquisition. In order to test its effectiveness in the acquisition of the Spanish clitic *se*, the following research questions were posited:

1. Does Processing Instruction improve L2 learners’ accuracy of interpretation of the functions of the clitic *se*?
2. Does Processing Instruction have an effect on learners’ accuracy in their production of *se*?
(3) Does Processing Instruction have an effect on the internal grammars of the L2 learners as evidenced by performance on a grammaticality judgment task?

(4) Assuming that L2 acquisition is UG constrained, what are the L2 learners’ grammar representations of the clitic *se* at this early stage of their L2 Spanish acquisition as evidenced in the adverb placement task?

The data gathered in this study seeks to answer these questions and to see to what extent learners have access to UG. The following hypotheses address each function of *se* that this research investigates and explains the possible processing difficulties that Spanish L2 learners have with it:

**Middle constructions.** Both Spanish and English have these constructions but they differ syntactically:

(1) Este pan *se* corta fácilmente
(2) This bread cuts easily
(3) *Este pan corta fácilmente*

The constructions in (1) and (2) are equivalent in meaning. However, syntactically they differ in that in Spanish a clitic *se* is required while in English no clitic is used. Example (3) shows that in Spanish, the absence of *se* renders the sentence ungrammatical. A possible learning problem is that learners rely solely on the adverb to help them identify the middle voice function and ignore the clitic *se*. This could be due to two reasons: First, the near parallelism in surface
structure between Spanish (1) and English (2) where both have a modifying adverb in final position. Second, the fact that *se* is an unstressed morpheme makes it almost inaudible in sentence-medial position. Due to this syntactic parallelism and the lack of salience of the clitic, learners may ignore *se* and incorrectly judge an ungrammatical sentence without *se* as grammatical. The only syntactic difference between these structures is the obligatory presence of *se* in Spanish while it is null in English. The following hypotheses can be formulated for the L2 acquisition of this clitic in middle voice constructions:

_Hypothesis 1_: Learners will reset their L1 parameter from null to overt morphology in middle constructions.

_Hypothesis 2_: Learners will not rely solely on the presence of the modifying adverb in order to arrive at a middle voice interpretation.

If after treatment learners are able to interpret a middle construction and are able to use the clitic *se* in a sentence even when the adverb is absent, this will show that they have been able to reset their L1 parameter from null in English to overt in Spanish.

For this middle function, L2 learners might recur to processing strategies such as the presence of other lexical words (adverbs) or to overlook *se* due to its unstressed quality. This is why the PI treatment was designed to make learners attend to the meaning of *se* within sentences that did not have an adverb present, but did have prepositional phrases. In addition, the treatment was designed to impel learners to compare similar surface structure sentences to distinguish middle sentences from other sentences. For example, in sentences such as _las luces de neón se ven claramente_ ‘neon lights can be seen clearly’ vs. _la niña se lava meticulosamente_
‘the girl washes herself meticulously,’ both sentences are syntactically alike; however, the *se* in former sentence has a middle function while the latter has a reflexive function. This kind of tasks required learners to attend to the clitic *se* function since learners needed to identify if the sentence referred to an inherent characteristic of the NP or to something else.

**Impersonal constructions.** Both Spanish and English have this kind of construction. English has only one\(^{40}\) form shown in (4), while Spanish has the two forms shown in (5) and (6):

(4) People work well here

(5) La gente trabaja bien aquí

(6) Se trabaja bien aquí

se.CLITIC work well here

(7) \#pro trabaja bien aquí (ungrammatical as an impersonal construction)

\[\text{work well here}\]

Given its rich verbal morphology, Spanish is a *pro*-drop language, meaning that the subject does not need to be overtly present. On the one hand, since English is not a *pro*-drop language, example (4) shows that English requires an overt subject like *people, one*, etc. On the other hand, Spanish can have an overt subject like *la gente* ‘people,’ as in (5), or it can use the clitic *se*, as in (6). Sentence (7) shows that if *se* is not present, then it cannot be interpreted as an impersonal construction. Since Spanish is a *pro*-drop language, sentence (7) is grammatical if *pro* is present because its subject interpretation can be taken from the discourse; for example, this

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\(^{40}\) English also employs words such as *someone, one, they*, etc. to fulfill the grammatical subject position in the impersonal construction.
pro can be interpreted as él ‘he,’ ella ‘she,’ usted ‘you (formal),’ John, Martha…etc. In addition, as detailed in Chapter 2, se cannot function as the subject of the sentence because it does not meet the syntactic requirements of being a subject; rather, the subject of the action is implicit. Looking at possible processing strategies, learners might overlook se due to its unstressed quality, or to interpret it as an NP subject. Taking this into account, the PI treatment was designed to encourage learners to attend to the meaning of se by distinguishing among sentences with similar surface structures. For example, learners identified whether sentences such as se azotó a los delincuentes ‘someone whipped the criminals’ or se cepilla los dientes ‘s/he brushes his/her teeth’ were either “impersonal” (former) or “something else” (e.g., reflexive as in the latter example). In addition, in exemplars of this function that were included in the treatment, the clitic se was consistently in sentence-initial position, which is a salient position and therefore increases the likelihood of being attended during sentence processing. The L2 learning problems for Spanish impersonal constructions are that 1) English does not allow a sentence without an overt subject while Spanish does, 2) Spanish can have a non-overt implicit subject, and 3) the se is an unstressed morpheme that can be easily overlooked in a sentence, with the result that learners may mistakenly interpret the sentence as a pro-drop sentence and not as an impersonal one. Therefore, in impersonal constructions, the following hypothesis is posited for Spanish L2 acquisition:

_Hypothesis 3:_ Learners will reset their L1 parameter from overt subject to non-overt subject.
For this hypothesis, it is necessary to clarify that a non-overt subject is not the same as a null subject. “Null subject” implies the presence of pro as a subject in Spanish and requires the presence of the clitic se. Therefore, a sentence will be ungrammatical if it has both an overt subject and the clitic present, as in (8):

\[ \text{(8) } \ast \text{La gente se trabaja bien aquí.} \]

“Non-overt subject” in this study implies that there is a subject, but it is an implicit one whose interpretation is understood from the context. If learners are able to interpret an impersonal construction and are able to use the clitic se in a sentence without an overt subject, this may be taken as evidence that they have reset their L1 parameter from overt to non-overt.

**Passive constructions.** Both English and Spanish have passive periphrastic constructions, as in (9) and (10), respectively. Spanish has an additional passive form using the clitic se, as shown in (11):

\[ \text{(9) The letters were written by the president} \]

\[ \text{(10) Las cartas fueron escritas por el presidente} \]

\[ \text{(11) Se escribieron las cartas a mano} \]

\[ \text{(12) Las cartas se escribieron a mano} \]
In both English and Spanish, the periphrastic passive can have the agent of the action introduced with the preposition *by/por*, as in (9) and (10). The Spanish passive *se* constructions in (11) and (12) show that the NP can precede or follow the *se+verb* unit. Example (13) illustrates that the absence of the clitic in a passive structure renders the sentence ungrammatical since Spanish is a *pro*-drop language and this sentence could have a *pro* which could be interpreted from the discourse. Looking at possible processing strategies, learners might overlook *se* due to its unstressed quality, or they might interpret the object NP as the agent of the sentence. Taking this into account, the PI treatment was designed to make learners attend to the meaning of *se* in a variety of contexts. In most of the activities, the clitic *se* was placed in the more salient sentence-initial position, again to increase the likelihood that learners would attend the clitic during the sentence processing.

Summarizing the possible learning problems that Spanish L2 learners may have with passive *se* constructions, 1) the NP of the passives in Spanish can stay inside the verb phrase (VP) when it is in post-verbal position, or the NP moves to Tense/Inflectional Phrase (TP) when it is in preverbal position (recall from Chapter 2 that in English the NP needs to move to TP), 2) the agent is absent while it can be present in the periphrastic passive in English, and 3) the clitic *se* is in non-salient middle position when the NP precedes the *se+verb* unit, making it less likely to be noticed such that the sentence will not be interpreted as a passive. The following hypothesis is posited for Spanish passive constructions:
Hypothesis 4: Learners will move the grammatical subject outside VP (i.e., the notional object rises to the specifier of TP).

If after instructional treatment learners are able to interpret the *se* in passive sentences and are able to produce it in NP post-verbal or pre-verbal position, this will show that their IL is moving towards the L2 by leaving the NP inside the VP for *se* passives when the NP is in post-verbal position. Therefore, if learners correctly interpret the *se* in passive constructions, then they will either move the grammatical object NP to a pre-verbal subject position (i.e., specifier of TP), or they will not move the grammatical object NP from its initial position in the verbal phrase VP where it stays in post-verbal position. Also, it will indicate that learners are able to notice that the *se*+verb unit cannot be broken by the NP when it moves from VP to TP in pre-verbal position.

As I have detailed in this section, each *se* function requires different processing strategies. The PI materials used for this study targeted each of these functions separately and were designed to raise learners’ awareness on what strategies to avoid depending on the function and to lead them towards strategies that enhanced their comprehension of the *se* in each of these three functions. Chapter 6 describes the methodology and the data collection procedure, Chapter 7 summarizes the data analysis and results, and Chapter 8 presents the conclusion for this study, answering each of the research questions posited in this section.
CHAPTER 6
METHODOLOGY

This chapter gives an overview of the steps taken for gathering the data for this study, describing how the participants were recruited, how it was collected, and how the data was scored for statistical analysis.

Participants

The participants were English native speakers learning Spanish as their L2. Their ages ranged from 18 to 22 years (average of 19). They were recruited from 15 Spanish class sections at the end of their second semester of Spanish classes at UW-Madison in order for them to participate at the onset of their third semester. Volunteers were remunerated for their participation. Initially, 124 students expressed interest in participating; however, due to attrition, the final sample included 63 participants.

Students at the end of their second semester L2 Spanish classes were selected because they had already learned the Spanish vocabulary necessary to be able to understand the Spanish included in the PI treatment and the language tests. Also, they had not yet been introduced to all the functions of the clitic se, making them good candidates for the study since they were naïve learners who could potentially benefit from the study before being introduced to the other functions of the clitic se in their regular Spanish classes.

Participants were excluded from the final sample if their pre-test scores were equal to or

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41 In general, during the first and the second semester, Spanish L2 students are introduced to the reflexive clitic se (Juan se ve en el espejo ‘Juan looks at himself in the mirror’), the reciprocal se (ellos se besan ‘they kiss each other’), and the spurious se (Ana se lo da, se = indirect object “le”, ‘Ana gives it to him’).
higher than 60%;\textsuperscript{42} if they had studied abroad in a Spanish speaking country; if they were Spanish heritage speakers or English\textsuperscript{43} was not their native language; if they knew another Romance language,\textsuperscript{44} and if they missed any treatment sessions.\textsuperscript{45} These criteria were necessary in order to have as homogeneous a sample of participants as possible. The participants were divided into two groups: 31 participants were assigned to the treatment group\textsuperscript{46} and 32 participants to the control group, which completed the pre-test and post-test, but did not receive any instructional treatment.

In addition, 14 Spanish native speakers were part of the study. These speakers were from Colombia (8), Cuba (1), Mexico (1), Peru (1), Spain (2), and Venezuela (1). They were doing their graduate degrees or were professors in different universities in the US. They completed the grammaticality judgment task and an adverb placement task (explained below) via e-mail. Also, 10 English native speakers from the United States completed the adverb placement task (Appendix H). They were also doing their graduate studies in a Midwestern university in the US. This was done in order to have a base for syntactic comparison between the L2 Spanish learners and native speakers of Spanish and English.

\textsuperscript{42} The cut-off of 60% is based on the results of the pilot study.

\textsuperscript{43} Having speakers of one specific language allows for a better generalization of language patterns on the acquisition of this clitic.

\textsuperscript{44} Students with knowledge of other Romance languages were excluded because other Romance languages like French and Portuguese also have the clitic se. This previous knowledge could interfere with the results of this study.

\textsuperscript{45} Make-up sessions were organized for people who missed regularly-scheduled treatment sessions. However, if after the make-up session, their attendance record showed that they had missed one or more sessions, the participants were excluded.

\textsuperscript{46} Initially there were 32 participants but one was excluded for missing a treatment session.
Data Collection Procedure

The participants in both L2 Spanish groups answered a biographical questionnaire (see Appendix E). The biographical questionnaire elicited information about the participants’ age, how many hours a week they spend studying and using Spanish, knowledge of other languages, and previous exposure to Spanish. The information on this questionnaire helped to remove participants who fell into the categories for non-inclusion outlined in the previous section.

Both L2 Spanish groups took a pre-test to identify what they knew about the clitic *se*; only the treatment group participated in three PI treatment sessions; and both groups took an immediate post-test to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment. The pre-test, three treatment sessions, and the immediate post-test took place outside of class, and each session lasted approximately one hour. The participants in the control group participated a total of two hours (one hour per test) while the treatment group participated a total of five hours (two tests and three treatment sessions). Taking into account that the participants were all recruited at the end of their first year of Spanish classes, there was the possibility that they were not familiar with some of the vocabulary in the activities and the tests. Therefore, word banks were included with each activity in the treatment and each task on the pre-test and post-test in order to control for vocabulary knowledge.

Treatment

There was a set of guidelines that the researcher and the participants followed. During the treatment sessions, the researcher was present to give the materials to the participants, to read out loud sentences required for aural activities, to clarify vocabulary, and to provide the correct answer for the activities in the form of “correct” or “incorrect” responses, without providing
further explanations. The researcher did not provide any grammatical explanation in order to control the amount of explicit grammatical information to which participants were exposed. Participants were not allowed to give any kind of explanations among themselves during the treatment sessions; nor were they allowed to go back to the explanation sheet to verify information about their answers. Participants did not receive any homework and they were also advised not to talk about the activities outside the treatment sessions.

One of the three targeted functions of *se* (passive voice, middle voice, and impersonal) was introduced in each treatment session. The instructional treatment consisted of explicit written information explaining the function of the clitic *se* (see Appendices A, B, and C), followed by structured input activities. Explicit information provided during each session explained how the clitic functions in Spanish and provided a brief comparison of how this function is realized in English (*se* is required in Spanish while English uses other strategies, as described in Chapter 2). Examples of illogical sentences were included in order to show why the clitic *se* is crucial in these Spanish constructions. At the end of each explanation sheet, there was a summary section reminding the participants the main points of the function, and the phonetic qualities of *se* (i.e., that being unstressed makes it difficult to perceive in sentence-medial position).

After reading the explicit information sheets at their own pace, participants completed referential and affective activities designed to enhance the salience of the functions of the clitic *se* and therefore help with input processing (see Appendix D). The treatment activities were created following the principles of PI: one form was presented at a time, meaning was always in focus, both oral and written input was provided, and no output was required of participants at any point during treatment (Wong, 2004). During the SI activities, participants were given five to
seven minutes to finish each activity before the researcher provided correct answers; then, they continued with the next activity.

Given that all three functions of the *se* require third person conjugation, it was important to have unambiguous sentences to differentiate between impersonals and passives. Impersonals accept only singular verbal agreement without pre-verbal NPs, while passives accept both singular and plural verbal agreement with pre-verbal or post-verbal NPs. However, a singular post-verbal noun with singular verbal agreement can be interpreted as either passive or impersonal since both have the same surface structure. For example: *se canta una canción todos los días* can mean ‘a song is sung everyday’ or ‘people sing a song everyday.’ Therefore, items were differentiated by function in order to avoid possible confusion between these functions. For impersonal sentences, apart from singular agreement, other characteristics of exemplars included the personal “a” (*se necesita a esa profesora* ‘people need that teacher’), plural nouns in post-verbal position (*se arregla motores aquí* ‘people repair motors here’), embedded clauses (*se dice que ella está loca* ‘people say that she is crazy’), and verbs that do not accept passivization (*pensar* ‘think,’ *creer* ‘believe,’ etc.).

Table 1 summarizes the SI activities and the items that were present for each function in these activities. Since this present study focused on three functions, the number of items per function was also limited due to time constraints. However, each function had 17 items that were distributed among five tasks to test what L2 learners could do with the clitic *se* in different contexts. The impersonal function activities consisted of three referential and two affective activities. For the first referential activity, participants matched one of two pictures that better depicted a sentence they heard (12 items). For the second activity, they chose one of four

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47 Due to students’ commitments, the test had to be limited to an hour maximum since learners only had one hour per day to participate in this study.
sentences that seemed to be illogical for a given situation (16 items). For the third referential activity, they identified if a written sentence had an impersonal meaning or not (10 items). For the first affective activity, participants read sentences that could be interpreted as applicable or not to the year 2010 (7 items), and marked each sentence accordingly as “true” or “not true.”. For the second affective activity, they identified the country where certain situations were likely to happen (8 items).

The middle voice function consisted of three referential activities and one affective activity. For the first referential activity, participants read two sentences and chose the one that matched a given scenario (6 items). For the second and third referential activities, they identified if a sequence of written sentences (11 items) and the aural sentences (10 items) had a middle voice meaning or not. For the affective activity, participants decided whether or not they agreed with statements they read (6 items). The explicit information sheet focused on reinforcing the presence of the clitic se and demoted the presence of the adverb for this function; therefore, the items in the SI activities consisted of middle sentences containing either adverbs (17 items) or prepositional phrases (8 items).48

The passive voice function included two referential and three affective activities. For the first referential activity, participants listened to two sentences and identified which sentence matched the picture provided (5 items). For the second referential activity, participants read two sentences and chose the one that better applied to a specific situation (6 situations). For the three affective activities, participants identified the likelihood of a situation happening in a dorm (7 items), with their families (8 items), and in a city (8 items). Within these activities, the passive

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48 It was a challenge to create middle voice sentences that could take a prepositional phrase instead of an adverb without sounding ungrammatical. This is why there is a mismatch in the number of items presented in the PI treatment that contained adverbs (24 items) vs. prepositional phrases (9 items).
sentences had the NP in post-verbal position in the situation activity, and the NP was in pre-verbal in all the other SI activities. There were more sentences with *se* in initial position (28 items) than in middle position (6 items); this was done in order to place the *se* in an initial salient position in the sentence.

Table 1

*Number and Type of SI Activities and Items per Function*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>SI Activities</th>
<th>Impersonal</th>
<th></th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th></th>
<th>Passive</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referential</td>
<td>Hear a sentence and choose a picture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Circle the non-logical sentence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify impersonal meaning or something else</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Situations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify characteristics of the NP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>Beliefs / Agree or Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Act. = activity.

Since SI activities focus on processing input, none of these activities required the participants to produce the clitic during treatment.

In order to avoid any possible scaffolding effect, the treatment group was further divided into three subgroups, which completed the three treatment sessions as follows:
1. Group A: Impersonal-Middle-Passive (see Appendix A)
2. Group B: Middle-Passive-Impersonal (see Appendix B)
3. Group C: Passive-Impersonal-Middle (see Appendix C)

Tests

The pre-test (administered a week before the first treatment session) and the post-test (administered the day after the final treatment session)\(^49\) consisted of one interpretation task, two production tasks, and one grammaticality judgment task (see Appendix F for the pre-test and Appendix G for the post-test). The post-test included an additional adverb placement task. No time limit was imposed for completing the tests.\(^50\) In no instance were the tasks or items on either version of the test used during the SI activities. The tasks on the pre-test and the post-test were identical in format so that the two versions would represent the same level of difficulty. This section offers an overview of each task.

The interpretation task consisted of identifying subjects of sentences. The purpose of this task was to see whether participants were able to interpret passive and middle voice sentences as non-agentive since the clitic *se* does not allow an agent in these sentence types. The task for the impersonal constructions tested if participants were able to interpret that the agent was implied in the sentence. During this task, participants underlined what they thought the subject of the sentence was or wrote “implied” if they thought that the subject was not present. A set of three items per function was used in both the pre-test and the post-test.

\(^{49}\) Due to the participants’ classes and personal commitments, it was not possible to schedule the post-test right after the treatment because they did not have two hours in a row to do so. This is why the post-test had to be given on the day after the final treatment session.

\(^{50}\) A pilot study was conducted using five students (not included in this study) in order to examine the difficulty of the comprehension and production tasks in the tests. As a result, some test items were changed with new items in the tests.
There were two production tasks, a sentence completion task and a translation task. Given that the PI treatment focused solely on input processing, including production tasks allowed to test if input-based instruction had an effect on output performance. The sentence completion paragraphs were different for the pre-test and post-test; each paragraph consisted of five critical items per function and nine distractor sentences. Both testing sessions shared the same translation task (2 critical items per function and 3 distractor items). Having the same translation task allowed observation of any changes in participants’ productive abilities resulting from the input-based treatment.

The grammaticality judgment (GJ) task was included to assess if PI had an effect on learners’ grammars. Sorace (1996) argues that there are hierarchies of grammatical acceptability in any language (L1 or L2) and that having only two grammatical categories in a task, either grammatical or ungrammatical, ignores this hierarchy. Therefore, in this study participants chose on a scale from zero to three if the sentence was “ungrammatical” = 0, “somewhat grammatical” = 1, “grammatical” = 2, and if participants could not give a grammatical judgment about the sentence, they marked an ‘X’ in the “do not know” = 3 column. The pre-test included four items per function (2 grammatical and 2 ungrammatical) and four distractor sentences. The post-test included all of the se sentences from the pre-test (hereafter “old items”) in order to see if there was a change in their judgments after treatment. It also included new se sentences (3 grammatical and 2 ungrammatical items per function) in order to see if participants were able to accurately judge the grammaticality of previously-unseen items. The GJ task was placed at the end of the tests in order to prevent the input from the GJ items from affecting answers on the other tasks. As explained in Chapters 2 and 4, for middle constructions it is possible that learners could rely on the presence of an adverb to judge a sentence’s grammaticality. Thus, the
new GJ sentences in the post-test included four items with a prepositional phrase rather than an adverb in order to test whether judgment would be different in the absence of an adverb. For passive constructions, given that the noun can be pre-verbal or post-verbal, the new GJ sentences contained three pre-verbal nouns items and two post-verbal noun items in order to observe the potential influence of noun position on judgments.

Another task included on both the pre-test and post-test was a function identification task in which participants read a sentence (3 items per function plus 4 distractors) and decided if it had a passive, a middle, an impersonal or a different interpretation. If they did not know what the function was, they could also write “do not know.”

The post-test, but not the pre-test, included an adverb placement task to test where learners decided where the clitic *se* could be placed syntactically with relation to adverbs. During the treatment sessions, participants did not receive any kind of instruction on the placement of adverbs in Spanish. As explained in Chapter 2, Cinque (1999) proposed a universal hierarchy of adverb placement; thus, having an adverb placement task allowed observation of how high participants thought the clitic *se* can move in a syntactic derivation in impersonal, middle, and passive constructions. To complete the task, participants marked with an ‘X’ the positions where they believed a Spanish adverb could be placed in a given sentence (4 items per function and no distractors). Their responses would be taken to indicate where the clitic is placed in their interlanguage. Tables 2 and 3 below summarize the tasks and the number of tasks and items per function in the pre-test and the post-test, respectively.
Table 2

*Number of Tasks and Items per Function in the Pre-test*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-test tasks</th>
<th>Impersonal</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Passive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject ID</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 (Adv)</td>
<td>1 (No Adv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 (Adv)</td>
<td>3 (No Adv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GJ</td>
<td>2 (G)</td>
<td>2 (U)</td>
<td>2 (G-Adv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adv = adverb, G = grammatical, GJ = grammaticality judgments, ID = identification, NP-V = preverbal noun, U = ungrammatical, and V-NP = postverbal noun.
Table 3

*Number of Tasks and Items per Function in the Post-test*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Impersonal</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Passive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject ID</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (Adv)</td>
<td>1 (NP-V)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Com.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4 (Adv)</td>
<td>1 (No Adv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GJ</td>
<td>NG</td>
<td>NU</td>
<td>OG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Adv</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adv</td>
<td>Adv</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv. Plac.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 (V-NP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schedule

The timeframe for data collection was as follows:

- Week 1: Contacting Spanish course coordinator and TAs
- Week 2: Visiting Spanish classes to recruit participants
- Weeks 3-4: Gathering participants’ schedules, biographical information questionnaire, and randomly assigning them to a treatment or control group. Sending e-mail reminders about participation in the study
- Week 7: Giving the pre-tests for all the groups
- Week 8: Three treatment days (Monday through Wednesday) and post-tests on Thursday.

During the treatment week (week 8), make-up treatment sessions were scheduled. As previously mentioned, participants who completed the treatment were divided into three subgroups, and each subgroup completed the treatment sessions in a different order. This allowed for students who missed one session to go to another group to make up that session. The treatment activities were the same for all groups. However, the explanation sheets were different for each group because each sheet had a reminder of the function presented the day before; this was done with the purpose of showing participants that the *se* has many functions and that they needed to separate the function studied the day before from the function they were about to study. When a student went to another group, s/he received the same activities but did not receive that group’s explanation sheet. Instead, s/he received the sheet that s/he was supposed to receive during the missed session. This ensured that all the participants were still following the order of the group to which they were originally assigned. In all cases, the make-up session was completed before a participant rejoined their original group for the next treatment session. The
fact that the participant was able to make up a session in another group did not require any extra accommodation for the participant or for the researcher.

Data Scoring

For the sentence completion, subject identification and the function identification tasks on the pre-test and the post-test, a correct answer earned one point, and an incorrect or a blank answer earned zero points. Partial points were not awarded. Spelling did not count in scoring. The same scoring procedure was used for the translation tasks on both tests; however, this task differed in that participants had the choice to translate sentences either using the clitic se or not. Hence, if participants translated the sentence using the clitic se correctly, they received one point; if it was incorrect, they received zero points; and if they translated the sentence using other strategies that did not require se, then this answer did not count towards their total task score. For example, an English impersonal sentence such as ‘someone scared the children’ can be translated (a) by using the clitic se, as in se asustó a los niños ‘someone scared the children’ or (b) by using an impersonal noun, such as in alguien asustó a los niños ‘someone scared the children’. Taking into account that there were two items per function, strategy (a) counted towards point assignment, but strategy (b) did not. Therefore, if a participant chose (a) for one sentence but (b) for another sentence, then his/her total score for this function was one out of one. As a result, given that participants had different proportional scores, the scores were converted to percentages in order to conduct statistical analysis for this task.

For the GJ task in the pre-test, a correct identification of grammaticality earned one point, incorrect answers earned zero points, and “do not know” answers did not earn points. This task

51 The distractor sentences were not included either in the scoring or in the statistical analysis.
on the post-test was coded depending on the grammaticality judgment that participants completed on the pre-test. A correct identification of grammaticality earned one point, an incorrect identification earned zero points, and “do not know” answers did not earn points. However, for the old items, if on the pre-test they judged the sentence as ungrammatical but it was grammatical (or vice versa), and if in the post-test they marked the sentence as “somewhat grammatical,” participants earned one point. This was done in order to account for the fact that there was a more target-like change in their grammaticality judgment.

The adverb placement task did not receive points because this task was used to examine what Spanish L2 learners’ adverb placement in a *se* sentence suggested about their interlanguage syntax. The results of this task are presented by the number of participants who placed the adverb in the same position. This number allowed checking for patterns in adverb placement when compared to the Spanish native speakers’ adverb placement data.

A series of one-way ANOVA tests were conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between the treatment and control groups’ scores on each task. In addition, when necessary, paired-samples *t*-tests were done in order to test whether there was a significant change in accuracy of performance from pre-test to post-test within each group. The results of these analyses are presented in Chapter 7.
CHAPTER 7

RESULTS

This study seeks to answer the following research questions: First, as assessed by the subject identification task, did PI help to improve L2 Spanish learners’ accuracy in interpretation of the clitic se functions? Second, as evaluated by the translation and sentence completion tasks, did PI help to improve L2 Spanish learners’ accuracy in production of the clitic se functions? Third, as indicated by the performance on grammaticality judgment tasks, did PI have an effect on learners’ internal grammar? Taking into account that this research focuses on L2 learning of three different functions of Spanish se, this section reports the results of one-way ANOVAs by function and by task on the pre-tests and on the gain scores (i.e., the difference between the post-test scores and the pre-test scores).

One-way ANOVAs were conducted on the pre-test scores to test for differences between groups prior to PI treatment. One-way ANOVAs conducted on the gain scores were done to take into account possible differences between the groups at the pre-test stage. Given that the number of items for the same task varied from pre-test to post-test, the mean values for the se function tasks are reported as proportions in order to have the test scores on the same scale for statistical analysis. These results also report the partial eta squared (η²) value in order to show the effect size for these ANOVA tests. This section answers the research questions above in light of these results, addressing each function individually.
Middle Voice Function

Looking at the interpretation task, subject identification task, for middle sentences containing an adverb, the means of the treatment group did not improve after the treatment since the pre-test and post-test scores do not differ significantly between groups (see Table 1).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics. Middle Function Subject Identification Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub. ID-Adverb</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Sub. ID = Subject identification

A one-way ANOVA conducted on the pre-test showed that the groups differed at the pre-test stage (see Table 2). However, a one-way ANOVA performed on the gain scores between the post-test and the pre-test scores showed no significant difference between the groups’ performance from pre-test to post-test. The groups’ performance is illustrated in Figure 1.
Table 2

One-way ANOVA Tests. Middle Function Interpretation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Partial η²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subj. ID - Adv</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>4.083</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>1.494</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.226</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Adv = Adverb, and Subj. ID = Subject identification. Findings are statistically significant at the p < .05 level.

Figure 1. Middle voice interpretation. Subject identification task

In the light of these results, a partial answer can be given for research question one. PI did not help participants to improve their interpretation of middle voice sentences as assessed by their performance on this subject identification task.
Table 3 shows that the treatment group outperformed the control group when producing middle sentences that required the clitic \textit{se}.

Table 3

\textit{Descriptive Statistics. Middle Function Production}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp. – Adv</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp – No Adv</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Note.} Adv = Adverb, and Sent. Comp. = Sentence completion

One-way ANOVAs conducted on the pre-test scores for the sentence completion task showed no difference between the groups’ performance at this stage (see Table 4 below). A one-way ANOVA done on the gain scores between pre-test and post-test revealed a significant difference between the performance of the treatment group compared to the control group in middle sentences with adverbs and prepositional phrases that specifically required the clitic \textit{se}. The partial \(\eta^2\) on the gain scores revealed that 14\% of the gain that L2 participants made can be attributed to the PI treatment; thus, there are other factors that can also explain their performance (further developed in the conclusion discussion in Chapter 8). Hereafter, this is how these partial
\(\eta^2\) results should be interpreted for the other tasks and functions. Likewise, for the translation task, a one-way ANOVA conducted on the pre-test showed no difference between the groups. A one-way ANOVA on the gain scores showed a significant difference between the treatment group and the control group when translating middle sentences that required \textit{se}. The performance of the treatment and the control groups for the sentence completion task is illustrated in Figure 2 and for the translation task in Figure 3.

Table 4

\textit{One-way ANOVA Tests. Middle Function Production}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>(F)</th>
<th>Partial (\eta^2)</th>
<th>(P)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp. – Adv</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain Scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>9.844</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp. – No Adv</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>1.969</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain Scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>7.343</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>1.766</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain Scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>13.178</td>
<td>.178</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \textit{Adv} = Adverb, and \textit{Sent. Comp.} = Sentence completion. Findings are statistically significant at the \(p < .05\) level.
Figure 2. Middle function sentence completion task

Figure 3. Middle function translation task
Taking into account the results of both production tasks for answering the second research question, the treatment group outperformed the control group on production of Spanish middle sentences. Thus, PI helped to improve the accuracy in the production of middle sentences.

Table 5 shows the average proportional scores for the GJ task. For items evaluated on pre-test as well as on post-test (i.e., old items), the treatment group outperformed the control group for both grammatical and ungrammatical sentences. For items evaluated only at post-test (i.e., new items), the treatment group outperformed the control group in the accuracy of judgments for ungrammatical sentences but not for grammatical ones.
Table 5

**Descriptive Statistics. Middle Function Grammaticality Judgments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tests</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. Adv.</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. Adv.</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. No Adv.</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. Adv.</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. No Adv.</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The N values varied because some participants chose the answer “do not know” for some sentences.

Abbreviations: Adv. = Adverb, Gram. = grammatical, and Ungram. = ungrammatical

Results of a one-way ANOVA (Table 6) conducted on the pre-test GJ scores showed no difference between the groups’ judgments of grammatical sentences with adverbs but the groups differed in their ability to identify ungrammatical sentences with adverbs, with the control group outperforming the treatment group. A one-way ANOVA conducted on the gain scores revealed that the treatment group performed significantly better than the control group at identifying both grammatical sentences (old items with adverbs) and ungrammatical sentences (old items with adverbs). A one-way ANOVA on the new items with prepositional phrases present only in the
post-test showed that the treatment group outperformed the control group in the identification of ungrammatical sentences. However, there was no significant difference between the groups in their ability to identify new grammatical items with prepositional phrases.

Taking into account that there was already a significant difference between the groups’ pre-test scores when identifying ungrammatical middle sentences with adverbs (old items), paired-sample $t$-tests were conducted on each group’s test scores to further assess performance. Results revealed that the performance of the control group, $t(30) = 2.530, p = .017, d = .6214$, and the treatment group, $t(30) = -5.906, p = .000, d = -1.41023$, significantly differed from pre-test to post-test; while the treatment group significantly improved their performance from pre-test to post-test, the control group decreased in their accuracy at correctly identifying the grammaticality of these sentences. Figure 4 illustrates how the groups performed from pre-test to post-test on this task for old items, and Figure 5 illustrates the participants’ performance on the new items on the post-test.
Table 6

One-way ANOVA Tests. *Middle Voice Function Grammaticality Judgments*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Old items</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. Adv.</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 58</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 58</td>
<td>14.559</td>
<td>.201</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. Adv.</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 60</td>
<td>8.438</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 60</td>
<td>35.421</td>
<td>.371</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New items</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. No Adv.</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1, 60</td>
<td>2.102</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. No Adv.</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1, 55</td>
<td>7.292</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. Adv.</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1, 56</td>
<td>9.790</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Findings are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. Abbreviations: Adv. = Adverb, Gram. = grammatical, and Ungram. = ungrammatical.
**Figure 4.** Middle voice function. Grammaticality judgments of old sentences with adverbs

**Figure 5.** Middle voice function. Grammaticality judgments of new sentences
Summarizing the results for the middle voice function of *se*, PI helped participants to improve the accuracy of their judgments regarding the middle voice function when sentences included an adverb, but not a prepositional phrase. Regarding interpretation, PI did not help participants in their accuracy at interpreting but it did help with their production of this function.

**Passive Voice Function**

Turning now to the subject identification task for passive *se* constructions, when the subject was in post-verbal position, the treatment group’s mean decreased from pre-test to post-test while the control group’s mean stayed stable (see Table 7). There was not a sizeable difference in the post-test between the groups’ means when the subject was pre-verbal.

Table 7

*Descriptive Statistics. Passive Function Subject Identification Task*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>N</em></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td><em>SD</em></td>
<td><em>N</em></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-verbal Subj. ID.</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-verbal Subj. ID.</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Since the number of items for this task varied from pre-test to post-test, proportional scores were calculated and used for data analysis of this task. Abbreviation: Subj. ID = subject identification.

As illustrated in Table 8, one-way ANOVAs conducted on the pre-test scores for post-verbal nouns showed no significant between-groups difference. Likewise, a one-way ANOVA
on the gain scores showed no significant difference in performance between groups. In addition, a one-way ANOVA conducted on pre-verbal nouns, tested only during the post-test, also revealed that there was no significant difference between these groups’ respective performances. Figure 6 illustrates the groups’ performance on the pre-test and the post-test for post-verbal noun structures, and Figure 7 illustrates groups’ performance on the pre-verbal noun structure tested at post-test.

Table 8

One-way ANOVA Tests. Passive Function Subject Identification Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-verbal subject</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.294</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.204</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-verbal subject</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.968</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.329</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Findings are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level.
Figure 6. Passive Function. Subject identification with post-verbal noun

Figure 7. Passive Function. Subject identification with pre-verbal noun
The first research question can be partially answered in light of these results. The PI treatment group did not outperform the control group in interpreting passive sentences with post-verbal nouns. On the contrary, the ability to correctly identify post-verbal subjects decreased in the PI group. For pre-verbal nouns tested at post-test, the groups performed similarly in this task.

Next, regarding the passive function production tasks, Table 9 shows that for the sentence completion task the mean scores of both groups improved from pre-test to post-test. For the translation task, the pre-test mean of the control group is higher than that of the treatment group. However, the treatment group mean increased considerably from pre-test to post-test compared to the control group mean, which improved minimally.
Table 9

Descriptive Statistics. Passive Sentence Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp.-Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp.-Post-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation - Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. For the translation task, the N values varied because the participants had the opportunity to translate these sentences using the clitic se or other strategy. If they chose the other strategy, then, that item was excluded from the statistical analysis. The vast majority of the participants translated these sentences with pre-verbal subjects. Therefore, only the results of this structure are presented in this section. Abbreviation: Sent. Comp. = Sentence completion.

A one-way ANOVA conducted on the pre-test proportional scores for the sentence completion task yielded no significant difference between the groups. A one-way ANOVA done on the gain scores revealed no significant difference between the groups from pre-test to post-test on either item type for sentence completion (see Table 10). For the translation task, there was a difference in performance between groups on the pre-test. Taking into account that the groups already differed at the pre-test stage, a paired-samples t-test was conducted to further examine individual groups’ performance. Results revealed that the treatment group $t(25) = -5.957, p$
=.000, \textit{d} = -1.55801, significantly improved from pre-test to post-test while the control group did not, \textit{t}(25) = -1.690, \textit{p} = .103, \textit{d} = -.26108. The performance of both groups for the sentence completion task is illustrated in Figure 8, and the translation task is illustrated in Figure 9.

Table 10

\textit{One-way ANOVAs. Passive Function Production Tasks}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>\textit{df}</th>
<th>\textit{F}</th>
<th>Partial ( \eta^2 )</th>
<th>\textit{p}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp.- Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>2.386</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp.- Post-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.376</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>1.930</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation- Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 53</td>
<td>6.592</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 50</td>
<td>10.691</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Note.} Findings are statistically significant at the \textit{p} < .05 level. Abbreviations: NP = noun phrase, and Sent. Comp. = sentence completion.
Figure 8. Passive function. Sentence completion with pre-verbal and post-verbal nouns

Figure 9. Passive function. Translations with pre-verbal nouns
Finally, Table 1 shows that for the passive translation task, the mean scores of both groups improved from pre-test to post-test. At the same time that their use of the clitic *se* increased, the use of the periphrastic passive\(^{52}\) decreased as illustrated by both groups’ means. However, the treatment group mean increased considerably from pre-test to post-test compared to the control group mean, which also showed some improvement.

Table 11

*Descriptive Statistics. Translation of Periphrastic and se Passive Sentences*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>N</em></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td><em>SD</em></td>
<td><em>N</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation-Se</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.355</td>
<td>.469</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.855</td>
<td>.294</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation-Periphrastic</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.597</td>
<td>.473</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.145</td>
<td>.294</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way ANOVA conducted on the pre-test proportional scores for the translation task when using either the periphrastic passive or the *se* passive, yielded no significant difference between the groups. A one-way ANOVA done on the gain scores revealed a significant difference between the groups from pre-test to post-test when translating the passive sentences using the clitic *se*, since the PI group increased both the frequency and the accuracy of use of the

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\(^{52}\) Sentences that were considered periphrastic were sentences that contained the verb *ser* ‘to be’ + verb in past participle, or any other instances where the learners were using another auxiliary verb such as *estar* ‘to be.’ These latter forms were included into this periphrastic category since learners were using the auxiliary verb which was functioning as the auxiliary verb in this passive form.
*se* in passive sentences. However, there was not a significant difference between the groups when translating the passive using a periphrastic form (see Table 12). These results are illustrated in Figure 10 below.

Table 12

*One-way ANOVAs. Se Passive and Periphrastic Passive*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Se passive</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>1.673</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>4.349</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periphrastic passive</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>.737</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>3.038</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>.086</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Findings are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Figure 10. Passive translations. Translations with *se* and periphrastic forms
A partial answer can be given for the second research question regarding production. The results for the production tasks showed that PI helped participants to more accurately translate passive sentences; however, PI did not help participants to produce the clitic \textit{se} with more accuracy on a sentence completion task.

Moving on to the third task for the passive function, the GJ task, Table 13 shows that the groups’ proportional scores for new items and grammatical old items did not change considerably from pre-test to post-test. However, for ungrammatical judgments of old items, the treatment group’s mean increased noticeable as compared to the control group’s.
### Table 13

_Descriptive Statistics. Passive Function Grammaticality Judgment Task_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. Post-verbal NP</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Note._ The N value varies among the different grammaticality judgment sentences due to the selection of the “do not know” answer by some participants in both pre-test and post-test. Abbreviations: Gram. = grammatical, and Ungram. = ungrammatical.

One-way ANOVAs done on the pre-test showed no significant difference in performance between groups for either grammatical or ungrammatical sentences (old or new items) from pre-test to post-test (see Table 14). A one-way ANOVA test for the GJ overall reinforced the results in this task; there was not a significant difference between the groups from pre-test to post-test in either grammatical or ungrammatical passive voice sentences. The group performance on this
task is illustrated in Figure 11 for old items and in Figure 12 for the new items tested only in the post-test.

Table 14

One-way ANOVA Tests. Passive Function Grammaticality Judgment Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Partial η²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.415</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 60</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 60</td>
<td>3.053</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1, 53</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungram. Pre-verbal NP</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1, 59</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram. Post-verbal NP</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.609</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Findings are statistically significant at the p < .05 level. Abbreviations: Gram. = grammatical, and Ungram. = ungrammatical.
Figure 11. Passive grammaticality judgments for old items

Figure 12. Passive grammaticality judgments for new items
In summary, the results pertaining to the passive function of se suggest that PI did not help participants to interpret passive se sentences with either pre-verbal or post-verbal NPs; regarding production, PI helped participants to accurately use se in the translation task but not in the sentence completion task, and lastly, the PI treatment did not help to modify participants’ judgments regarding sentence grammaticality.

**Impersonal Function**

Turning now to the impersonal se items included in the subject identification task, as Table 15 shows, neither group improved considerably in their performance on this sentence type.

Table 15

*Descriptive Statistics. Impersonal Subject Identification Task*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subj. ID.</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The N varies from pre-test to post-test in this task because one participant did not complete this task.

Abbreviation: Subj. ID. = Subject identification.

A one-way ANOVA (see Table 16 below) conducted on the pre-test showed no significant difference in performance between groups. Likewise, a one-way ANOVA on the gain scores showed no significant performance between the groups from pre-test to post-test. Figure 13 illustrates the two groups’ performance on this task.
Among these results, the first research question can be partially answered as follows: Exposure to PI did not help with the interpretation of impersonal sentences as assessed by participants’ performance on the subject identification task.
Looking production performance for the impersonal function, Table 17 shows the group scores for the two production tasks: sentence completion and translation. Both groups improved their performance on the sentence completion task, and the treatment group improved its performance on the translation task more than the control group.

Table 17

*Descriptive Statistics. Impersonal Function Production Tasks*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$N$</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$N$</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp.</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* For the translation task, the $N$ values varied because the participants had the opportunity to translate these sentences using the clitic *se* or another strategy. If they chose the other strategy, then that item was excluded from the statistical analysis. The vast majority of the participants translated these sentences with pre-verbal subjects. Therefore, only the results of this structure are presented in this section. Abbreviations: Sent. Comp. = sentence completion.

As shown in Table 18 below, a one-way ANOVA on the pre-test scores as well as on the gain scores for the sentence completion task showed no significant difference between the groups. For the translation task, a one-way ANOVA conducted on the pre-test showed no difference between the groups. However, a one-way ANOVA conducted on the gain scores
showed a significant difference in performance between the groups. These results confirmed that the treatment group outperformed the control group when translating impersonal sentences. The performance of the groups is illustrated in Figure 14 for the sentence completion task and in Figure 15 for the translation task.

Table 18

One-way ANOVA Tests. Impersonal Production Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sent. Comp.</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.329</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.881</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 45</td>
<td>0.491</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 42</td>
<td>36.045</td>
<td>.462</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Findings are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. Abbreviation: Sent. Comp. = Sentence Completion
Figure 14. Impersonal function. Sentence completion task

Figure 15. Impersonal function. Translation task
In partial answer to the second research question, these results showed that PI helped improve the production of impersonal sentences on the translation task but not on the sentence completion task.

Lastly, regarding the GJ task in the impersonal function, both groups improved their performance for the old items as seen in the means in Table 19. However, the treatment group did not differ from the control group in their judgment of old ungrammatical sentences. For the new items, the mean of the treatment group is considerably higher for ungrammatical sentences than the mean of the control group, although both groups seemed to have performed the same with grammatical sentences.
### Descriptive Statistics. Impersonal Function Grammaticality Judgment Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Old items</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungrammatical</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New items</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungrammatical</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The N values varied between groups because participants had the opportunity to select a “do not know” answer for this task. Therefore, proportional scores were calculated and used for statistical analysis. *Note:* Findings are statistically significant at the p < .05 level.

The results of one-way ANOVAs (Table 20) conducted on the pre-test scores and on the gain scores showed no significant difference in the groups’ performance on either grammatical or ungrammatical old items. A one-way ANOVA revealed a significant difference between both groups for new ungrammatical items but not for new grammatical items. Groups’ performance for judging the grammaticality of old items is illustrated in Figure 16 and in Figure 17 for new items.
### Table 20

*One-way ANOVA Tests. Impersonal Function Grammaticality Judgments*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Partial $\eta^2$</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>.941</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungrammatical</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 57</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 55</td>
<td>2.135</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1, 60</td>
<td>1.518</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungrammatical</td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>6.788</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Findings are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level.

---

![Figure 16](image)

*Figure 16.* Impersonal grammaticality judgments for old items
Figure 17. Impersonal grammaticality judgments for new items

Taking into account these results, both groups seem to experience difficulties in providing correct grammaticality judgments. Therefore, PI did not seem to help in the recognition of grammatical vs. ungrammatical impersonal sentences. In general, the results suggests that PI did not help participants to better interpret this function, and PI helped participants to accurately use se when tranlating, but not in a sentence completion task.

To summarize the results of all three functions of se, the ANOVA tests conducted on the three se function tasks revealed mixed results. Regarding interpretation, assessed in this study through a subject identification task, PI was better than no instruction for improving participants’ accuracy at interpreting middle sentences. On the production tasks involving the middle voice, the treatment group significantly outperformed the control group. For impersonal constructions, the treatment group did not appear to benefit from PI for interpreting these constructions or for producing se accurately on a sentence completion task. However, PI seemed to help the
treatment group improve its accuracy of performance on translation of impersonal constructions. For the passive se construction, the treatment group’s performance on the interpretation task was not significantly different from that of the control group with post-verbal subject structures. For production, PI helped the treatment group improve their translation of passive constructions involving the clitic se, but did not seem to help them produce se more accurately on a sentence completion task. These results are further detailed in Chapter 8.

Function Identification Task

For the function identification task, participants in the treatment group outperformed the control group from pre-test to post-test as shown in Table 21. Given that the function identification task was part of two different tasks, answers were combined into one score.

Table 21

*Descriptive Statistics. Impersonal Function Identification Task*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One-way ANOVAs conducted on the pre-test scores revealed no significant between-groups difference before treatment. One-way ANOVAs conducted on the gain scores of the three *se* functions showed mixed results (see Table 22). There was a significant difference between groups when identifying the function of the clitic *se* in middle and impersonal constructions, but not in passive ones. The groups’ performance is illustrated in Figure 18.

Table 22

*One-way ANOVA Tests. Impersonal Function Identification Task*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Partial η²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.450</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>43.497</td>
<td>.416</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>2.007</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>0.955</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain scores</td>
<td>1, 61</td>
<td>11.797</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Findings are statistically significant at the p < .05 level.
Figure 18. Identification of the functions of the clitic *se*

**Adverb Placement Task**

The results of the adverb placement task, completed at post-test only, showed where participants placed the adverb in middle, passive, and impersonal sentences. In both English and Spanish, negation is placed before the lexical verb, as in *John does not eat apples* and *Juan no come manzanas*, respectively. Therefore, given that Spanish *se + verb* is a verbal unit, it was expected that participants would place the adverbs before this verbal unit. Taking this into account, sentences with the adverb “no” were used as control sentences to test whether Spanish
L2 learners would follow this same placement pattern. The numbers on each line below represent the number of participants (out of 63) who placed the parenthetical adverb in that position (an asterisk shows that the placement of the adverb is ungrammatical):

**Middle sentences:**

_ *7 _ las blusas de seda _57 _ se _ *4 _ lavan _ *7 _ con cuidado _ *1 _ \(\text{(no)}\)

‘Silk blouses are washed carefully’

**Impersonal sentences:**

__57 __ se __ *7 _ azotó __ *4 __ a los delincuentes __ *1 __ \(\text{(no)}\)

‘Someone slapped the delinquents’

**Passive sentences:**

__56 __ se __ *6 __ oyeron __ *6 __ unos ruidos extraños __ *2 __ \(\text{(no)}\)

‘Strange noises were heard’

Even though few participants placed “no” in different places, the majority of the participants revealed the same pattern of adverb placement. The other set of adverb placement sentences used in this task are shown below:
Middle sentences (study participants):

a) _29_ las cartas a máquina _36_ se _*3_ leen _*8_ mejor _*45_ (probablemente)
   ‘Typed letters are read better’
   ‘probably’

b) _40_ las tortas _25_ se _*3_ hacen _12_ con harina _47_ (usualmente)
   ‘Cakes are made with flour’
   ‘usually’

c) _*13_ esta camisa _16_ se _*1_ limpia _52_ (suavemente)
   ‘This shirt is cleaned’
   ‘softly/gently’

Impersonal sentences (study participants):

a) _37_ se _*2_ necesita _8_ a esa profesora _52_ (supuestamente)
   ‘People need that teacher’
   ‘supposedly’

b) _37_ se _*1_ corre _21_ en la mañana _49_ (intencionalmente)
   ‘People run in the morning’
   ‘intentionally’

c) _52_ se _*1_ cuenta _11_ la misma historia _42_ (siempre)
   ‘People tell the same story’
   ‘always’

Passive sentences (study participants):

a) _46_ se _*2_ construyeron _8_ muchas casas _47_ (posiblemente)
   ‘Several houses were built’
   ‘possibly’

b) _45_ se _*2_ quemaron _4_ muchos bosques _48_ (desafortunadamente)
   ‘Many forests were burned’
   ‘unfortunately’
c) __37__ se __*2__ solucionaron __7__ los problemas __55__
    ‘The problems were solved’
    ‘briefly’

The results of this task showed that Spanish L2 learners place adverbs in diverse positions in their syntactic representations.

The sentences below show the answers provided by 14 Spanish native speakers for this same task:

*Middle sentences (Spanish native speakers):*

a) __*1__ las blusas de seda __14__ se ____ lavan ___ con cuidado __ (no)

b) __9___ las cartas a máquina __6_ se ____ leen ______ mejor _____ (probablemente)

c) __11__ las tortas __5__  se ____ hacen__4___ con harina __4__ (usualmente)

d) ______ esta camisa _____ se ______ limpia __14___ (suavemente)

*Impersonal sentences (Spanish native speakers):*

a) ___14___ se ______ azotó ___ a los delincuentes ____ (no)

b) __12___ se ___ necesita __7____ a esa profesora __5__ (supuestamente)

b) __9__ se ______ corre __7__ en la mañana _9_____ (intencionalmente)

d) ___11__  se ______ cuenta _11___ la misma historia __8__ (siempre)

*Passive sentences (Spanish native speakers):*

a) __14__ se ____ oyeron ______ unos ruidos extraños ______ (no)
b) __11__ se ___ construyeron __4___ muchas casas __6__ (posiblemente)

c) __14__ se ______ quemaron __4___ muchos bosques _8___ (desafortunadamente)

d) ___3___ se ____ solucionaron __5____ los problemas _9__ (brevemente)

The results of the placement of the adverb “no” for Spanish native speakers show that Spanish L2 learners follow the same adverb placement pattern for this negative adverb. However, looking at the participants’ placement of other adverbs, it differs in some cases from placements provided by Spanish native speakers. These results are discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.
CHAPTER 8
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigates the effects of Processing Instruction on the acquisition of the clitic \textit{se} in middle, passive and impersonal constructions by English native speakers learning L2 Spanish. This chapter addresses each research question, in a separate subsection, in light of the results presented in Chapter 7. The first section in this chapter addresses the first research question about interpretation of the functions of the clitic. The second section addresses the production, and the third section focuses on the restructuring of participants’ grammars. The last section focuses on the position of the clitic in learners’ grammars and how their IL is represented at this stage of their L2 acquisition. Finally, some preliminary conclusions are made regarding the L2 development of the study’s participants.

**Does Processing Instruction Improve L2 Learners’ Accuracy of the Interpretation of the Functions of the Clitic \textit{se}?**

The statistical analyses in this study yielded results that contradict previous PI research. As outlined in Chapter 4, VanPatten and Cadierno (1993), VanPatten and Oikkenon (1996), VanPatten (2004), and Farley and Keating (2008) claim that PI helps with the interpretation of grammatical forms. However, it would be premature to state this study’s SI activities did not help participants to improve their interpretation of the \textit{se} functions as indicated by the treatment group’s gain scores, which did not differ significantly from the control group’s for any of the three functions of \textit{se}. Two possible explanations for these results are either that participants were
unable to make the correct form-meaning connections for the clitic, or that the subject identification task was too difficult due to its metalinguistic nature.

With regard to the first explanation, it is possible that learners had difficulties making the correct form-meaning connections because se has three distinct functions in this study. In all three functions, both groups identified the grammatical subjects of the sentences which could be due to the position of the NP. Even though learners were introduced to each function separately, these functions have similar surface structures which can make it difficult to discriminate the crucial traits among them. In passives, learners may have had difficulties identifying the correct subject with post-verbal NP structures. The fact that English does not allow post-verbal subjects could have been the source of learners’ uncertainty on how to interpret a post-verbal subject, since they are bound by their L1 parameters. In middle function sentences, learners did not have difficulties identifying a pre-verbal NP as the subject. Given that the control group also improved on this task, it is likely that participants were following their L1 parameter where NPs in initial position are the subject, without really distinguishing between the grammatical subject and the notional subject (i.e., the agent or doer of the action). In impersonal sentences, both groups again performed similarly, possibly because these sentences included either the NP within a prepositional phrase that provided information about where the action takes place or a personal “a” that syntactically marked the NP present as a direct object. During the first semester of Spanish classes, learners are taught that a [+human] NP in object requires the personal “a” as in John vio a Martha ‘John saw Martha.’ Therefore, contrary to the other two se functions, it is possible that neither group had difficulties interpreting impersonal constructions due to these morphological cues.
Turning now to the second possible answer to the first research question, the task may have been demanding due to its metalinguistic nature. In the PI treatment, it was explicitly explained to learners that the agent, the subject position, and the object are different elements. This explanation was included in order to highlight the incorrect processing strategy of assuming that the first NP of the sentence is the agent. During the interpretation task, it would have been incorrect if learners had marked the subject as ‘implied’ in middle and passive constructions since it was implied only in impersonal constructions. Marking the subject as implied would have shown that learners were unable to separate the semantic agent from the grammatical subject. However, given that both the treatment and the control group correctly identified the grammatical subject, this task did not allow further testing if learners were indeed separating the notions of agent vs. subject. In examples such as *La ropa blanca se ensucia inmediatamente* ‘white clothes get dirty immediately,’ learners correctly identified that the subject of the sentence is “la ropa.” If the instructions of the task had required identification of the agent of the action, then, by choosing “la ropa” it would have been clear that they were conflating agent and subject notions. However, given that the instructions for this task asked only for the identification of the subject, it is unclear if they were identifying the grammatical subject or what they thought to be the subject of the sentence (i.e., NP doer). It is likely that learners were still using the first noun strategy and conflating these two elements.

Selinker (1972) explained that in cases where the L1 and the L2 differ in terms of language properties or parameters interference occurs and in cases where the L1 and the L2 are similar, positive transfer results. Thus, the L1 plays a crucial role because it can facilitate or impede the L2 acquisition process. In this study, the major obstacle for these Spanish L2
learners was acquiring a overtly expressed morpheme that embodies the absence of an argument. The main concern is that \textit{se} is not morphologically an NP to be considered an argument. If participants analyzed \textit{se} as the subject of the sentence, then they are using the first noun strategy; this shows that the effect of their L1 is still noticeable during this early stage of L2 acquisition.

Additionally, regarding the middle voice function, participants could have used other strategies to interpret the function accurately. Both English and Spanish middle voice constructions usually have an adverb present. Given this syntactic similarity, it is possible that learners relied on the presence of an adverb rather than on the meaning conveyed by the clitic \textit{se}, which is in the middle position of the sentence, for identifying the middle function. Therefore, this adverbial similarity between English and Spanish seemed to have made it more difficult to make the correct form-meaning connection between the morpheme and its middle function.

Results of the function identification task revealed that after treatment the PI group correctly identified the functions of the clitic \textit{se} significantly more than the control group. The PI group was able to differentiate the \textit{se} functions even though it seemed that they were unable to make the correct form-meaning connections. Even though this task is metalinguistic in nature, it allowed participants to identify by name L2 structures that are not instantiated as such in their L1. I acknowledge that, like any other methodology, these tasks were not perfect; still, they allowed the observation that participants were able to identify that not every instance of \textit{se} is reflexive or reciprocal.

Finally, the lack of success at making form-meaning connections between the clitic \textit{se} and the three functions which were the focus of this study may have been due to insufficient
exposure to L2 input. Learners were exposed to the three functions for three days (one function per day), which may not have been enough time for them to make stable form-meaning connections. Like Bruhn de Garavito’s (1999) study, the challenge for Spanish L2 learners may have been that one morpheme conveys different meanings despite similar syntactic structures of the three sentences constructions. In order to arrive at a better interpretation of these functions, it seems to be necessary to be exposed to more L2 input as well as to be presented one function at a time, because the syntactic similarities among the functions make it difficult to discriminate one from another. In other words, agreeing with Lee and VanPatten (2003), it is not sufficient to present one form (during any kind of instruction); it is essential also to take into account whether the focus form has several functions, and if so, it is necessary to divide the presentation of this form per individual function to help learners to successfully discriminate among them.

**Does Processing Instruction Improve Learners’ Accuracy in the Production of se as Evidenced in the Sentence Completion and Translation Tasks?**

The results of statistical analysis conducted on the production tasks yielded mixed results. On the one hand, the PI group improved its production of middle voice constructions on both the sentence completion and translation tasks. On the other hand, the PI group was able to produce the clitic se for passives and impersonals on the translation task, but not on the sentence completion task. These results show that even though PI helped improve performance on some types of production tasks, performance depended to some degree on task type.

On the translation task, the PI group produced the clitic se in more instances than the control group, and the control group used se incorrectly. The translations items were the same
for both pre-test and post-test in order to assess if there was a change in performance. The fact that the PI group improved compared to the control group cannot be attributed to memorization of the sentences because they did not see these sentences during the treatment sessions. This aligns with Bruhn de Garavito’s (1999) claim that learners did not resort to memorization in her research since they differentiated among the *se* passive, impersonal and inchoative functions, all of which have the same surface structure *se VP NP*. However, it is important to mention that during this task, learners translated English sentences which could have given them cues of what grammatical structure to use when translating these sentences.

With regard to production of the passive construction, L1 transfer was observed in learners’ translations. Learners produced nouns only in pre-verbal position in the passive sentences, even though during treatment they were instructed that the noun can be in either pre-verbal or post-verbal position. In addition, the majority of the passive items in the SI activities illustrated post-verbal structures. The fact that learners translated these sentences only with pre-verbal nouns shows that the requirement of English to have an overt NP in subject position is strong in L1 English speakers; therefore, they may be resistant to any associated parameter resetting during L2 learning, at least at this level.

In contrast, the sentence completion task showed a different pattern of results. The treatment group successfully produced the clitic *se* for middle sentences, but not for passive or impersonal constructions. For middle sentences, the PI group was able to correctly insert *se* with or without adverbs present in the sentence, while the control group failed to do so (see Table 3 in Chapter 7). This pattern of results shows that the PI group did not rely solely on the presence of the adverb to produce the clitic *se* in this task. For passive functions, there was not a significant
between-groups difference for producing *se* in sentences with either pre-verbal NPs or post-verbal NPs (see Table 9 in Chapter 7). Given that learners had difficulties interpreting the passive *se* (i.e., failing to differentiate between the notional and the grammatical subject), this within-subjects discrepancy in performance on the sentence completion production task could be due to the fact that in English the agent is usually introduced by the preposition *by*, while the agent is absent in these Spanish passive *se* constructions. Therefore, it is possible that participants needed activities that required differentiating between the periphrastic and the *se* passives. This could have helped them modify their processing strategy that the agent needs to be present in this construction. For impersonal constructions, both groups performed similarly as well. It is possible that both groups guessed where to include the clitic *se* because they were unsure about where the agent was (see Table 17 in Chapter 7). In addition, taking into account that English only allows subject NPs to be in pre-verbal position, while in Spanish passives sentences the subject NP can be in either pre-verbal or post-verbal positions and in impersonals the NP is in post-verbal position, this might have impeded from changing their processing strategies, which in turn may have led them to guess when to insert the *se* in these sentences.

It is important to take into account the nature of these production tasks. Even though both tasks were guided production, the translation task seems to have given cues to learners compared to the sentence completion task. The sentence completion task consisted of a paragraph combining all three *se* functions, and having all the functions mixed into one paragraph could have been cognitively demanding. Learners were introduced to each function separately and the SI activities did not have examples illustrating these three functions together. Additionally, the SI activities consisted of identifying situations or matching sentences with
pictures but none of the activities included the functions in a paragraph length exercise. This could be one reason why learners had difficulties with this task, since the functions were all combined into one paragraph making it difficult to differentiate among them.

In contrast, the translation task contained separate sentences in English that participants needed to translate into Spanish. During the treatment, PI participants were shown how these functions were morphologically expressed in both English and Spanish. Seeing sentences of similar syntactic structure in English reduced learners’ processing effort since each sentence was presented separately. In addition, the English sentences presented in the translation task might have given learners the opportunity to identify the function of the sentence in English, which may have provided a clue for them to decide if the construction required the clitic se in Spanish. Unfortunately for this translation task, English has only one syntactic option per function, which restricted the way meaning could be evoked in a non-obvious manner. Nevertheless, compared to the control group, PI participants significantly increased their use of the clitic se instead of other available Spanish strategies. PI participants used considerably less the periphrastic form for passive sentences (to be + verb in past participle) and they did not use an overt NP in subject position (somebody, someone, etc.) for impersonal constructions. Given that these participants were correctly using the se clitic to express these functions in the translation task, it is apparent that there was movement towards the target language grammar. The translation task results support previous research (Celik-Yacizi, 2007; Farley & Keating, 2008) that PI, even though it focuses only on interpretation, helps learners in their L2 production.

Overall, PI and L2 input helped learners move towards target language grammar in the appropriate use of se. This overrides their L1 morpho-syntactic patterns which do not permit the
overt representation of these functions with a clitic. Even though the results of the sentence completion task showed that having all functions together may be too cognitively demanding, the translation task showed that the PI group correctly produced the clitic *se* in all three functions suggesting that learners’ IL made progress towards the target grammar; however, more input is necessary for all the *se* functions to be integrated into their IL. This task also showed that it is inadequate to focus on only one form during PI instruction. If this one form has several functions, it is essential to target only one of these functions at a time as well as to expose learners to more L2 input to help them better process this function.

**Does Processing Instruction Have an Effect on the Internal Grammars of the Spanish L2 Learners as Reflected by Participants’ Performance on the Grammaticality Judgment Task?**

Spanish *se* constructions are ideal for testing access to UG in L2 acquisition. The surface structure of these functions is the same for two functions: in middles and passives, the *se* follows the NP. At the same time, in passives and impersonals, the *se* is in sentence-initial position. As explained in Chapter 4, the *se* in each function exhibits different properties; thus, it is predicted that Spanish L2 learners are not able to make any direct surface structure transfer between English and Spanish, because the properties of the *se* functions are subtle and not evident in the input to which they are exposed. The grammaticality judgment items (old and new) were thus designed to test if there was a change in learners’ grammars and whether or not they followed the target grammar’s constraints for *se*. The results were mixed regarding PI participants’ judgments for the three targeted *se* functions.
For middle constructions, results were different depending on the presence or absence of an adverb. With an adverb present, PI participants were able to correctly identify their grammaticality while the control group failed to do so. For sentences without an adverb, contrary to the control group, PI participants correctly identified when the sentence was ungrammatical, however, both groups were unable to identify when the sentence was grammatical with prepositional phrases. The fact that learners were able to correctly identify the grammaticality of most of the sentences shows that PI treatment was effective in helping learners to gradually move towards the target language. It is important to mention that the PI and the control groups performed similarly on the post-test when judging the well-formedness of new grammatical items without an adverb. It is possible that for the sentences with adverbs (old items), the PI participants were still using the adverb as a cue for identifying the middle function, thus showing L1 transfer. However, more meaningful is the fact that PI learners significantly outperformed the control group by correctly judging ungrammatical sentences with both adverbs and prepositional phrases. During the PI treatment, learners receive mostly positive input, but they also were exposed to negative input in the form of information about what processing strategies to avoid in order to better interpret the three functions under study. Thus, the fact that PI participants were able to identify when a sentence was ungrammatical shows that learners were moving towards a target-like grammar.

For passive constructions, both groups had difficulty distinguishing grammatical from ungrammatical sentences. A possible explanation for this result is that the passive function allows the clitic *se* to be in both initial (*se*-v-NP) and middle position (NP-*se*-v) in the sentence. This point was explicitly explained during the treatment, but in the SI activities, there were more
examples with the *se* in initial position than in middle position. This methodological decision was made in order to place the *se* in the more salient initial position, avoiding the possibility that learners would ignore it in middle position. However, insufficient input with *se* in middle position may have caused learners to be uncertain if a passive *se* in middle position was grammatical or not. Furthermore, having two positions in Spanish not only for the clitic *se* but also for the subject NP may have clashed with participants’ L1 parameter requiring the subject NP to be in sentence-initial position. Hence, for this function, learners might have relied on the English passive structure, which would explain learners’ inconsistency with correctly identifying the grammaticality of passive sentences. In sum, the GJ results for passive constructions showed that Spanish L2 learners had difficulty incorporating the passive *se* into their grammars since this function has two elements (*se* and NP) that can appear in different positions while still conveying the same meaning.

The results for the impersonal items showed that the PI group did not perform differently from the control group. Both groups were able to successfully distinguish grammatical from ungrammatical impersonal sentences (old items). English impersonal constructions require an overt NP in subject position, and given that both groups improved on this task could be due to learners’ IL grammars still being bound by their L1 parameter. Looking closely at the data, PI learners were able to identify ungrammatical sentences only with the new items, thus showing that their IL grammar is gradually moving towards target-like grammar. Taking into account the multifunction character of this clitic, results for the impersonal items in this study provide support for Ellis’ (2002) claim that exposure to L2 input is crucial for L2 acquisition as well as for Yang’s (2012) suggestion that not only is input important but also more information needs to be
explicit for L2 acquisition to be successful. Therefore, it is necessary to have a longer period of PI and more L2 input exposure in order to help learners to reset their L1 parameter.

The fact that learners are able to better identify the ungrammaticality of a sentence indicates some kind of movement towards the target grammar. During treatment, PI participants received mostly positive input along with negative input with information about what processing strategies to avoid for interpreting the impersonal function. With this knowledge, the PI group was able to modify their processing strategies and correctly identify when a sentence was ungrammatical in middle and (some) impersonal constructions. Thus, learners were able to go beyond their limited L2 exposure since the ungrammaticality of these *se* functions cannot be predicted solely from the input. This shows that these learners were moving toward the target-like language grammar, allowing them to accurately judge whether or not certain clitic *se* structures were well-formed. If there is no access to UG, it would be difficult to explain how learners arrived at this grammaticality distinction among these functions.

Even though there is some evidence in this study’s results to support the claim of access to UG, there is also evidence to suggest that learners’ ILs were still bound by L1 parameters in some instances. In these instances, however, it is possible to predict that the grammaticality judgments for the functions in question will be more consistent after more L2 exposure. As a result, for middle sentences, it is necessary to expose learners to structures where they can differentiate the subject from the agent of the sentence to avoid conflating these two elements or to interpret that the first noun is the agent/doer of the sentence. In addition, more examples with prepositional phrases are needed for this structure so that L2 learners do not rely on the presence of the adverb avoiding a one-to-one correspondence with their L1. For passive structures, it is
necessary to expose learners to an equal number of examples showing both initial and middle positions to reinforce that *se* can appear in both positions. For impersonal constructions, more input showing that the agent/doer is not the NP present but that it is implied will help learners to move away from their L1 parameter requiring an overt NP in subject position.

Native speakers acquiring their L1 do not have previous linguistic knowledge while adult L2 learners already have their L1 systems fully developed. When learners have difficulty with certain forms, this does not imply a breakdown of their grammars; rather, it reflects a mapping problem among the form, the function, and its syntactic representation. The fact that learners differed when judging the grammaticality among the *se* functions between old and new items suggests that L2 Spanish learners did not master the structural and thematic properties of *se* as a result of interacting with this study’s short-term treatment. However, taking into account both the complex nature of the *se* morpheme and the fact that this study’s treatment focused only on one function per day, it is probable that more L2 input would help learners to make the correct form-meaning connections over time.

Furthermore, results revealed a hierarchy of difficulty among the three functions of *se* which were the focus of this study. As explained during the methodology chapter, the PI treatment was given in different orders to three PI subgroups in order to avoid any scaffolding effect. The middle voice function proved to be the least difficult for students, followed by the passive and the impersonal function respectively (middle > passive > impersonal). This was evidenced by the results of the PI group who outperformed the control group in most of the tasks for the middle function, while it was not the case for passive and impersonal functions. The results of this study suggest that there was still L1 influence, at least in the beginning stages of
Spanish L2 acquisition regarding the use of these clitic *se* functions and the position of the NP. Hence, the challenge is to facilitate learners’ progress toward a more target-like language outcome in all three *se* functions by helping them to modify their processing strategies. This modification will tap into Spanish learners’ L1 grammar representations to help them reset their L1 parameters to L2 parameters in order to be integrated in their IL.

In addition, the results of this study have shown that more input and more instruction are crucial. Studies on the acquisition of Spanish object clitics (VanPatten, 2004; Farley & Keating, 2008; Morgan-Short & Bowden, 2006) have shown that without instructional intervention learners incorrectly interpret these forms. Thus, explicit explanations help with L2 acquisition (Ellis, 2002; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Montrul, 1999; Neupane, 2009) as evidenced by the results of PI for the middle *se* function in this study. The purpose of the SI activities was to help learners modify their processing strategies. Performance on the GJ task supports previous PI research (VanPatten & Oikkenon, 1996; Celik-Yacizi, 2007) that focusing on learners’ processing strategies has an effect on their L2 production as well as on their developing grammars. Schwartz and Sprouse (1996) explained that at the beginning stages of L2 acquisition, learners make mistakes because their L1 affects their IL path; thus, ILs differ in their endpoints. However, White (1996) argues that it is necessary to stop asking if UG is available; instead, it is necessary to look for ways to determine whether or not learners’ grammars draw from UG. In this study, these learners’ IL has its own rules showing characteristics of both the L1 and the L2.
Assuming that L2 Acquisition is UG Constrained, What is the Representation that L2 Learners Have of the Clitic se in their IL?

Given the poverty of the stimulus, if L2 is constrained by UG, then learners will use UG for L2 acquisition. The results of the post-tests showed that Spanish L2 learners seemed to have a grammar which does not differ fundamentally from the grammar representations of either Spanish native speakers or English native speakers. On the one hand, regarding the position of subjects, Spanish L2 learners seem to be bound by their L1 parameter, thus supporting Schwartz and Sprouse’s (1996) view that the L1 principle and parameter values are the initial state of L2 learners’ IL. On the other hand, regarding the position of adverbs, Spanish L2 learners’ grammars showed characteristics of Spanish native speakers in that they syntactically placed adverbs as if they were adjectives in a Spanish sentence, thus mirroring target-language syntax and not their L1 syntax. A possible explanation can be offered under Bowers’ (1975) analysis who stated that adjectives and adverbs are morphologically and syntactically related since adverbs are derived from adjectives (further developed below). Despite the general trend of adverb placement, post-test results revealed that the syntactic representation for this study’s L2 learners is very diverse. Even though L1 interference is considered one of many causes of morphological errors in early L2 acquisition, it does not account for the complete IL system. As it is further developed in this section, participants’ IL showed characteristics of both English and Spanish.

The results of the interpretation, production, and GJ tasks revealed a hierarchy of difficulty among the three se functions that were the focus of this study: middle > passive >

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53 I redirect the reader to the adverb placement task for English native speakers is in Appendix H for a comparison between the positions of these English native speakers and this present study L2 participants.
impersonal. This hierarchy can be explained in light of English L1 parameters. Spanish L2 learners preferred pre-verbal subjects over post-verbal ones. For the middle and passive voice, the PI group identified and produced pre-verbal NP subjects better than post-verbal ones. For the impersonal constructions, some learners incorrectly included a pre-verbal NP in their translations. This pre-verbal NP preference is due to their L1 parameter that requires overt NP subjects to precede the verb.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the presence of the clitic se in these constructions prevents the overt realization of an agent NP argument to satisfy the argument structure of the verb. Burzio (1986) states that when a verb cannot assign its external (agent) theta-role, by default it cannot assign accusative case which forces the NP to move in order to receive nominative case. Hence, Tremblay (2005, 2006) argues that the clitic se receives the agent theta-role. Parallel to Burzio (1986), Jaeggli (1986) states that the English passive morpheme –en (i.e., written, bitten, etc.) blocks the assignment of accusative case, thus forcing the NP to move to Tense/Inflectional Phrase (TP) to receive nominative case, consequently checking the Extended Projection Principle (EPP) feature in TP (Landau, 2007) which forces the presence of an NP in the specifier of TP. This process explains why the NP in these constructions moves to receive case. Likewise, the clitic se absorbs the agent theta-role by directly merging into the specifier position of vP where the subject NP argument is present (Uriagereka & Raposo, 1996); thus, it also blocks the assignment of accusative case to the NP present. In addition, Spanish does not require its subjects to move since the overt agreement in the verb checks the features necessary in TP. These processes are illustrated in the syntactic representations in Figures 1 and 2 below.
Figure 1. English syntactic structure illustrating EPP requirement.

Figure 2. Example of a Spanish *se* structure with pre-verbal and post-verbal NPs.
Figure 1 illustrates that the English subject NP needs to move to the specifier of TP due to the requirement of the EPP feature in this head. Figure 2 illustrates that the Spanish subject, in contrast, can either stay in post-verbal position inside vP or move out of vP. Taking into account these derivational structures, the L2 learners’ IL grammar can be explained.

Spanish L2 learners placed the clitic *se* in the specifier of vP. Given that the specifier of vP is where the clitic *se* and the subject NP (agent) are generated, both elements compete for the same syntactic position. In translating impersonal sentences, Spanish L2 learners expressed the impersonal function using either the clitic *se* (as in 1) or an overt NP (as in 2), suggesting that these elements are in complementary distribution. For passives and middles in (3) and (4) respectively, the overt NP was placed before the unit *se* + verb, showing that the NP moved from object position to subject position in order to check nominative case.

1. “Se envió las invitaciones a los invitados”
   **Impersonal**
   
   `se.CLITIC send.3SG.PAST the invitations to the guests`
   Someone sent the invitations to the guests

2. “Alguien envió las invitaciones a los invitados”
   **Impersonal**
   
   `someone send.3SG.PAST the invitations to the guests`
   Someone sent the invitations to the guests

3. “Las paredes se pintaron ayer”
   **Passive**
   
   `the walls se.CLITIC paint.3PL.PAST yesterday`
   The walls were painted yesterday

4. “Estas hojas se queman rápidamente”
   **Middle**
   
   `These leaves se.CLITIC burn.3PL.PRES quickly`
   These leaves burn fast
   
   (Examples from Spanish L2 learners in this study)
The representations for structures (1)-(2) are illustrated in Figure 3 and sentences (3)-(4) are shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 3. Spanish impersonal se representation
These sentences also revealed where Spanish L2 learners placed the subject NP in their IL. As mentioned previously in Chapter 2, the NP in middle voice constructions is the affected object of the verb which is generated in object position and then it moves out of its object position (vP) to receive nominative case pre-verbally (TP). In this study, participants moved the NP to a pre-verbal position (as seen in Figure 4). Likewise, in the passive voice, participants did not leave the NP inside VP and moved it to a pre-verbal position, even though this post-verbal position is indeed available for these structures in Spanish. Furthermore, for impersonal constructions, contrary to Spanish parameters, some participants were unable to leave these sentences without an overt NP. Given that their L1 English parameter requires impersonal nouns
such as *people* or *someone* to occupy the subject position, learners overtly merged the word *alguien* ‘someone’ into the specifier of TP in order to satisfy their L1 requirement as shown in (5) below.

(5) “Alguien se asustó a los niños”

Impersonal someone se.CLITIC scare.3SG.PAST to the children someone scared the children

(Spanish L2 learner in this study)

This sentence shows that syntactically the overt noun *alguien* and *se* compete for the same position. Since the clitic *se* receives the agent theta role when occupying the specifier of vP in this phase, in the next CP phase, the [+EPP] feature in the specifier of TP requires a NP to be present, the only option available for an overt NP in this syntactic derivation is to directly merge *alguien* into this position since the direct object *los niños* ‘the children’ cannot move to this position because it has already been assigned accusative case. Thus, both elements receive case via chain relation satisfying the subject theta-role requirement as well as the nominative case assignment since *alguien* and *se* are linked together. This process is illustrated in Figure 5 below.

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54 Chomsky (2000) proposed the phase theory explaining that the verbal phrase (vP) and the complementizer phrase (CP) are domains where elements can merge or move. In this example, since *se* is in the specifier of vP, the impersonal word *alguien* merges in the specifier of TP (within CP phase).

55 Chomsky (1993) stated that, in chain theory, even though two elements are syntactically in different positions, they have the same characteristics since they are syntactically linked. For example, in the passive voice sentence: Ana was hit by a truck → Ana was hit by a truck, the elements *Ana* and the trace *t* form a chain since *Ana* moved from its initial position (where *t* is) to receive nominative case (specifier of TP).

56 These two elements are in a chain relation even though *se* is in the vP phase and *alguien* ‘someone’ is in the CP phase. *Se* is on the edge of the vP phase allowing it to be accessible to further operations.
The fact that participants merged an overt NP in impersonal structures in the specifier of TP clearly shows they are still bound by their L1 parameter. In English, the NP moves to check both the nominative case and the strong [+EPP] feature in TP; thus, Spanish L2 learners’ IL representation mirrors this L1 parameter. Adult L2 learners come to the Spanish L2 learning process with their L1 features already set. This data illustrates not only that learners were moving towards resetting their L1 parameter from null to overt morphology for these *se* functions, but also that the position of the subject NP is restricted by their L1 parameter.

Other characteristics of Spanish L2 learners’ IL were seen in the adverb placement task. Learners placed the clitic before the verb and no other element intervened between these elements (i.e., they did not place the adverb between *se* and the verb.) An intervening element is considered ungrammatical for Spanish native speakers because *se* + verb is an indivisible unit.

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57 However, as seen in the results chapter, less than 5% of the L2 Spanish participants placed the adverb between the clitic *se* and the verb. Hence, this small percentage is not significant for making a generalization regarding this *se*-adverb-verb structure. Therefore, an analysis of these results is not offered in this dissertation.
The majority of learners followed the L2 pattern regarding adverb placement even though they were not instructed on adverb placement during treatment. Therefore, this task gives further insight into the mental representations of participants’ IL. The adverb placement task showed that Spanish L2 learners had the tendency to place the adverbs in sentence final position (77%) or in sentence initial position (58%):

(6) “se necesita a esa profesora supuestamente”
   se.CLITIC need.3SG.PRES to that teacher supposedly
   ‘People supposedly need that teacher’
   (Spanish L2 learner in this study)

The adverb cannot be a complement of the verb because the complement position is occupied by the object NP. The adverb in final position shows that it is being adjoined to the sentence as seen in Figure 6 below.\(^{58}\)

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\(^{58}\) Cinque (1999) has several functional categories to which adverbs can be attached. For this analysis, the XP corresponds to any functional category in the left periphery of the sentence where these adverbs can be placed.
Figure 6 shows that the adverb is placed in adjunct position serving as evidence that Spanish L2 learners treat adverbs as adjuncts. It is possible to assume that these L2 learners are analyzing adverbs like adjuncts since they are exposed to sentences such as *La casa roja* ‘the red house,’ where the adjective behaves like an adjunct. This sentence is syntactically represented in Figure 7 below.
Figure 7. Spanish adjectives in adjunct position

Figure 7 illustrates the kind of Spanish adjunct input to which learners have been exposed. Taking into account this syntactic representation, Spanish L2 learners have received input in their classes which gave them the opportunity to test their own language hypothesis. With this kind of L2 input, learners have had evidence that, in Spanish, adjectives are adjuncts which modify the head to which they attach. It seems that participants have also hypothesized that adverbs obey this same L2 parameter. Bowers (1975) proposed that adverbs and adjectives are related due to the morphological traits they share because many adverbs are derived from adjectives. For example, in English the morpheme –ly and in Spanish the morpheme –mente are added to adjectives to change their lexical category to adverbs (rápido ‘quick’ (adjective) to rápidamente ‘quickly’ (adverb)). Therefore, the fact that Spanish L2 learners analyzed adverbs like adjectives supports Bower’s analysis that these two lexical categories are indeed related not only morphologically but also syntactically.

59 In addition, Bowers (1975) also analyzes certain structures showing that the same syntactic rules that apply to adjectives are also applicable to adverbs. Therefore, he proposed the AP category which brings both adjectival and adverbial phrases together. I direct the reader to his article for an in-depth analysis of these categories.
As a result, this data can also shed some light on the ongoing debate about the position of adverbs, that is, whether they are in specifier or in adjunct position. On the one hand, researchers such as Cinque (1999, 2004) proposed an adverb hierarchy where adverbs directly merge in the specifier position of their corresponding functional heads. For example, the adverb *necessarily* attaches to a Modality Phrase conveying a meaning of necessity. On the other hand, Bowers (1975, 1993) argued that adverbs are in adjunct position. Bowers’ (1993) evidence for his argument that adverbs are syntactically adjuncts comes from *perfectly*-like adverbs which can only appear in post-verbal position as in (7) or before or after prepositional complements as in (8) but not between the verb and the direct object. In this study’s data, L2 learners adjoined some adverbs such as *probablemente* ‘probably’ to different places in the sentence as shown in example (8). However, more remarkable is the fact that the majority of these participants (71%) placed the adverb in sentence-final position (underlined in example). The syntactic representations for sentences (8) and (9) are illustrated in Figures 8 and 9 respectively.

(7) John will (quickly) learn French *perfectly* (quickly) (Bowers, 1993, p. 607)

(8) John spoke (*intimately) French (*intimately) to Mary (*intimately) (Bowers, 1993, p. 610)

(9) (Probablemente) las cartas a máquina (probablemente) se leen (*probablemente) mejor (probablemente)
‘(Probably) typed letters (probably) are read (probably) better (probably)’
(Spanish L2 learner in this study)
Figure 8. Bowers’ representation of English adverb placement as adjuncts (1993, p. 611)
Figure 9. Adverb placement by Spanish L2 learners - initial or final position

Given that this data revealed that Spanish L2 learners are analyzing adverbs as adjuncts, then, this explains the different positions where the adverb was placed within the sentence in this adverb task. Therefore, it is possible that for these Spanish L2 learners’ IL, adverbs are base-generated in adjunct position.

The results of this study revealed that the IL has characteristics of natural languages.\textsuperscript{60}

As mentioned previously, the study rests on the assumption that learners have access to UG and

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\textsuperscript{60} It is important to point out that I am not claiming that IL is a natural language per se. I am saying that IL shows some characteristics of actual natural languages such as English and Spanish as shown in this analysis.
the data in this study support this assumption. L2 learners were able to use the clitic *se* overtly in contexts where their L1 does not have overt morphology. In addition, regarding the position of the subject NP and adverbs, learners’ ILs follow their L1 parameter for the former and an L2 parameter for the latter. This study revealed that IL has its own rules by following parameters from different languages in order to account for the position of its elements. Thus, IL draws from different UG possibilities that are still accessible to adult L2 learners. This data supports White’s (2008) conclusion that even though learners’ IL is not identical to the L2 native speakers’ grammars, IL is still constrained by UG. IL is the result of the L2 input properties coalescing with UG and the L1 grammar. However, it is apparent from the data that learners still had difficulty interpreting the clitic *se*, even with exposure to Processing Instruction. The correct form-meaning connections, then, must be developed with more L2 input and by focusing not only on one form but also on its individual functions separately in order to help restructure L2 learners’ ILs.

The purpose of this dissertation was to test the effectiveness of PI on the acquisition of Spanish clitic *se* by English native speakers as well as to use linguistic theory to explain some of the characteristics of L2 learners’ IL. The results showed that PI can be helpful for certain structures (middles) but not for others (passives and impersonals), that learners’ IL indeed can have characteristics of their L1 and the L2, and through linguistic theory, it is possible to provide a possible explanation of why some structures are more difficult than others. There is still a lot of research to be done taking into account what was done in the present research: having more treatment days, focusing on one function at a time, having more items per target structure, creating an interpretation task that is less metalinguistic, testing advanced learners to test if there
is full access to UG, and the list can go on. Nevertheless, this dissertation opened the door for using PI with different *se* functions in L2 Spanish, and as such, I hope that it provides the reader useful information not only to continue carrying out SLA research on the functions of the clitic *se* in Romance languages but also to use linguistic theory to explain L2 learners’ IL.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

TREATMENT ORDER 1

IMPERSONAL “SE”

In English, when people do not want to specifically say who did what, they use impersonal words like someone, one, they, you, people, etc. In this way, the action is attributed to people in general and not to a specific person:

(a) Someone/people called the police

Spanish expresses this same meaning by using the pronoun se:

(b) Se llamó a la policía

This se is roughly equivalent to words such as alguien (someone), uno (one) and la gente (people); however, the impersonal se cannot appear at the same time with these words or with people’s names as in sentence (d) below. Notice that impersonal se is at the beginning of the sentence because it works as a place holder for the subject. Notice that in (b) the object of the sentence (the thing being called) la policía ‘the police’ is introduced by the personal “a.” The presence of this “a” is important because it appears only in impersonal se constructions but not in the passive voice and middle voice se constructions (which you will learn about in future sessions.)

An important requirement to remember for using an impersonal construction in Spanish (as well as in English) is that the action has to be performed by a (non-specific) human being which is implied in the sentence. For example, contrast sentence (b) with (c) and (d) below:

(c) La mesa llamó a la policía  (illogical)
(d) Juan llamó a la policía

Sentence (c) is illogical because the non-human subject la mesa cannot call the police. Sentence (d) cannot be understood as an impersonal because we know that “Juan” is a specific person doing the action. However, sentence (b) can only be understood that there was someone (a non-specific human being) who called the police because of the se.

The verb llamar ‘to call’ is a transitive verb, which means that it needs both a subject (the doer of the action) and an object (the receiver of the action) as in (b) and (d). In (b) the doer of the action is someone not specific marked by se and in (d) the doer is “Juan”. In both (b) and (d) the object of the verb “llamar” is “la policía.”
Impersonal constructions can be used also with intransitive verbs, which only need a doer, such as *trabajar* “to work,” *llegar* “to arrive,” *vivir* “to live,” etc., as in (e) and (f):

(e) Se trabaja bien aquí  
“People work well here”

(f) Se vive bien aquí  
“People live well here”

In these sentences, the verbs *trabajar* and *vivir* do not have an object like the verb *llamar* in (b), (c) and (d); but they do have a non-specific human doer. These examples show that impersonal constructions with *se* can be made with transitive and intransitive verbs.

**IMPORTANT:**

It is important to notice that in the impersonal constructions the verb is conjugated in third person singular the “él/ella/usted” form. “*Se*” is the first word of the sentence and there is no subject named. The subject is omitted precisely because we do not know or we do not care who it is; however, “*se*” needs to be present. It might be helpful to think of the impersonal “*se*” as a sort of place holder for a non-specific human subject.

The problems for Spanish learners with the impersonal constructions tend to be: 1) English needs a subject to be present “people, someone, they…” while Spanish only needs “*se,*” 2) sometimes the “*se*” in a sentence is hard to hear because it is a small word that the voice does not emphasize, and 3) Spanish learners mistakenly overlook this pronoun interpreting the sentence without the “*se*” and missing the impersonal reading of the sentence as in (g):

(g) Llamó a la policía  
“He /she called the police”

Let’s summarize the main points for the impersonal *se*:

- It is used when the subject is unknown or irrelevant
- It cannot appear with the words such as: *alguien (someone), uno (one), la gente (people),* etc or with people’s names.
- The *se* works as a place holder for the subject
- The doer of the actions needs to be human and non-specific
- The verb is in third person *singular* (the *él/ella/usted* form): llama, vive, trabaja…
- The *se* is roughly equivalent to English “they” and “someone”
- The personal “a” appears in this construction to mark the object of the sentence when the object is human.

The focus of this session is on the impersonal *se*. We will focus on hearing and interpreting the pronoun *se* in the activities for today.
MIDDLE VOICE “SE”

Middle voice refers to qualities or inherent properties of things. These properties bring about states or consequences with only minimal (if any) human intervention (unlike the impersonal constructions that imply a human doer). For example:

(a) This bread cuts easily

In this English sentence, the inherent quality of the bread is that its softness makes it easy to cut regardless of how a person might approach the task. This sentence certainly does not mean that “someone cuts the bread easily.”

Spanish has this same kind of structure. However, while Spanish needs the pronoun se in this middle construction as in (b), English does not have a pronoun equivalent to se as in (a):

(b) Las camisas de seda se lavan cuidadosamente
   ‘Silk shirts are (need to be) washed carefully’

In this example, it is understood that given the delicate material of the shirts, they need to be washed in a specific manner. Comparing examples (a) and (b) it can be seen that the nouns “bread” and “silk shirts” are the objects of their respective verbs: “to cut bread” and “to wash shirts.” This is one of the requirements for the middle voice sentences. In addition, the noun needs to agree with the verb because this noun is the subject of the sentence: in (b) the plural noun “las camisas de seda” agrees with the verb “lavarse” (unlike impersonal constructions, in which the verb can only be in the third person singular él/ella/usted form.) This can also be seen in example (c):

(c) Los árboles secos se queman fácilmente
   ‘Dry trees burn easily.’

In this example, it is understood that because trees are dry, there is no moisture in them to prevent them from burning. In addition, “los árboles” is the object of the verb “queman” and agrees with the verb. In all of these examples, we are talking about inherent characteristics of the nouns that bring about the action (like burning trees) or make the action necessary (like washing shirts carefully.) The examples (a), (b), and (c) show the inherent characteristics of objects not of people; therefore, the middle voice cannot be used with people.

As the following examples show, the object/thing whose characteristics are being talked about needs to be nearly always present and needs to appear before the verb: “Las camisas de seda” in (b) and “Los árboles secos” in (c) cannot be omitted as shown in (d) and (e) respectively:
These sentences are ungrammatical because the objects “las camisas de seda” and “los árboles secos” that are being referred to are not present.

It is important to remember that in Spanish as well as in English, the middle voice constructions typically include an adverb, like “fácilmente” in (a) and “cuidadosamente” in (b). However, English does not have a pronoun *se* to indicate that the sentence is middle voice as in (g), while in Spanish this pronoun is obligatory as in (f) below:

(f) Los árboles secos *se* queman fácilmente
(g) Dry trees burn easily

Sentences (f) and (g) both have the adverb *fácilmente* “easily” and both have the same structure; their only difference is the presence of the pronoun *se* in Spanish. In Spanish what makes the middle voice interpretation possible is the presence of this pronoun. Its absence makes a middle voice sentence ungrammatical in Spanish:

(h) *Los árboles secos queman fácilmente*  (ungrammatical)

Notice that this would be a word-for-word translation from English to Spanish, but again the absence of *se* makes the sentence ungrammatical.

Let’s contrast the middle voice with the impersonal construction we saw in the last session. In middle voice sentences *se* appear in middle position while in impersonal constructions *se* is obligatorily in initial position because it functions as a place holder for the subject:

**Middle voice** = El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter *se* vende muy bien
**Impersonal** = *Se* habla español

Another important difference between the impersonal and the middle voice is that the verb in the impersonal construction is always singular while the verb in the middle voice agrees with the noun/subject of the sentence (so it can be singular or plural):

Impersonal = *Se* habla español  (singular)

Middle Voice = *Los árboles secos* *se* queman fácilmente  (plural)
   *El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter* *se* vende muy bien  (singular)

**IMPORTANT:** Similar to the impersonal “*se,*” one of the problems with the pronoun “*se*” in middle voice is that sometimes it is hard to hear in a sentence because it is a small word that the voice does not emphasize and it occurs in the middle of the sentence which makes it harder to pick out. Because the “*se*” is so easy to overlook, learners tend to think it is OK to leave the
pronoun out of a sentence when, in fact, doing so makes the sentence ungrammatical, as we saw in example (h) above.

Let’s summarize the main points for the middle voice se:

- The noun is the object of the verb (to cut bread, to wash shirts)
- The noun becomes the subject and it appears before the verb (pre-verbal position)
- The se marks inherent qualities of the noun (objects not of people)
- The noun or the se cannot be omitted
- There is a agreement between the noun and the verb

The focus of this session is on the middle voice se. We will focus on hearing and interpreting the pronoun se in the activities for today

PASSIVE “SE”

In English, when the speaker wants to highlight the outcome of an action without giving importance to the agent (the “doer”) of the action, usually the passive voice is used:

(a) The letters were written by the president

In this sentence what is important is that the letters were written. Notice that the doer/agent of the action is de-emphasized by being placed at the end of the sentence and is introduced by the preposition “by.” The passive sentence in (a) is related to the active voice sentence in (b):

(b) The president wrote the letters

Remember from session 1 that a transitive verb represents an action that requires a “doer” (subject/agent) and a “receiver” (object). The object the letters of the transitive verb to write in (b) becomes the subject of the passive voice in (a).

Spanish has two kinds of passive voice:

1) verb to be “ser” + the verb in past participle (equivalent to English verbal forms such as “written, bitten, broken, stolen,…etc.”):

(c) Las cartas fueron escritas por el presidente
   ‘The letters were written by the president’

Similar to English, what matters in passive sentences like (c) is that the letters were written, so the agent of the action, el presidente, is moved to the end of the sentence and is introduced by the preposition por. This construction is parallel to the English passive construction in (a). The second Spanish construction, which has no parallel in English, is shown in (2). It is another construction that requires the pronoun se:
2) “se” + verb

(d) Se pintaron las paredes de azul
   ‘The walls were painted blue’

(e) Las paredes se pintaron de azul
   ‘The walls were painted blue’

What is important is that the walls were painted, regardless of who painted them. When using the passive with se, the agent (“doer”) of the action is not present in the sentence (similar to impersonal se and middle voice se). In addition, examples (d) and (e) show that the noun las paredes can appear before or after the verb (unlike the impersonals where the noun can only be after the verb, and unlike the middle voice where the noun can only be before the verb.)

Let’s contrast the functions of the se seen until now: The se in the middle voice is in middle position, in impersonal constructions is in initial position while in passives can appear in initial as well as in middle position:

Impersonal = Se habla español (initial position)

Middle voice = El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter se vende muy bien (middle position)

Passive = Se pintaron las paredes de azul
          Las paredes de azul se pintaron (initial position)
          (middle position)

Contrast the passive and the middle sentences where the se is in middle position. Although these sentences look the same, the se of the passive voice does not refer to inherent qualities of the noun but the se of the middle voice does. In the passive voice, las paredes “the walls” do not have an inherent quality to be painted blue. However, in the middle voice, the book of Harry Potter has the quality of being “extraordinary,” this is why it sells well.

Regarding verb agreement, the verb in the impersonals is always in third person singular while the verbs in the middle and the passive voices agree with the noun of the sentence:

Impersonal = Se habla español (singular)

Middle Voice = El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter se vende muy bien (singular)
          Los árboles secos se queman fácilmente (plural)

Passive = La pared de azul se pintó (singular)
          Se pintaron las paredes de azul (plural)

Remember that the impersonal se is a place holder for the subject of the sentence (no subject can be present), the middle voice se refers to inherent qualities of the noun of the sentence and the passive voice se de-emphasizes the doer of the action.
**IMPORTANT:**

It is important to notice that, as with middle voice, the verb in passive constructions agrees with the noun. Notice, for example, that in the sentence “se pintaron las paredes de azul” the verb is plural (in the “ellos/ellas/ustedes” form). This is because “las paredes” is plural. In contrast, if the noun object is singular, the verb must also be singular, as in “se pintó la pared de azul.” The noun, which is now the subject of the sentence, can precede or follow “se + verb” as we saw in examples (d) and (e) above (Note that Spanish speakers tend to use structure (d) more than (e).)

Remember that “se” is sometimes hard to hear because is not accented, especially when it is in the middle of the sentence. If the pronoun is overlooked the passive voice interpretation of the sentence may be missed, as in the following example:

\[
\text{f) pintaron las paredes de azul}
\]

“They painted the walls blue”

This example has two interpretations, neither of which is passive. First, given that you can drop the subject in Spanish, it can be understood that “they”, someone already known from previous context, painted the walls. Second, the “they” referred to in the sentence can be some non-specific subject, similar to the subject of the English sentence “They say it’s going to snow tonight.” As shown above, neither of these is the function of the “se” passive construction in Spanish.

The following table compares all the se functions studied previously:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NOUN</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>VERB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impersonal</strong></td>
<td>Noun after the verb</td>
<td>Se functions as a place holder for the agent/doer of the action. Se cannot appear with other impersonal words.</td>
<td>The verb is in third person singular because there is no subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle</strong></td>
<td>Noun/subject before the verb</td>
<td>Se functions as a marker for the inherent characteristics of the noun (objects not people.)</td>
<td>The verb agrees with the noun/subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passive</strong></td>
<td>Noun/subject before or after the verb</td>
<td>Se marks that the doer of the action has been de-emphasized.</td>
<td>The verb agrees with the noun/subject.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Middle voice refers to qualities or inherent properties of things. These properties bring about states or consequences with only minimal (if any) human intervention (unlike the impersonal constructions that imply a human doer and unlike the passive voice where the doer is de-emphasized; you will learn about these constructions in future sessions). For example:

(a) This bread cuts easily

In this English sentence, the inherent quality of the bread is that its softness makes it easy to cut regardless of how a person might approach the task. This sentence certainly does not mean that “someone cuts the bread easily.”

Spanish has this same kind of structure. However, while Spanish needs the pronoun se in this middle construction as in (b), English does not have a pronoun equivalent to se:

(b) Las camisas de seda se lavan cuidadosamente
    ‘Silk shirts are (need to be) washed carefully’

In this example, it is understood that given the delicate material of the shirts, they need to be washed in a specific manner. Comparing examples (a) and (b) it can be seen that the nouns “bread” and “silk shirts” are the objects of their respective verbs: “to cut bread” and “to wash shirts.” This is one of the requirements for the middle voice sentences. In addition, the noun needs to agree with the verb because this noun is the subject of the sentence; in (b) the plural noun “las camisas de seda” agrees with the verb “lavan” (similar to the passive voice and unlike impersonal constructions, in which the verb can only be in the third person singular él/ella/usted form; you will learn about these in future sessions.) This can also be seen in example (c)

(c) Los árboles secos se queman fácilmente
    ‘Dry trees burn easily.’

In this example, it is understood that because trees are dry, there is no moisture in them to prevent them from burning. In addition, “los árboles secos” is the object of the verb “queman” and agrees with the verb. In all of these examples, we are talking about inherent characteristics of the nouns that bring about the action (like burning trees) or make the action necessary (like washing shirts carefully.) The examples (a), (b), and (c) show the inherent characteristics of objects, not of specific people. Therefore, the middle voice cannot be used with specific people.
As the following examples show, the object/thing whose characteristics are being talked about needs to be nearly always present and needs to appear before the verb: “Las camisas de seda” in (b) and “Los árboles secos” in (c) cannot be omitted as shown in (d) and (e) respectively:

(f) *se lavan cuidadosamente (ungrammatical)
(g) *se queman con facilidad (ungrammatical)

These sentences are ungrammatical because the objects “las camisas de seda” and “los árboles secos” that are being referred to are not present.

It is important to remember that in Spanish as well as in English, the middle voice constructions typically include an adverb, like fácilmente “easily” in (c) and cuidadosamente “carefully” in (b). However, English does not have a pronoun se to indicate that the sentence is middle voice as in (g), while in Spanish this pronoun is obligatory, as shown in (f) below:

(f) Los árboles secos se queman fácilmente
(g) Dry trees burn easily

Sentences (f) and (g) both have the adverb fácilmente “easily” and both have the same structure; their only difference is the presence of the pronoun se in Spanish. In Spanish what makes the middle voice interpretation possible is the presence of this pronoun. Its absence makes a middle voice sentence ungrammatical in Spanish:

(h) *Los árboles secos queman con facilidad (ungrammatical)

Notice that this would be a word-for-word translation from English to Spanish, but again the absence of se makes the sentence ungrammatical.

**IMPORTANT:** One of the problems with the pronoun “se” in middle voice is that sometimes it is hard to hear in a sentence because it is a small word that the voice does not emphasize and it occurs in the middle of the sentence which makes it harder to pick out. Because the “se” is so easy to overlook, learners tend to think it is OK to leave the pronoun out of a sentence when, in fact, doing so makes the sentence ungrammatical, as we saw in example (h) above.

Let’s summarize the main points for the middle voice se:

- The noun is the object of the verb (to cut bread, to wash shirts)
- The noun becomes the subject and it appears before the verb (pre-verbal position)
- The se is used to mark inherent qualities of the noun (objects not of specific people)
- The noun or the se cannot be omitted
- There is agreement between the noun and the verb
The focus of this session is on the middle voice *se*. We will focus on hearing and interpreting the pronoun *se* in the activities for today.

**PASSIVE “SE”**

In English, when the speaker wants to highlight the outcome of an action without giving importance to the agent (the “doer”) of the action, usually the passive voice is used:

(a) The letters were written by the president

In this sentence what is important is that the letters were written. Notice that the doer/agent of the action is de-emphasized by being placed at the end of the sentence and is introduced by the preposition “by.” The passive sentence in (a) is related to the active voice sentence in (b):

(b) The president wrote the letters

The verb *escribir* ‘to write’ is a transitive verb, which means that it needs both “doer” (subject/agent of the action) and an object (the receiver of the action) as in (b). The object the letters of the transitive verb *to write* in (b) becomes the subject of the passive voice in (a).

Spanish has two kinds of passive voice:

1) verb *to be* “ser” + the verb in past participle (equivalent to English verbal forms such as “written, bitten, broken, stolen,…etc.”):

(c) Las cartas fueron escritas por el presidente
   ‘The letters were written by the president’

Similar to English, what matters in passive sentences like (c) is that the letters were written, so the agent of the action, *el presidente*, is moved to the end of the sentence and is introduced by the preposition *por*. This construction is parallel to the English passive construction in (a). The second Spanish construction, which has no parallel in English, is shown in (2). It is another construction that requires the pronoun *se*:

2) “*se*” + verb

(d) Se pintaron las paredes de azul
   ‘The walls were painted blue’

(e) Las paredes *se* pintaron de azul
   ‘The walls were painted blue’

What is important is that the walls were painted, regardless of who painted them. When using the passive with *se*, the agent (“doer”) of the action is not present in the sentence (similar to middle voice *se* that we learnt in the last session and to the impersonal *se* which you will learn in the next session). In addition, examples (d) and (e) show that the noun *las paredes* can appear before or after the verb (unlike the middle voice where the noun can only be before the verb and...
unlike the impersonals where the noun can only be after the verb which you will learn in the next session.

Let’s contrast the passive voice and the middle voice constructions. The *se* in the middle voice is in middle position while in passives can appear in initial as well as in middle position:

Middle voice = El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter *se* vende muy bien (middle position)

Passive = *Se* pintaron las paredes de azul (initial position)
Las paredes de azul *se* pintaron (middle position)

Contrast the passive and the middle sentences where the *se* is in middle position. Although these sentences look almost the same, the *se* of the passive voice does not refer to inherent qualities of the noun but the *se* of the middle voice does. In the passive voice, *las paredes* “the walls” do not have an inherent quality to be painted blue. However, in the middle voice, the book of Harry Potter has the quality of being “extraordinary,” this is why it sells well.

In both of these constructions the verb agrees with the subject of the sentence:

Middle Voice = El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter *se* vende muy bien  (singular)
Los árboles secos *se* queman fácilmente (plural)

Passive = *La pared* de azul *se* pintó  (singular)
*Se* pintaron *las paredes* de azul (plural)

Remember that the middle voice *se* refers to inherent qualities of the noun of the sentence and the passive voice *se* de-emphasizes the doer of the action.

**IMPORTANT:**

*It is important to notice that, as with middle voice, the verb in passive constructions agrees with the noun. Notice, for example, that in the sentence “*se pintaron las paredes de azul*” the verb is plural (in the “ellos/ellas/ustedes” form). This is because “las paredes” is plural. In contrast, if the noun object is singular, the verb must also be singular, as in “*se pintó la pared de azul.*” The noun, which is now the subject of the sentence, can follow or precede “*se + verb*” as we saw in examples (d) and (e) above (Note that Spanish speakers tend to use structure (d) more than (e).)

Remember that “*se*” is sometimes hard to hear because is not accented, especially when it is in the middle of the sentence. If the pronoun is overlooked the passive voice interpretation of the sentence may be missed, as in the following example:

*f) pintaron las paredes de azul*
“*They painted the walls blue*”*
This example has two interpretations, neither of which is passive. First, given that you can drop
the subject in Spanish, it can be understood that “they”, someone already known from previous
context, painted the walls. Second, the “they” referred to in the sentence can be some non-
specific subject, similar to the subject of the English sentence “They say it’s going to snow
tonight.” As shown above, neither of these is the function of the “se” passive construction in
Spanish.

Let’s summarize the main points for the passive voice se:
• It is used to de-emphasize the doer of the action
• The se can be in initial or in middle position
• The verb agrees with the noun that becomes the subject of the sentence of the sentence
  (singular or plural)
• The noun can precede or follow the unit “se + verb”

The focus of this session is on the passive voice se. We will focus on hearing and interpreting
the pronoun se in the activities for today.

IMPERSONAL “SE”

In English, when people do not want to specifically say who did what, they use
impersonal words like someone, one, they, you, people, etc. In this way, the action is attributed
to people in general and not to a specific person:

(a) Someone/people called the police

Spanish expresses this same meaning by using the pronoun se:

(b) Se llamó a la policía

This se is roughly equivalent to words such as alguien (someone), uno (one) and la gente
(people); however, the impersonal se cannot appear at the same time with these words or with
people’s names as in sentence (d) below. Notice that impersonal se is at the beginning of the
sentence because it works as a place holder for the subject (unlike the middle voice where se is in
middle position and unlike the passive voice where se can be in middle or initial position.)
Notice that in (b) the object of the sentence (the thing being called) la policía ‘the police’ is
introduced by the personal “a.” The presence of this “a” is important because it appears only in
impersonal se constructions but not in the passive voice and middle voice se constructions.

An important requirement to remember for using an impersonal construction in Spanish
(as well as in English) is that the action has to be performed by a (non-specific) human being
which is implied in the sentence. For example, contrast sentence (b) with (c) and (d) below:

(c) La mesa llamó a la policía (illogical)
(d) Juan llamó a la policía
Sentence (c) is illogical because the non-human subject *la mesa* cannot call the police. Sentence (d) cannot be understood as an impersonal because we know that “Juan” is a specific person doing the action. However, sentence (b) can only be understood that there was someone (a non-specific human being) who called the police.

Remember from session 2 that a transitive verb represents an action that requires a “doer” (subject/agent) and a “receiver” (object). The verb *llamar* ‘to call’ is a transitive verb as in (b) and (d). In (b) the doer of the action is someone not specific marked by *se* and in (d) the doer is “Juan”. In both (b) and (d) the object of the verb “llamar” is “la policía.”

In addition, impersonal constructions can be used also with intransitive verbs, which only need a doer, such as *trabajar* “to work,” *llegar* “to arrive,” *vivir* “to live,” etc., as in (e) and (f):

(e)  *Se trabaja bien aquí*  “People work well here”
(f)  *Se vive bien aquí*  “People live well here”

In these sentences, the verb *trabajar* and *vivir* do not have an object like the verb *llamar* in (b), (c) and (d); but they do have a non-specific human doer. These examples show that impersonal constructions with *se* can be made with transitive as well as intransitive verbs.

Let’s contrast the functions of the *se* seen until now: The *se* in impersonal constructions is in initial position, in the middle voice is in middle position while in passives it can appear in initial as well as in middle position:

Impersonal =  *Se* habla español  (initial position)

Middle voice =  *El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter se vende muy bien* (middle position)

Passive =  *Se pintaron las paredes de azul*  (initial position)
           *Las paredes de azul se pintaron*  (middle position)

Regarding verb agreement, the verb in the impersonals is always in third person singular while the verbs in the middle and the passive voices agree with the noun (subject) of the sentence:

Impersonal =  *Se* habla español  (singular)

Middle Voice =  *El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter se vende muy bien*  (singular)
           *Los árboles secos se queman* fácilmente  (plural)

Passive =  *La pared de azul se pintó*  (singular)
           *Se pintaron las paredes* de azul  (plural)

Remember that the impersonal *se* is a place holder for the subject of the sentence (no subject can be present), the middle voice *se* refers to inherent qualities of the noun/subject of the sentence and the passive voice *se* de-emphasizes the doer of the action.
**IMPORTANT:**

It is important to notice that in the impersonal construction the verb is conjugated in third person singular the “él/ella/usted” form. “Se” is the first word of the sentence and there is no subject named. The subject is omitted precisely because we do not know or we do not care who it is; however, “se” needs to be present. It might be helpful to think of the impersonal “se” as a sort of place holder for a non-specific human subject.

The problems for Spanish learners with the impersonal constructions tend to be: 1) English needs a subject to be present “people, someone, they…” while Spanish only needs “se,” 2) sometimes the “se” in a sentence is hard to hear because it is a small word that the voice does not emphasize, and 3) Spanish learners mistakenly overlook this pronoun interpreting the sentence without the “se” and missing the impersonal reading of the sentence as in (g):

(g) **Llamó a la policía**

“It/he/she called the police”

Let’s summarize the main points for the impersonal se:

- It is used when the subject is unknown or irrelevant
- It cannot appear with words such as: alguien (someone), uno (one), la gente (people), etc. or with people’s names.
- The se works as a place holder for the subject. No subject can be present.
- The doer of the action needs to be human and non-specific
- The verb is in third person singular (the él/ella/usted form): llama, vive, trabaja…
- The se is roughly equivalent to English “they” and “someone”
- The personal “a” appears in this construction to mark the object of the sentence when the object is human.

The following table compares all the se functions studied previously:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NOUN</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>VERB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impersonal</strong></td>
<td>Noun after the verb</td>
<td>Se functions as a place holder for the agent/doer of the action. Se cannot appear with other impersonal words.</td>
<td>The verb is in third person singular because there is no subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle</strong></td>
<td>Noun/subject before the verb</td>
<td>Se functions as a marker for the inherent characteristics of the noun (objects, not specific people.)</td>
<td>The verb agrees with the noun/subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passive</strong></td>
<td>Noun/subject before or after the verb</td>
<td>Se marks that the doer of the action has been de-emphasized.</td>
<td>The verb agrees with the noun/subject.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

TREATMENT ORDER 3

PASSIVE “SE”

In English, when the speaker wants to highlight the outcome of an action without giving importance to the agent (the “doer”) of the action, usually the passive voice is used:

(a) The letters were written by the president

In this sentence what is important is that the letters were written. Notice that the doer/agent of the action is de-emphasized by being placed at the end of the sentence and is introduced by the preposition “by.” The passive sentence in (a) is related to the active voice sentence in (b):

(b) The president wrote the letters

The verb escribir ‘to write’ is a transitive verb, which means that it needs both a “doer” (subject/agent of the action) and an object (the receiver of the action) as in (b). The object the letters of the transitive verb to write in (b) becomes the subject of the passive voice in (a).

Spanish has two kinds of passive voice:

1) verb to be “ser” + the verb in past participle (equivalent to English verbal forms such as “written, bitten, broken, stolen,…etc.”):

(c) Las cartas fueron escritas por el presidente
   ‘The letters were written by the president’

Similar to English, what matters in passive sentences like (c) is that the letters were written, so the agent of the action, el presidente, is moved to the end of the sentence and is introduced by the preposition por. This construction is parallel to the English passive construction in (a). The second Spanish construction, which has no parallel in English, is shown in (2). It is another construction that requires the pronoun se:

2) “se” + verb

(d) Se pintaron las paredes de azul
   ‘The walls were painted blue’

(e) Las paredes se pintaron de azul
   ‘The walls were painted blue’

What is important is that the walls were painted, regardless of who painted them. When using the passive with se, the agent (“doer”) of the action is not present in the sentence (similar to impersonal se and middle voice se which you will learn about in future sessions.) In addition, examples (d) and (e) show that the noun las paredes can appear before or after the verb (unlike
the impersonals where the noun can only be after the verb, and unlike the middle voice where
the noun can only be before the verb; you will learn about these constructions in future sessions.)

**IMPORTANT:**

It is important to notice that the verb in passive constructions agrees with the noun. Notice, for
example, that in the sentence “se pintaron las paredes de azul” the verb is plural (in the
“ellos/ellas/ustedes” form). This is because “las paredes” is plural. In contrast, if the noun
object is singular, the verb must also be singular, as in “se pintó la pared de azul.” The noun,
which is now the subject of the sentence, can precede or follow “se +verb” as we saw in
examples (d) and (e) above (Note that Spanish speakers tend to use structure (d) more than (e).)
Remember that “se” is sometimes hard to hear because is not accented, especially when it is in
the middle of the sentence. If the pronoun is overlooked the passive voice interpretation of the
sentence may be missed, as in the following example:

\[ f) \quad \text{pintaron las paredes de azul} \]
\[ \quad \text{“They painted the walls blue”} \]

This example has two interpretations, neither of which is passive. First, given that you can drop
the subject in Spanish, it can be understood that “they”, someone already known from previous
context, painted the walls. Second, the “they” referred to in the sentence can be some non-
specific subject, similar to the subject of the English sentence “They say it’s going to snow
tonight.” As shown above, neither of these is the function of the “se” passive construction in
Spanish.

Let’s summarize the main points for the passive voice *se*:

- It is used to de-emphasize the doer of the action
- The *se* can be in initial or in middle position
- The verb agrees with the noun that becomes the subject of the sentence
  (singular or plural)
- The noun can precede or follow the unit “*se* + verb”

The focus of this session is on the passive voice *se*. We will focus on hearing and interpreting
the pronoun *se* in the activities for today

**IMPERSONAL “SE”**

In English, when people do not want to specifically say who did what, they use
impersonal words like *someone, one, they, you, people, etc.* In this way, the action is
attributed to people in general and not to a specific person:

\[ (a) \quad \text{Someone/people called the police} \]

Spanish expresses this same meaning by using the pronoun *se*:
(b) Se llamó a la policía

This *se* is roughly equivalent to words such as *alguien* (someone), *uno* (one) and *la gente* (people); however, the impersonal *se* cannot appear at the same time with these words or with people’s names as in sentence (d) below. Notice that *se* is at the beginning of the sentence because it works as a place holder for the subject. Notice that in (b) the object of the sentence (the thing being called) *la policía* ‘the police’ is introduced by the personal “a.” The presence of this “a” is important because it appears only in impersonal *se* constructions but not in the passive voice (neither in middle voice *se* constructions which you will learn about in the next session.)

An important requirement to remember for using an impersonal construction in Spanish (as well as in English) is that the action has to be performed by a (non-specific) human being which is implied in the sentence. For example, contrast sentence (b) with (c) and (d) below:

(c) La mesa llamó a la policía  (illogical)
(d) Juan llamó a la policía

Sentence (c) is illogical because the non-human subject *la mesa* cannot call the police. Sentence (d) cannot be understood as an impersonal because we know that “Juan” is a specific person doing the action. However, sentence (b) can only be understood that there was someone (a non-specific human being) who called the police.

Remember from session 1 that a transitive verb represents an action that requires a “doer” (subject/agent) and a “receiver” (object) like the verb *llamar* ‘to call’ in (b) and (d). In (b) the doer of the action is someone not specific marked by *se* and in (d) the doer is “Juan”. In both (b) and (d) the object of the verb “llamar” is “la policía.” Impersonal constructions can be used also with intransitive verbs, which only need a doer, such as *trabajar* “to work,” *llegar* “to arrive,” *vivir* “to live,” etc., as in (e) and (f):

(e) Se trabaja bien aquí  (People work well here)
(f) Se vive bien aquí  (People live well here)

In these sentences, the verbs *trabajar* and *vivir* do not have an object like the verb *llamar* in (b), (c) and (d); but they do have a non-specific human doer. These examples show that impersonal constructions with *se* can be made with transitive and intransitive verbs.

Let’s contrast the functions of the impersonal *se* and the passive voice *se*. The *se* in impersonal constructions can only appear in initial position while in passives it can appear in initial as well as in middle position:

Impersonal = *Se* habla español  (initial position)
Passive = *Se* pintaron las paredes de azul  (initial position)
Las paredes de azul *se* pintaron  (middle position)
Regarding verb agreement, the verb in the impersonal constructions is always in third person singular while the verb in the passive voice agrees with the noun/subject of the sentence:

Impersonal =  \textbf{Se} habla español  \\
Passive =  \textbf{La pared} de azul \textbf{se} pintó  \\

Remember that the impersonal \textit{se} is a place holder for the subject of the sentence (no subject can be present) while the passive voice \textit{se} de-emphasizes the doer of the action.

\textbf{IMPORTANT:}  
\textit{It is important to notice that the verb is conjugated in third person singular the “él/ella/usted” form. “Se” is the first word of the sentence and there is no subject named. The subject is omitted precisely because we do not know or we do not care who it is; however, “se” needs to be present. It might be helpful to think of the impersonal “se” as a sort of place holder for a non-specific human subject.}

The problems for Spanish learners with the impersonal constructions tend to be: 1) English needs a subject to be present “people, someone, they...” while Spanish only needs “se,” 2) sometimes the “se” in a sentence is hard to hear because it is a small word that the voice does not emphasize, and 3) Spanish learners mistakenly overlook this pronoun interpreting the sentence without the “se” and missing the impersonal reading of the sentence as in (g):

\begin{itemize}
  \item (g) \textit{Llamó a la policía}  \\
  \textit{He /she called the police}
\end{itemize}

Let’s summarize the main points for the impersonal \textit{se}:

\begin{itemize}
  \item It is used when the subject is unknown or irrelevant
  \item It cannot appear with words such as: \textit{alguien (someone), uno (one), la gente (people)}, etc. or with people’s names.
  \item The \textit{se} works as a place holder for the subject.
  \item The doer of the action needs to be human and non-specific
  \item The verb is in third person singular (the \textit{él/ella/usted} form): llama, vive, trabaja…
  \item The \textit{se} is roughly equivalent to English “they” and “someone”
  \item The personal “a” appears in this construction to mark the object of the sentence when the object is human.
\end{itemize}

The focus of this session is on the impersonal \textit{se}. We will focus on hearing and interpreting the pronoun \textit{se} in the activities for today.
MIDDLE VOICE “SE”

Middle voice refers to qualities or inherent properties of things. These properties bring about states or consequences with only minimal (if any) human intervention (unlike the impersonal constructions that imply a human doer and unlike the passive that the doer is de-emphasized). For example:

(a) This bread cuts easily

In this English sentence, the inherent quality of the bread is that its softness makes it easy to cut regardless of how a person might approach the task. This sentence certainly does not mean that “someone cuts the bread easily.”

Spanish has this same kind of structure. However, while Spanish needs the pronoun se in this middle construction as in (b), English does not have a pronoun equivalent to se:

(b) Las camisas de seda se lavan cuidadosamente
    ‘Silk shirts are (need to be) washed carefully’

In this example, it is understood that given the delicate material of the shirts, they need to be washed in a specific manner. Comparing examples (a) and (b) it can be seen that the nouns “bread” and “silk shirts” are the objects of their respective verbs: “to cut bread” and “to wash shirts.” This is one of the requirements for the middle voice sentences. In addition, the noun needs to agree with the verb because this noun is the subject of the sentence; in (b) the plural noun “las camisas de seda” agrees with the verb “lavar” (unlike impersonal constructions, in which the verb can only be in the third person singular él/ella/usted form.) This can also be seen in example (c)

(c) Los árboles secos se queiman fácilmente
    ‘Dry trees burn easily.’

In this example, it is understood that because trees are dry, there is no moisture in them to prevent them from burning. In addition, “los árboles secos” is the object of the verb “queimar” and agrees with the verb. In all of these examples, we are talking about inherent characteristics of the nouns that bring about the action (like burning trees) or make the action necessary (like washing shirts carefully.) The examples (a), (b), and (c) show the inherent characteristics of objects, not of specific people. Therefore, the middle voice cannot be used with people.

As the following examples show, the object/thing whose characteristics are being talked about needs to be nearly always present and needs to appear before the verb: “Las camisas de seda” in (b) and “Los árboles secos” in (c) cannot be omitted as shown in (d) and (e) respectively:

(d) *se lavan cuidadosamente (ungrammatical)
(e) *se queman con facilidad (ungrammatical)

These sentences are ungrammatical because the objects “las camisas de seda” and “los árboles secos” that are being referred to are not present.
It is important to remember that in Spanish as well as in English, the middle voice constructions typically include an adverb, like fácilmente “easily” in (c) and cuidadosamente “carefully” in (b). However, English does not have a pronoun se to indicate that the sentence is middle voice as in (g), while in Spanish this pronoun is obligatory, as shown in (f) below:

(f) Los árboles secos se queman fácilmente
(g) Dry trees burn easily

Sentences (f) and (g) both have the adverb fácilmente “easily” and both have the same structure; their only difference is the presence of the pronoun se in Spanish. In Spanish what makes the middle voice interpretation possible is the presence of this pronoun. Its absence makes a middle voice sentence ungrammatical in Spanish:

(h) *Los árboles secos queman con facilidad (ungrammatical)

Notice that this would be a word-for-word translation from English to Spanish, but again the absence of se makes the sentence ungrammatical.

Let’s contrast the functions of the se seen until now: The se in the middle voice is in middle position, in impersonal constructions is in initial position, while in passives it can appear in initial and in middle position:

Impersonal = Se habla español (initial position)
Middle voice = El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter se vende muy bien (middle position)
Passive = Se pintaron las paredes de azul (initial position)
Las paredes de azul se pintaron (middle position)

Regarding verb agreement, the verb in the impersonals is always in third person singular while the verbs in the middle voice and the passive voice agree with the noun (subject) of the sentence:

Impersonal = Se habla español (singular)
Middle Voice = El extraordinario libro de Harry Potter se vende muy bien (singular)
Los árboles secos se queman fácilmente (plural)
Passive = La pared de azul se pintó (singular)
Se pintaron las paredes de azul (plural)

Remember that the impersonal se is a place holder for the subject of the sentence (no subject can be present), the middle voice se refers to inherent qualities of the noun/subject of the sentence and the passive voice se de-emphasizes the doer of the action.

**IMPORTANT:** One of the problems with the pronoun “se” in middle voice is that sometimes it is hard to hear in a sentence because it is a small word that the voice does not emphasize and it occurs in the middle of the sentence which makes it harder to pick out. Because the “se” is so
easy to overlook, learners tend to think it is OK to leave the pronoun out of a sentence when, in fact, doing so makes the sentence ungrammatical, as we saw in example (h) above.

Let’s summarize the main points for the middle voice *se*:
- The noun is the object of the verb  (to cut bread, to wash shirts)
- The noun becomes the subject and it appears before the verb (pre-verbal position)
- The *se* is used to mark inherent qualities of the noun  (objects not of specific people)
- The noun or the *se* cannot be omitted
- There is agreement between the noun and the verb

*The following table compares all the se functions studied previously:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NOUN</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>VERB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impersonal</strong></td>
<td>Noun after the verb</td>
<td><em>Se</em> functions as a place holder for the agent/doer of the action. <em>Se</em> cannot appear with other impersonal words.</td>
<td>The verb is in third person singular because there is no subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle</strong></td>
<td>Noun/subject before the verb</td>
<td><em>Se</em> functions as a marker for the inherent characteristics of the noun (objects, not specific people.)</td>
<td>The verb agrees with the noun/subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passive</strong></td>
<td>Noun/subject before or after the verb</td>
<td><em>Se</em> marks that the doer of the action has been de-emphasized.</td>
<td>The verb agrees with the noun/subject.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Actividad A: Listen to the following sentences. You will hear each sentence twice. Select the picture that better describes the sentence you hear.

1. a b
2. a b
3. a b
4. a b
5. a b
6. a b
7. a b
8. a b
9. a b
10. a b
11. a b
12. a b

Vocabulario
Agredió/Agredieron = Hit
 Arrestó = Arrested
 Compañía = Company
 Cocinó = Cooked
 Construyó = Built
 Cosas = Things
 Delincuentes = Delincuents
 Edificios = Buildings
 Futbolistas = Soccer players
 Bruja = Witch
 Quemaba(n) = Burned
 Vegetales = Vegetables
Sentences to be read to Participants:

2. Se agredió a los futbolistas.
3. Ana llamó a la policía.
4. La compañía construyó unos edificios.
5. Se arrestó a los delincuentes.
6. Se cocinó los vegetales.
7. La bruja quemaba cosas.
8. Los futbolistas agredieron a una persona.
9. Juan cocina los vegetales.
10. Se construyó unos edificios.
11. La policía arrestó a los delincuentes.
12. Se llamó a la policía.
13. Se quemaba a las brujas.

Actividad B: Read the following statements. Circle the letter of the activity the one activity that is not logical for the given location.

Vocabulario

Adorar = To adore
Alborotador= Troublemaker
Asustar = To scare
1. En una escuela de kindergarten:
   a. se enseña a los niños.
   b. se protege a las mascotas de la clase.
   c. se asusta a los niños.
   d. se trabaja con profesores.

2. En un bar:
   a. se baila.
   b. se canta.
   c. se bebe alcohol.
   d. se ora con fé.

3. En una cárcel
   a. se trabaja con placer.
   b. se encarcela a los delincuentes.
   c. se vigila a los sospechosos.
   d. se castiga a los alborotadores.

4. En un salón de clase de español
   a. se habla español.
   b. se adora al sol.
   c. se hace los ejercicios.
   d. se evalúa a los estudiantes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cárcel = Jail</th>
<th>Castigar = To punish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encarcelar = To put in jail</td>
<td>Evaluar = To assess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hacer = To do/make</td>
<td>Mascota = Pet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orar con fé = To pray</td>
<td>Placer = Pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proteger = To protect</td>
<td>Sospechoso = Suspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vigilar = To watch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Impersonal “se”  Something else
1. __________  __________
2. __________  __________
3. __________  __________
4. __________  __________
5. __________  __________
6. __________  __________
7. __________  __________
8. __________  __________
9. __________  __________
10. __________  __________

1. Se despierta a las seis de la mañana.
2. Se azotó a los delincuentes.
3. Se afeita en las tardes.
4. Se habló mucho en esa reunión.
5. Se llega a Barcelona por este camino.
6. Se cepilla los dientes después de desayunar.
7. Se baña todos los días a las siete de la mañana.
8. Se vive tranquilo aquí.
9. Se levanta a las seis de la mañana.
10. Se adora al sol.

Actividad D: The following impersonal sentences represent beliefs that people may have held at different points in history. Mark with an X the sentences you think are true for our present times in 2010 and which ones are not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>True in 2010</th>
<th>Not true in 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Se dice que las mujeres son inferiores a los hombres.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Se cree que la tierra es cuadrada.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Se piensa que el sol gira alrededor de la tierra.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Se compra a personas como esclavos.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Se teme una tercera guerra mundial.  
6. Se habla solo lenguas indígenas.  
7. Se da educación a todas las personas.

**Actividad E**: The following impersonal sentences express what people might be expected to do in different countries. What country do you think each sentence is referring to?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>México</th>
<th>España</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Se juega al fútbol americano.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Se escucha a los mariachis.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Se va a las corridas de toros.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Se habla de Napoleón.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Se baila en el carnaval de Río.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Se come con jalapeños.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Se respeta a la reina.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Se conduce en el lado derecho.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocabulario**

- Conducir = To drive
- Corridas de toros = Bullfighting
- Derecho = Right
- Mariachis = Mexican music players
- Respetar = To respect
Actividad A: Read the following scenarios. Select one of the two sentence choices given that best fits in the scenario given.

Vocabulary:
Bosques = Forests
Carros viejos = Old cars
Casa prefabricadas = Prefabricated houses
Construyen = Built
Derrite = Melts
Distancia = Distance
Escuchan = Hear
Fuera = Outside of
Mantequilla = Butter
Millas = Miles
Queman = Burn
Queso Parmesano = Parmesan cheese
Rápidamente = Fastly
Refrigerador = Fridge
Ropa blanca = White clothes
Salsa de tomate = Ketchup

1. Firemen always take care of the forests. They burn the trees that can start a fire in order to prevent even bigger fires. In this case:
   a. Los bosques secos se queman fácilmente.
   b. Se queman los árboles secos controladamente.

2. Marcos knows a lot about cars. He installs nice stereos in the cars that he buys because he likes to make noise with them. However, with old cars he does not need to do that because:
   a. Los carros viejos se escuchan ruidosamente a millas de distancia.
   b. Se escuchan los carros viejos ruidosamente a millas de distancia.

3. It is the weekend. Mariana and Luis do not feel like cooking, so they prepare a quick lunch. Luis does not know what to add to the pasta and Mariana answers:
   a. La pasta se come con salsa y queso parmesano.
   b. Se come la pasta con salsa y queso parmesano.

4. Ana loves to dress in white clothes. The only problem is that:
   a. La ropa blanca se ensucia mucho.
   b. Se ensucia la ropa blanca con salsa de tomate.

5. “The Fast Builders” company prides itself of having the fastest workers in the city building prefabricated houses. This is what its business slogan says:
   a. Las casas prefabricadas se construyen rápidamente.
   b. Se construyen casas prefabricadas rápidamente.
6. My mom always becomes upset every time someone leaves the butter on the kitchen counter because:
   a. La mantequilla se derrite fuera del refrigerador.
   b. Se derrite la mantequilla fuera del refrigerador.

**Actividad B:** Read the following sentences. Identify if the action of the sentence is necessary or brought about due to an inherent characteristic of the underlined object or not, marking with an “X” in the corresponding column:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characterística</th>
<th>No Característica</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Sentences:

1. **Las luces de neón** se ven claramente.
   - Característica
   - No Característica

2. **La niña** se lava meticulosamente.
   - Característica
   - No Característica

3. **El pescado con espinas** se come lentamente.
   - Característica
   - No Característica

4. **Estos niños tímidos** se asustan frecuentemente.
   - Característica
   - No Característica

5. **La mujer** se ve distorsionadamente.
   - Característica
   - No Característica

6. **Este libro** se vende muy bien.
   - Característica
   - No Característica

7. **Las camisas de seda** se lavan cuidadosamente.
   - Característica
   - No Característica

8. **El agua** se compone de hidrogeno y oxigeno obviamente.
   - Característica
   - No Característica

9. **Los niños** se bañan en la bañera diariamente.
   - Característica
   - No Característica

10. **Estas frutas tan duras** se comen difícilmente.
    - Característica
    - No Característica

11. **Los computadores por ser pesados** no se transportaban fácilmente.
    - Característica
    - No Característica

**Vocabulary:**

- Asustar = To scare
- Bañar = To take a bath
- Bañera = Bathtub
- Claramente = Easily
- Cuidadosamente = Carefully
- Dientes = Teeth
- Duras = Hard
- Espina = Bone
- Feliz = Happy
- Frentemente = Frequently
- Hidrogeno = Hydrogen
- Impecablemente = Impeccably
- Lavar = To wash
- Lentamente = Slowly
- Luces = Lights
Oxígeno = Oxygen
Pesado = Heavy
Pescado = Fish
Neon = Neon
Seda = Silk

Transportar = To carry / transport
Tímidos = Shy
Ver = To see
Vivir = To live

**Actividad C:** Listen to the following sentences. Identify if the action of the sentence is necessary or brought about due to an inherent characteristic of the object or if it refers to something different, marking with an “X” in the corresponding column. You will hear each sentence twice:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Característica</th>
<th>No característica</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocabulario**

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aluminio = Aluminium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buenos = Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calienta = Heats up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ejemplares = Issue (publication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encuentran = Find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fácilmente = Easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grautitos = Free of charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inesperadamente=Unexpectedly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meticulosamente =Meticulously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niñas = Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perplejamente = Perplexly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progresivamente=Progressively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resbalo = Slipped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandía = Watermelon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vende = Sells</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sentences to be read out loud (twice each sentence):**

1. Este libro se vende muy bien
2. Las niñas se miran perplejamente
3. Fernando se baña meticulosamente
4. Los buenos amigos no se encuentran fácilmente
5. La sandía se come completamente sin la piel
6. El hombre se levanta de la silla
7. El aluminio se calienta progresivamente
8. Britney Spears se viste horriblemente
9. Los ejemplares gratuitos no se venden nunca
10. La profesora se resbaló inesperadamente
Actividad D: Read the following sentences and decide whether you agree or disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Un río se seca cuando no llueve</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Los bananos se pudren fácilmente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. El aluminio se dobla al calor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Los globos se elevan por el aire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. El agua se evapora al calor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Las flores se marchitan sin agua</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulario

- Aluminio = Aluminum
- Bananos = Bananas
- Calor = Heat
- Doblar = To bend
- Elevar = Elevate
- Evaporar = Evaporate
- Globos = Balloons
- Marchitar = To shrivel
- Pudrir = To rot
- Río = river
- Secar = To dry

PASSIVE “SE”

Actividad A: Circle the letter of the sentence that you hear (A) or (B) that matches the picture below.

1. A B
2. A B

3. A B

4. A B

5. A B
Sentences to be read:
1. a. Se construyeron las casas.
   b. Juan y Luis construyeron las casas.
2. a. Se escribieron cartas de amor.
   b. Las cartas de amor fueron escritas por mi mamá.
3. a. Se pintaron las paredes de azul.
   b. Las paredes fueron pintadas de azul por los obreros.
4. a. Se publicó el libro “Cien años de soledad” para la venta.
   b. García Márquez publicó el libro “Cien años de soledad.”
5. a. Se compran joyas de oro.
   b. Las joyas de oro fueron compradas por los comerciantes.

Actividad B: Read the following scenarios. Select one of the two sentence choices given that best fits in the scenario given.

Vocabulario

Carta = Letter
Cortinas = Curtains
Dar (dieron) = To give (gave)
Ejercicios = Exercises
Empleados = Employees
Escribir (escribió) = To write (wrote)
Escríta = Written
Esfuerzo = Effort
Felicitaciones = Congratulations
Felicitado = Congratulated
Fiesta = Party
Fue = Was
Fueron = Were
Hacer (hizo) = To Make (made)
Hecho = Made
Importa = What matters
Ingeniero = Engineer
Mejorar = To improve
Mojas = Nuns
Mucho = Much / A lot of
Pidiendo = Asking for
Práctica = Practice
Querer (quieren) = To want
Respeto = Respect
Solucionar = To solve
Sugirir (sugirieron) = Suggest (suggested)
Sugeridos = Suggested
Tejer (tejieron) = To knit
Tejidas = Knitted
1. Everybody in the office has been complaining about the way that the boss treat the employees but nobody has been able to confront him because they will be fired; so they decided to do something in an anonymous way:
   a. Una carta se escribió pidiendo respeto.
   b. Una carta pidiendo respeto fue escrita por los empleados.

2. Every year, in a fundraising party, the group “Los Latinos” always gives a lot of money to the fundraising event. This year, the party is in their honor:
   a. Felicitaciones se dieron en esta fiesta.
   b. El grupo “Los Latinos” fue felicitado en esta fiesta.

3. One of your friends is going to get married. She received a couple of curtains that are very unique but she does not know who made them. She looked for this information on Internet and she found out that:
   a. Las cortinas fueron tejidas por las monjas de Roma.
   b. Las cortinas se tejieron en Roma.

4. There was a problem during the construction of a house in our neighborhood. The architect who caused the problem stayed all night repairing the damage. The project manager is very upset and wants the problem solved regardless of who caused it. He arrives in the morning and sees that everything has been solved and says:
   a. Este problema se solucionó, que es lo que importa.
   b. El problema fue solucionado por el ingeniero, que es lo que importa.

5. It is very common nowadays that everybody needs to play political games in a work setting if they want to advance in their careers. People sometimes need to do their work and let their boss take the credit for it. So, it is not surprising that your selfish boss will say the following in a meeting:
   a. Todo este proyecto se hizo con mucho esfuerzo.
   b. Todo este proyecto fue hecho por mis empleados con mucho esfuerzo.

6. There is always someone in a class that is considered the teacher’s pet and my chemistry class is no exception. The teacher came and said to the class that there were going to be more practice exercises thanks to the suggestion of some people; however, you, as students, know who they are! You get together with your friends and you say:
a. Los ejercicios de práctica se sugirieron para mejorar en la clase.
b. Los ejercicios de práctica fueron sugeridos por los estudiantes que quieren mejorar en la clase.

Actividad C: Look at what happened in this crazy party at a fraternity house. Has this happened in your dorm too?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sí</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Se usaron las sábanas para hacer togas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Se bebió todo el agua de los floreros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Se escribieron obscenidades en la pared</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Se botaron los papeles higiénicos en la sala</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Se comieron las frutas del refrigerador</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Se tiraron los retratos de las paredes a la calle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Se encontraron identificaciones falsas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulario

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baño = Bathroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beber = To drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botar = To throw out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calle = Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comer = To eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encontrar = To find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falsas = Fakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florero = Flower vase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frutas = Fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identificaciones = IDs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obscenidades = Obscenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerador = Fridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retratos = Portraits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sábana = Blanket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togas = Togas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usar = To use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirar = To throw away</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Actividad D:** Which of these sentences apply to your family’s daily / weekly routine?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Se lavan los baños de la casa.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Se riega el árbol del jardín.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Se enceran los carros en el garaje.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Se recogen las frutas del invernadero.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Se organiza la oficina de mis padres.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Se abren las ventanas de la sala.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Se limpian las escaleras.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Se saca el perro a caminar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actividad E:** Read to the following sentences. Identify which ones are more applicable to a city (ciudad) and which ones to a country (país) or to both.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ciudad</th>
<th>País</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Se pide ayuda federal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Se cortan los árboles de la calle principal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Se organizan partidos políticos.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Se crean programas de educación.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Se declara la guerra.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Se elige un alcalde.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Se necesita un presidente.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: ___________________________ Age: _____________
E-mail: __________________________ Phone:_____________________
ID number: __________________________

What is your native language? _____________________________________

Other than English, what other language do you speak at home? _______________

Are you taking other language classes apart from Spanish?  Y  N _______________

How old were you when you started learning Spanish? _______________

Where (city, country)? ___________________________

Have you taken Spanish classes (literature, grammar, culture, conversation)?  Y  N

If yes, for how long? ___________________________

What classes did you take? ________________________________

For how long (total) have you been learning Spanish? __________________________

Have you studied abroad?  Y  N

If yes, where? ____________________________ For how long: _______________

Are you a Spanish major or minor?  Major  Minor  Neither

Why are you learning Spanish? _____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

How many hours per week do you practice your Spanish? _______________

How many hours per week do you spend doing your homework? _______________

What extra-curricular activities do you do that involve the use of Spanish?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
1. Read the following paragraph and fill in the blanks with the pronoun *se* wherever you think it is needed. Leave the space blank if you think no *se* is necessary.

### Mi vecino y su casa embrujada

Marcos es un chico extraño. Marcos (1) lava a su perro con cera. Pero él también hace cosas que no son muy comunes. Él solo (2) lee libros hechos en hoja de banano porque él dice que estos libros (3) leen mejor, tiene camisas de algodón porque no (4) arrugan y no tiene familia por que la familia no (5) escoge. También, Marcos solo come bananos porque esta fruta (6) puede comer sin cocinar. Además, solo tiene dos amigos porque los buenos amigos no (7) encuentran fácilmente. Él también (8) despierta a sus vecinos en la mañana con música. También, en la casa de Marcos (9) suceden cosas muy extrañas. Nadie (10) sabe por qué suceden estas cosas; solo (11) sabe que no son normales. Los televisores (12) prenden a la medianoche, (13) queman los papeles higiénicos, (14) tiran los platos al piso, (15) envían mensajes por la computadora cuando no hay nadie en casa, (16) cambian las fotografías de pared y (17) asusta a los amigos de Marcos. Algunas personas (18) creen que hay un espíritu en su casa, y otras personas (19) piensan que Marcos lo hace cuando está dormido. No (20) sabe qué pasa, (21) cree que él está loco y (22) teme que él haga alguna locura. Cuando Marcos (23) llega a casa, él (24) besa a su perro y va a dormir.

### Vocabulario:

- Algodón = Cotton
- Alguna = Some
- Arruga = Wrinkle
- Asustar = To scare
- Cera = Wax
- Embrujada = Haunted
- Enviar = To send
- Escoger = To choose
- Haga (hacer) = To make
- Hoja de banano = Banana leaf
- Locura = Craziness
- Papel higiénico = Toilet paper
- Pared = Wall
- Piso = Floor
- Prender = To turn on
- Quemar = To burn
- Suceder = To happen
- Tirar = To throw
- Vecinos = Neighbors
2. Translate the following sentences into Spanish. *Translate as many as you can by Appropriately using the pronoun “se,” keeping in mind that “se” is not appropriate in all sentences.* If you do use the pronoun “se,” please identify its function: passive, middle voice or impersonal or if you are not sure of its function write *don’t know*.

a) The walls were painted yesterday (paint ‘pintar’)

b) John walks to school (walk ‘caminar’)

c) Someone scared the children (scare ‘asustar’)

d) The peace treaty was signed yesterday. (sign ‘firmar’)

e) Catalina reads her book (read ‘leer’)

f) These leaves burn fast (burn ‘quemar’)

g) Ana buys books (buy ‘comprar’)

h) Someone sent the invitations to the guests (send ‘enviar’)

i) This bread cuts easily (cut ‘cortar’)

**Vocabulario:**

Bread = Pan
Easily = Fácilmente
Fast = Rápido / Rápidamente
Guests = Invitados
Invitations = Invitaciones
Leaves = Hojas

Peace treaty = Tratado de paz
This = Este
These = Estas
Wall(s) = Pared(es)
Yesterday = Ayer
3. Read the following sentences carefully and identify the function of the pronoun “se” in each of the sentences below: *impersonal, middle voice or passive*. If you think the “se” has none of these three functions write *other* and if you are not sure of its function write *don’t know*. In addition, identify the subject of the sentence: If it is an implied subject write *implied*, if you cannot identify the subject write *don’t know*. Please do not leave any spaces blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentences</th>
<th>“se” function</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Se puede mirar por los huecos de la pared</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las casas prefabricadas se construyen fácilmente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos se leyó todo el libro este fin de semana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esta piedra preciosa se vende muy bien en las joyerías</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalmente se construyeron los puentes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellos se preguntan si tienen la misma suerte</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los jugadores de fútbol se llevan muy bien</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se habla mucho en esa reunión</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se hicieron los trabajos a computador</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan se comió el pastel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se contrataron los servicios públicos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La pasta se come con salsa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se presentó a los organizadores del evento</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocabulario:**
- Construyeron = Built
- Fácilmente = Easily
- Huecos = Holes
- Joyería = Jewelery
- Jugador = Player
- Pared = Wall
- Piedra Preciosa = Jewel
- Poder (puede) = Can
- Prefabricadas = Prefabricated
- Puentes = Bridges
- Suerte = Luck
- Trabajo = Paperwork
4. **Grammaticality judgment sentences.** Please read the sentences and rate them on the following scale:

0 = ungrammatical, 1 = somewhat grammatical, 2 = grammatical and 3 = do not know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentences</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Las manchas de tomate limpian difícilmente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los bosques se quemaron con gasolina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcos ve los niños jugar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los mejores estudiantes se escogen en la reunión</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se necesita a un ayudante de cocina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los niños asustan a los perros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Este libro se vende bien</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se critica los jueces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariana se baña cada mañana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se habla mucho en esas reuniones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estos libros compran en todas las esquinas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las luces de neón se ven claramente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juliana quiere va al festival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los pantalones de algodón no planchan fácilmente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se odia los extranjeros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las puertas cerraron a las 10 de la noche</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocabulario:**

- **Algodón** = Cotton
- **Asustar** = To scare
- **Ayudante** = Helper
- **Bañar** = Take a shower
- **Bosques** = Forests
- **Cerrar** = To close
- **Claramente** = Clearly
- **Cocina** = Kitchen
- **Criticar** = To criticize
- **Escoger** = To choose
- **Esquinas** = Corners
- **Extranjeros** = Foreigners
- **Fácilmente** = Easily
- **Jueces** = Judges
- **Limpiar** = To clean
- **Luces** = Lights
- **Manchas** = Stains
- **Neón** = Neon
- **Odinar** = To hate
- **Pantalones** = Pants
- **Planchar** = To iron
- **Puertas** = Doors
- **Quemar** = To burn
- **Vender** = To sell
- **Ver** = To see
APPENDIX G

POST-TEST

ID number: ________________________________

1. Taking into account what you have learned during this study, identify the function of the pronoun “se” in each of the sentences below: **impersonal, middle voice, or passive.** If you think the “se” has none of these three functions write **other** and if you are not sure of its function write **don’t know.** In addition, identify the subject of the sentence by **underlining** it. If you think that the subject is implied (i.e. not present), do not underline anything and write "**NS**" next to the sentence. If you are unsure, write **don’t know** next to the sentence. Please do not leave any spaces blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oraciones</th>
<th>Función del “se”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La ropa blanca se ensucia inmediatamente</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se detestan las espinacas por su sabor a tierra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se come bien en este restaurante</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se asusta a estos niños por la noche</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana y Juan se besaron por la mañana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Este libro religioso se vende fácilmente</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana y Juan se casaron ayer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La carta se firmó esta tarde</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana se despierta a las 6:00am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las cartas enviadas por e-mail se leen rápidamente</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan se duerme a las 11:00pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se habla mucho en esa reunión</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se hicieron los trabajos a computador</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulario:

- **Asustar = To scare**
- **Ayer = Yesterday**
- **Besar = To kiss**
- **Carta(s) = Letter(s)**
- **Casar(on) = To get married**
- **Despertar (despierta) = To wake up**
- **Detestar (detestan) = Hate**
- **Dormir (duerme) = To sleep**
- **Ensucia (ensuciar) = To get dirty**
- **Envidias = Sent**
- **Espinacas = Spinach**
- **Fácilmente = Easily**
- **Firmar (firmó) = To sign**
- **Hacer (hicieron) = To do/make**
- **Inmediatamente = Immediately**
- **Leer (leen) = To read**
- **Mañana = Morning**
- **Reunión = Meeting**
Mariana y su día de terror

Mariana es artista, ella trabaja mucho todos los días y (1) ____ descansa los fines de semana. Ella (2) ____ sale frecuentemente a correr, pero hoy es un día extraño, porque cuando (3) ____ regresa a casa, ve que todo está cambiado. Sus cartas (4) ____ escribieron con retazos de periódico, (5) ____ colocaron las tejas al revés, (6) ____ prendieron todos los televisores, (7) ____ sacaron las frutas del refrigerador y (8) _____ pasaron las cosas de un lugar a otro. Mariana (9) ____ vio una nota en la pared que decía: “¡Hay muchas cosas que no sabes y que necesitas aprender! Siempre (10) ____ dice la verdad. El cristal (11) ____ quiebra fácilmente, la piña (12) ____ come difícilmente con la piel, los niños (13) ____ asustan fácilmente con historias de horror, el agua (14) ____ seca al sol, la ropa blanca (15) ____ ensucia fácilmente, (16) ____ busca el amor en Internet, y por último, (17) ____ vive bien aquí cuando tú no estás.” ¡Qué horror! ¡Mariana no (18) ____ sabía exactamente qué hacer! Ella salió corriendo de su casa y encontró otra nota en la puerta que decía: “Alguien (19) ____ avisó a la policía, y alguien (20) ____ llamó a un exorcista”. Mariana no comprendía qué pasaba. Por el momento, (21) ____ piensa que ella estaba loca. (22) ____ cree que Mariana (23) ____ regaló sus muebles y que ella (24) ____ vendió inmediatamente su casa.

Vocabulario:

Al revés = Backwards
Alguen = Someone
Asustar (asustan) = Get scared
Avisó (avisar) = Call
Buscar = To look for
Cambiado = Changed
Cartas = Letters
Comprendía = Understood
Corriendo = Running
Creer = To believe
Descansar = To rest
Encontró (encontrar) = To find
Ensucia = Get dirty
Extraño = Strange / Weird
Fines de semana = Weekends
Llamó (llamar) = To Call
Muebles = Furniture
Piña = Pinnacle
Piel = Peal
Puerta = Door
Quiebra (quebrar) = To break
Refrigerador = Fridge
Regresas = To return
Retazos = Snippets
Ropa blanca = White Clothe
Sabe / Sabía (saber) = To Know
Salió (salir) = To leave (left)
Seca = Dry
Salió (salar) = To leave (left)
Tejas = Tiles
Último = Lastly
Vendedor (vender) = To sell
Verdad = Truth
3. Translate the following sentences into Spanish. Translate as many as you can by APPROPRIATELY using the pronoun “se,” keeping in mind that “se” is not appropriate in all sentences. If you do use the pronoun “se,” please identify its function: passive, middle voice or impersonal or if you are not sure of its function write don’t know.

a. The walls were painted yesterday (paint ‘pintar’) ________________________________________________

b. John walks to school (walk ‘caminar’) __________________________________________________________

c. Someone scared the children (scare ‘asustar’) __________________________________________________

d. The peace treaty was signed yesterday (sign ‘firmar’) ____________________________________________

e. Catalina reads her book (read ‘leer’) ____________________________________________________________

f. These leaves burn fast (burn ‘quemar’) __________________________________________________________

g. Ana buys books (buy ‘comprar’) ______________________________________________________________

h. Someone sent the invitations to the guests (send ‘enviar’) _________________________________________

i. This bread cuts easily (cut ‘cortar’) ____________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book(s) = Libro(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread = Pan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children = Niños</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily = Fácilmente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast = Rápido</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guests = Invitados</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitations = Invitaciones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaves = Hojas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace Treaty = Tratado de Paz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School = Escuela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This = Este</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These = Estas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls = Paredes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yesterday = Ayer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Look at the adverb in parentheses at the right of each sentence. Mark with an X all the possible places where you could insert the adverb in the sentence.

d) _____ las blusas de seda ____ se ____ lavan ____ con cuidado ____ (no)

e) _____ se _____ necesita ____ a esa profesora ____ (supuestamente)

f) _____ las cartas a máquina ____ se ____ leen ____ mejor ____ (probablemente)

g) _____ se ____ quemaron ____ muchos bosques ____ (desafortunadamente)

h) _____ se ____ azotó ____ a los delincuentes ____ (no)

i) _____ se ____ construyeron ____ muchas casas ____ (posiblemente)

j) _____ las tortas ____ se ____ hacen ____ con harina ____ (usualmente)

k) _____ se ____ corre ____ en la mañana ____ (intencionalmente)

l) _____ se ____ cuenta ____ la misma historia ____ (siempre)

m) _____ esta camisa ____ se ____ limpia ____ (suavemente)

n) _____ se ____ solucionaron ____ los problemas ____ (brevemente)

o) _____ se ____ oyeron ____ unos ruidos extraños ____ (no)
### Vocabulary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Azotar = To whip</td>
<td>Blusas de seda =Silk blouses</td>
<td>Bosques = Forests</td>
<td>Brevemente = Briefly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camisa = Short</td>
<td>Cartas a máquina = Typed letters</td>
<td>Construyeron = Built</td>
<td>Cuidado = (with) Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delincuentes = Delincuents</td>
<td>Desafortunadamente=Unfortunately</td>
<td>Extraños = Strange</td>
<td>Harina = Flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historia = Story</td>
<td>Intencionalmente = Intentionally</td>
<td>Limpiar = To clean</td>
<td>Mañana = Morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misma = Same</td>
<td>Necesitar = To need</td>
<td>Posiblemente = Possibly</td>
<td>Probablemente = Probably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyeron = Heard</td>
<td>Quemaron = Burnt</td>
<td>Oyeron = Heard</td>
<td>Quemaron = Burnt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruidos = Noises</td>
<td>Siempre = Always</td>
<td>Solucionaron = Solved</td>
<td>Suavemente = Gently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supuestamente = Supposedly</td>
<td>Tortas = Cakes</td>
<td>Usualmente = Usually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Grammaticality judgment sentences

5. **Grammaticality judgment sentences.** Please read the sentences and rate them in the following scale: **0=ungrammatical, 1 = somewhat grammatical, 2 = grammatical and 3 = do not know**

### Vocabulario:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alguien = Someone</td>
<td>Algodón = Cotton</td>
<td>Almacén = Store</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aluminio = Aluminum</td>
<td>Asunto = Tepic</td>
<td>Asustar = To scare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayer = Yesterday</td>
<td>Ayudante = Helper</td>
<td>Bañar = Take a shower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosques = Forests</td>
<td>Calor = Heat</td>
<td>Camisa = Shirt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerrar = To close</td>
<td>Claramente = Clearly</td>
<td>Cocina = Kitchen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprar = To buy</td>
<td>Congelar = To freeze</td>
<td>Criticar = To criticize</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuidar = To take care of</td>
<td>Derretir (derrite) = To melt</td>
<td>Diamantes = Diamonds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escoger = To choose</td>
<td>Esquinas = Corners</td>
<td>Expulsar = To expel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extranjeros = Foreigners</td>
<td>Fácilmente = Easily</td>
<td>Frío = Cold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasolina = Gasoline</td>
<td>Humedad = Humidity</td>
<td>Jugar = To play</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jueces = Judges</td>
<td>Lavar = To wash</td>
<td>Limpiar = To clean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llorar = To cry</td>
<td>Luces = Lights</td>
<td>Lunes = Monday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchas = Stains</td>
<td>Mañana = Morning</td>
<td>Mejores = Best</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucho = A lot</td>
<td>Nada = Nothing</td>
<td>Neón = Neon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nieve = Snow</td>
<td>Odiar = To hate</td>
<td>Oxidar = To rust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pantalones = Pants</td>
<td>Partir (parten) = To break</td>
<td>Película = Movie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planchar = To iron</td>
<td>Promocionar = To promote</td>
<td>Puente = Bridge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puertas = Doors</td>
<td>Quemar = To burn</td>
<td>Querer (quiere) = To want</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reunión = Meeting</td>
<td>Saludar = To greet</td>
<td>Trabajos = Paperwork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale: 0=ungrammatical, 1 = somewhat grammatical, 2 = grammatical and 3 = do not know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sentences</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Las manchas de tomate limpián difícilmente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>El aluminio se oxida con la humedad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Este libro usado se vende bien</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Se expulsa a los traidores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Las luces de neón se ven claramente</td>
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<tr>
<td>Se cuida los niños</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>La película se promocionó el lunes</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los bosques se quemaron con gasolina</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcos ve los niños jugar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Se compraron los zapatos en el almacén</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Se necesita a un ayudante de cocina</td>
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<tr>
<td>El agua se congela en el frío</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estos libros compran en todas las esquinas</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alguien se quiere triunfar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los mejores estudiantes se escogen en la reunión</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los trabajos pasaron a computador</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los niños asustan a los perros</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juliana quiere va al festival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se critica los jueces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariana se baña cada mañana</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Se habla mucho en esas reuniones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Se va a hablar de un asunto importante</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>La foto tomó en el puente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Se lavaron todas las camisas ayer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los pantalones de algodón no planchan fácilmente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La nieve derrite con el calor</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-----------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Las puertas cerraron a las 10 de la noche</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellos se saludan todos los días</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Los diamantes no parten fácilmente</td>
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<tr>
<td>Se odia los extranjeros</td>
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<tr>
<td>Se llora por nada</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Juan baña todas las mañanas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los hijos no se escogen</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H

ENGLISH NATIVE SPEAKERS’ ADVERB PLACEMENT TASK

*Middle sentences (English NS):*

____ Silk blouses ___ are _10_ washed ____ carefully _____ ‘not’

_2_ Typed letters _1_ are _10_ read ______ better_5_ ‘probably’

_3_ Cakes _3_ are _9_ made ______ with flour __3_ ‘usually’

_2__ This shirt ______ is _10_ cleaned ______ ‘gently/softly’

*Passive sentences (English NS):*

_____ Strange _____ noises _____ were __10_ heard _____ ‘not’

__4_ Several houses _3_ were _10_ built _3__ ‘possibly’

_8_ Many forests _2_ were _7_ burned _4_ ‘unfortunately’

_3_ The problems _1__ were _8_ solved __4_ ‘briefly/shortly’

*Impersonal sentences (English NS):*

______ Someone _10_ slap _____ the delinquents’ _______ ‘not / did not’

_5_ People _10_ need __1__ that teacher’ _1__ ‘supposedly’

_2_ People _10_ run __4_ in the morning _4__ ‘intentionally’

______ People _9_ tell ______ the same story __3_ ‘always’