

Development and validation of the test of spelling competence (TCORT) in incoming university students

Desarrollo y validación del test de competencia ortográfica TCORT en estudiantes universitarios de nuevo ingreso

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Abstract:

This study aims to present a test to assess spelling competence (TCORT) in incoming Spanish university students and to obtain validity evidence to support its use. The starting point was a bank of 73 items covering the most relevant spelling areas of the Spanish language, and the 37 most representative items were selected from the information provided by six experts. Afterwards, a pilot study of the TCORT was carried out with 602 students. The final version consisted of 31 items, with sufficient internal consistency ($\alpha = .90$; $\omega = .89$) and an invariant unidimensional structure between sexes. It also correlated significantly with other variables, such as previous

performance ($r = .37$, $p < .01$), verbal reasoning ($r = .27$, $p < .01$) and spelling, measured with another tool not adapted to the target population ($r = .45$, $p < .01$). Validity evidence based on the test content, internal structure and relations to other variables supported the use of the test to assess spelling competences in incoming university students. The usefulness of TCORT in providing relevant data to facilitate the creation of university policies aimed at promoting spelling competence training in university students is discussed.

Keywords: spelling, competence, university students, validity, academic performance.

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Resumen:

El objetivo de este estudio es presentar un test para evaluar la competencia ortográfica (TCORT) en estudiantes universitarios españoles de nuevo ingreso y obtener evidencias de validez que apoyen su uso. Se partió de un banco de 73 ítems que cubrían las áreas ortográficas más relevantes de la lengua española y se seleccionaron los 37 ítems más representativos a partir de la información proporcionada por seis expertos. Después, se realizó un estudio piloto del TCORT con 602 estudiantes. La versión final se compuso de 31 ítems, con una adecuada consistencia interna ($\alpha = .90$; $\omega = .89$) y una estructura unidimensional invariante entre sexos. Además, se correlacionó de forma significativa con otras variables, como el rendimiento

previo ($r = .37, p < .01$), el razonamiento verbal ($r = .27, p < .01$) y la ortografía, medida con otro instrumento no adaptado a la población objetivo ($r = .45, p < .01$). Las evidencias de validez basadas en el contenido del test, en la estructura interna y en la relación con otras variables apoyaron su uso para evaluar competencias ortográficas en estudiantes universitarios de nuevo ingreso. Se discute la utilidad de TCORT para aportar datos relevantes que faciliten la creación de políticas universitarias dirigidas a promover el entrenamiento de la competencia ortográfica en estudiantes universitarios.

Descriptoros: ortografía, competencia, estudiantes universitarios, validez, rendimiento académico.

1. Introduction

1.1. Importance of spelling in the academic context

In recent years, the teaching of spelling has been a challenge in the international education setting, reflected in international projects and programmes that include the assessment of spelling, either as an individual competence or as part of reading competence. The reports derived from these projects have shown that Spain has one of the lowest scores in reading competence and literacy (OECD, 2015). This fact may be due to the change in communication patterns resulting from the use of social media. For example, Mingle and Adams (2015) show that students who have used social media (i.e., WhatsApp) experience negative effects on their spelling

and grammar, which is related to poor academic performance. However, spelling errors made in digital writing need not necessarily imply errors due to ignorance or carelessness; rather, these are part of the dominant social communication among students, which has been named “disorthographic norm” (Gómez, 2014). Specific proposals have therefore been developed to train spelling competence, starting with the use of digital technologies in order to make writing easier for students and reduce spelling errors (OECD, 2018).

Writing well is a cognitive challenge because it is at once a test of memory, language and thinking ability (Kellogg & Raulerson, 2007). Students competent in written linguistic communication understand and produce texts in various situ-

ations where the context in writing, the intention and the assessment of the recipient to whom they address are relevant factors (Rico-Martín & Níkleva, 2016). Thus, spelling competence is a key element for appropriate written expression.

According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), spelling is defined as “the knowledge and skill in the perception and production of the symbols of which written texts are composed” (Consejo de Europa, 2002, p. 114). Graphic code is, by definition, a convention and, therefore, changing and unstable. Understanding and mastering spelling is not limited to the written transcription of phonemes; rather “it is related to the plurality of subsystems of language and not only to phonic but also to morphological, syntactic, lexical and semantic aspects” (Camps et al., 2004, p. 21).

In this respect, spelling is a transversal competence that must be given priority from the early stages of education and which affects the whole academic life of students (Fernández-Rufete, 2015). From a sociological perspective, this competence is essential for members of a community to consolidate their belonging to a group (Camps et al., 2004), since the spelling unit is fundamental for consolidating a language and maintaining the awareness of speaking the same language within our dialectical diversity. However, the emergence of digital media and social media increases the divide between written communication and academic standards (Rizzo, 2022). Furthermore, teaching spelling competence is less common as

students progress in their academic career (Sánchez-Rivero et al., 2021).

The impact on the university stage of students seems clear. Accordingly, there is a growing concern for the performance of students in academic tasks (i.e., written works) in which spelling mistakes are gradually getting worse (Gómez, 2005; Suárez et al., 2019). This concern is particularly relevant concerning the education of students in qualifications that lead to them practising teaching professionally (Martín, 2015; Suárez et al., 2021). Some authors even brand the fact that plans to boost the spelling competence of university students are not included in educational curricula as “incomprehensible” and “counterproductive”, as they play an important role in digital literacy among young people (Gómez & Gómez, 2015). In view of the foregoing, the acquisition and promotion of appropriate spelling competence in university education must become a fundamental objective in curricula.

1.2. Assessment of spelling

Assessment of spelling has often been included in assessment protocols for reading comprehension or writing skills. In the context of higher education, there are various standardised tests, such as American College Testing (ACT) and the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), which contain tests related to reading comprehension. Other tools are more accurate in this respect, using exclusive scores for spelling competences. One example is the Components of Spelling Test (CoST) (Daffern et al., 2015) tool, used to assess spelling competence in primary education;

or the Graded Spelling List (GraSp_List) (Venkatesan & Holla, 2011), which assesses spelling in populations with functional diversity.

In Spain, the assessment of spelling competence has been of interest in some teaching innovation works aimed at improving spelling through a cooperative university programme (Saneleuterio, 2018) or sign language (Marín-García, 2021). Likewise, various tests have been validated to assess spelling in Spanish, such as the Developmental Contrastive Spelling Test (Arteagoitia et al., 2005), the vocabulary assessment tool EVOG (Orellana-García et al., 2020), and the Lextale-Esp test (Izura et al., 2014). Additionally, others have been developed which not only include spelling, but also other elements of language, such as cognitive ability batteries BAT-7 (Arribas-Águila et al., 2013), BLOC (Cuetos, 2008), or PROLEC-SE (Cuetos et al., 2016). Nonetheless, the aforementioned tests do not meet the necessary requirements to assess spelling in the context of higher education, since they have been developed in order to be implemented in stages of education prior to university (Arteagoitia et al., 2005; Cuetos, 2008), they are focused on detecting difficulties in oral comprehension (Cuetos et al., 2016; Cuetos, 2008), they assess spelling competence through the vocabulary size of students without considering a map of spelling rules (Izura et al., 2014; Orellana-García et al., 2020), and they do not include any constituents of Spanish spelling such as the use of upper case and lower case letters, or accentuation (Arribas-Águila et al., 2013).

1.3. Spelling and academic achievement

Spelling acquisition cannot be considered an isolated gain. This is very often a source of development of related intellectual skills. One of the most relevant links is established with written composition, as it sets in motion the learning of standards through the creation of discourse and text review (Fernández-Rufete, 2015) or through written formal interactions between teachers and students (Níkleva, 2015). Furthermore, spelling competence activates word segmentation and recognition skills, as well as skills that involve advanced text processing (Vanderswalmen et al., 2010).

In primary and secondary education, spelling acquisition seems to influence subsequent academic performance (Job & Klassen, 2012; Rico-Martín, 2002; Salvador-Mata et al., 2007). At the university stage, the spelling assessed in comprehensive reading and writing assessments seems to predict good results over the years (Sæle et al., 2016). Accordingly, text composition is considered to be a single predictor of success during the freshman year of university studies (Kellogg & Raulerson, 2007), where spelling competence is key to explaining inadequate functioning in reading and writing skills (Gentry et al., 2014).

In this respect and considering the needs detected, the objective of this study is to create a tool to assess spelling competence in incoming university students and to obtain validity evidence to support its use. To this end, a tool has been developed based on the “spelling competence” theo-

retical construct definition. Afterwards, following the assessments made by a group of experts, the tool has been given to a sample of incoming Spanish university students. The results obtained have been used to obtain validity evidence based on content, internal structure (dimensionality and invariance) and relations to other variables (American Educational Research Association [AERA] et al., 2014).

2. Method

2.1. Participants

In the first phase of the study, six experts were involved in teaching spelling competence to university students, who initially assessed the items prepared in order to measure the construct. Secondly, 685 participants were recruited; three of them did not agree to participate in the study, and another 79 did not end up completing it and were excluded. The final sample consisted of 602 participants (52% female and 48% male), with an average age of 18.20 years ($SD = 1.83$). Of these, 194 studied degrees in economic sciences and business studies; 187, in social and human sciences; 123, in legal and political sciences; and 98, in engineering.

2.2. Tools

The Test of Spelling Competence (TCORT) has been created in order to measure the spelling competences of Spanish university students. Each item in the test is made up of four sentences. In only one of them, there is a clear spelling error belonging to one of the fundamen-

tal constituents of spelling, which must be identified by the respondent. Each correct answer is given one mark, and each wrong answer receives zero marks.

BAT-7-S (Arribas-Águila et al., 2013). This is a battery of seven cognitive abilities applicable to pre-university students (16-18 years): verbal reasoning (V), spatial reasoning (E), attention (A), reasoning (R), numerical reasoning (N), mechanical reasoning (M) and spelling (O). This tool has demonstrated sufficient internal consistency in each of its subscales (Cronbach's alpha values between .78 and .95) (Sánchez-Sánchez & Arribas-Águila, 2014).

Previous performance. Assessed by means of the scores achieved by students in the university entrance exam (PAU) (ranging between 0 and 10).

2.3. Process

The first version of the tool was created based on two documents: the latest edition of *Ortografía de la lengua española [Spelling of the Spanish language]* (Real Academia Española [RAE] & Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española [ASALE], 2010), and the *Ortografía de uso del español actual [Spelling of current Spanish usage]* manual (Gómez-Torrego, 2015), which uses the spelling of the RAE as a reference, but adapts to the most common use of spelling standards. The content of the tool was structured based on the “five fundamental constituents of spelling” identified by the RAE: spelling of letters, accentuation (use of the tilde accent), punctuation marks, use of upper

case and lower case letters, and graphic representation of lexical units.

The representative elements of comprehensive spelling competence were deduced from each of the fundamental constituents, following the approach of Gómez-Torrego (2015) as a reference to assess spelling competence. These elements were considered to be the indicators of the construct. Thus, the representative elements were established based on four of the five fundamental constituents of spelling (from now on referred to as spelling areas): letters (A), upper case and lower case letters (B), prefixation and composition (C), and accentuation (D). No items referring to punctuation marks

were included, since this is a component of spelling with a high degree of subjectivity and, due to discursive reasons, it allows several valid options in some cases. In each of the four spelling areas in particular, various representative elements were established (for example, in the “letters” area, one of the representative elements was the use of *b/v*). Subsequently, three clear items were developed (not subject to contextual interpretation) to assess each one of these elements in order to obtain an initial item bank which was large enough, that is, approximately double its final version (Muñiz & Fonseca-Pedrero, 2019). Table 1 shows the number of items developed for each area and for each representative element.

TABLE 1. Number of items developed for each area and element.

Spelling area	No. of items	Representative elements (no. of items)
<i>Letters</i>	33	Use of <i>b/v</i> (3 items)
		Use of <i>g/j</i> + <i>e/i</i> (3 items)
		Use of <i>c/z</i> (3 items)
		Use of <i>ll/y</i> (3 items)
		Use of <i>s/x</i> (3 items)
		Use of <i>d/z</i> (3 items)
		Use of <i>c/cc</i> (3 items)
		Use of silent <i>h</i> in first position and <i>h</i> in the middle (3 items)
		Use of <i>r</i> after consonants belonging to the syllable before (3 items)
		Use of <i>m/n</i> (3 items)
Use of <i>y/e</i> + <i>o/u</i> conjunctions (3 items)		
<i>Upper case and lower case letters</i>	8	
<i>Prefixation and composition</i>	11	
<i>Accentuation</i>	21	General rules of accentuation (4 items) Use of diphthongs and hiatuses (5 items) Diacritical tilde (12 items)

As a result, 73 items were generated, and these covered each of the elements contained in the spelling areas. The process to generate each of the items was as follows: for each item, four sentences were developed which contained one word or expression from a certain representative element of spelling competence (i.e., use of *b/v*). Three of these statements contained the expression written correctly (i.e., “Hay que rebelarse contra los tiranos”), while one of these statements contained the expression written incorrectly (i.e., “No *tubo* mucha suerte con la ortografía”), with the latter being the choice that students must be able to identify.

In order to select the most relevant items from each spelling area, a validation protocol was developed for expert judgement in which an assessment of the original 73 items was requested. In order to fulfil this protocol, six experts with proven experience in the educational field were contacted. Firstly, they were asked to sign an informed consent form in which they were notified of the objective of the research. All of them agreed to participate in the study voluntarily. Afterwards, the validation protocol was sent via e-mail, which was then completed and sent back to the research team.

The experts’ task consisted of using a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 4 (a lot), to assess the following aspects: a) representativeness, defined as the extent to which the sentences created were representative of the spelling area to which each item is supposed to belong; b) familiarity of the terms, defined as the likelihood that the subjects know all the words that appear in the sentence; and c) understanding of sentences,

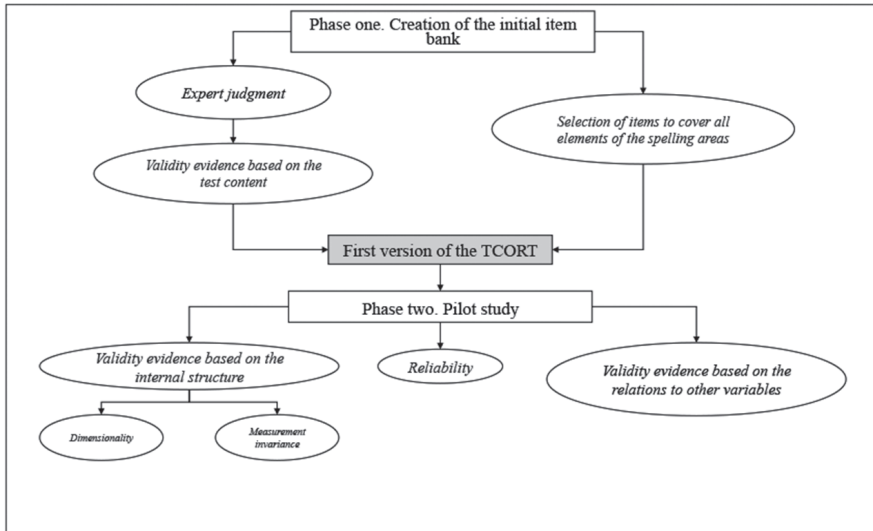
defined as the extent to which the sentence is coherent and understandable. Lastly, the experts were asked for a qualitative assessment of each of the items in the event that they considered any aspect to be relevant.

Subsequently, a first version of the test was obtained, made up of all items that the experts deemed suitable for piloting. The research team used this to make a selection in order to reduce the length of the TCORT, in any case maintaining that the spelling areas would still be represented in the pilot version. In particular, the following criteria were considered for the selection of items that would form the final version of the TCORT: a) the experts must agree on the parts assessed; b) all the spelling areas must be represented; c) overlapping must be avoided in each spelling area; d) a number of items which is around half of the initial bank must be reached (Muñiz & Fonseca-Pedrero, 2019).

In the second phase, 602 students completed the refined version of the TCORT and the BAT, and provided information on their academic performance in the PAU in two different online sessions. During the sessions, a specialized team monitored the process, provided technical support and resolved any procedural issues. The participants who agreed to take part in the study received a link to a survey manager. Before beginning the study, an assessment was requested on the part of Universidad Loyola Andalucía, which issued a favourable report (23 April 2020).

Figure 1 illustrates the various phases developed to obtain validity evidence on the usefulness of the tool created.

FIGURE 1. Summary of the TCORT validation process.



2.4. Data analysis

First of all, the information provided by the experts was analysed in order to obtain validity evidence based on the test content (Sireci & Faulkner-Bond, 2014). The degree of agreement was assessed as regards the representativeness, familiarity and understanding of the items using the content validity ratio (CVR) (Ayre & Scally, 2014). Specifically, the recommended cut-off point (CVR = .80) was followed for the number of experts ($n = 6$) and a confidence level of 95%. (Wilson et al., 2012).

Secondly, once the final version of the TCORT was defined following review by the research team, the tool was used on a sample of university students in order to obtain validity evidence based on the internal structure and the relations to other variables. Descriptive analyses were initially conducted of the skewness

and kurtosis of the multivariate sample using Mardia's test (Mardia, 1970). Afterwards, it was verified that the data were adequate for factoring by means of Barlett's test of sphericity ($p < .001$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, using values equal to or greater than .70 as the criterion.

In order to obtain evidence based on the internal structure of the TCORT (Rios & Wells, 2014), the total sample was split into two sub-samples selected at random, stratified by sex (52% female and 48% male) (Lloret-Segura et al., 2014). Analyses were carried out of dimensionality in accordance with various approaches in each sub-sample. In the first one, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted, and in the second one, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out. In EFA, the optimal number of factors was

explored based on parallel analysis with optimal implementation. In particular, the model based on the 95th percentile was chosen as a first option, for it provides polychoric scores, which are more accurate (Timmerman & Lorenzo-Seva, 2011); and, as a second option, the factor solution based on the average was used. Two indices were provided for each factor solution: a) H index or construct replicability (Hancock & Mueller, 2000), where values greater than .70 indicate that the measurement of the construct can be replicated; and b) factor determinacy index (FDI) (Gorsuch, 2003), where values greater than .90 indicate that the factor score can be used. Furthermore, a closeness to unidimensionality analysis was conducted to support unidimensionality as the main option in cases in which single-factor solution was obtained. Three indices were used for this: unidimensional congruence (UniCo; values equal to or greater than .95), explained common variance (ECV; values equal to or greater than .85), and mean of item residual absolute loadings (I-REAL; values below .30) (Ferrando & Lorenzo-Seva, 2018).

Considering the optimal number of factors, the fit was analysed using the maximum likelihood and weighted least square mean and variance adjusted (WLSMV) method due to the categorical nature of items (Rhemtulla et al, 2012). Fit of the model was assessed using root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and standardized root mean-square (SRMR), with optimal values below .08 (Hooper et al., 2008); and com-

monality of items, with a cutoff point of .20 (Child, 2006).

The WLSMV estimation method was used in CFA. Fit of the model was assessed using the goodness of fit RMSEA and SRMR, the comparative fit index (CFI) and the tucker-lewis index (TLI), and these were appropriate with values equal to or greater than .95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Lastly, the prediction error of the proposed models was compared based on the Akaike information criterion (AIC) and the bayesian information criterion (BIC).

Once the dimensionality of the tool had been analysed, the total sample of students was considered in order to assess the invariance of the TCORT with regard to sex and the reliability of the tool and in order to obtain validity evidence based on relations to other variables.

Factorial invariance was carried out based on a multigroup CFA, examining a set of increasingly restrictive models in relation to sex. The intention was to compare the fit of the model when the individual parameters of the model were estimated separately for the various subpopulations in relation to the fit when the parameters were set to be invariants throughout them (Byrne, 2012). Invariance was again tested using the WLSMV estimator, by means of the following models, from least to most restrictive (Svetina et al., 2019): test 1, configural (equivalent structure in all groups: factor loadings and free thresholds in all

groups, residual variances set at 1 in all groups and factorial averages set at 0 in all groups); test 2, metric (factor loadings set to be equal, free thresholds in all groups, factorial averages set at 0 and residual variances set at 1 in both groups); test 3, scalar (factor loadings and thresholds set to be equal, residual variances set at 1 in one group and free in the other, and factorial averages set at 0 in one group and free in the other). Invariance between models was assessed using the following criteria (Chen, 2007): a) Δ CFI ($>.02$); b) Δ RMSEA ($>.15$).

The reliability of the tool was then analysed with the factor solution selected. The Cronbach's alpha (α) and McDonald's omega (ω) coefficients were calculated in order to analyse the internal consistency of the TCORT, with values greater than .70 considered to be acceptable (Dunn et al., 2013). The following were also analysed for each item: a) the discrimination index, considering that items are suitably discriminated against above .30 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994); and b) the reliability coefficient when removing the item from the test.

Lastly, analysis was conducted on the relationships between scores of the TCORT and scores in other tools that assessed theoretically related variables in order to obtain validity evidence based on relations to other variables (Oren et al., 2014). The bivariate correlations between scores in the TCORT and the following variables were specifically analysed: previous performance (PAU), the total score of the BAT, and scores ob-

tained in the seven BAT subscales. Particular attention was paid to spelling and verbal reasoning, as these are related problem-solving with verbal content that makes up so-called crystallized intelligence. Associations (r) were interpreted, in accordance with Evans' guide (1996), as very weak (.10 to .19), weak (.20 to .39), moderate (.40 to .59), strong (.60 to .79), or very strong (over .80).

Analyses were conducted using the following programs: FACTOR to explore the optimal dimensions in EFA; MPLUS to analyse dimensionality, invariance and reliability; and SPSS Statistics (v26.0) for descriptive statistics and calculation of correlations.

3. Results

3.1. Validity evidence based on the test content

Table A.1 of the Annex shows the results obtained concerning the 73 initial items in the expert judgement. The values obtained in each of the indices assessed are specified, as well as the decision made based on these (pass or fail) and any changes included according to the information collected.

Pursuant to the expert assessments, 60 of the 73 items were representative of the construct, reflected the expected familiarity and were understandable ($CVR \geq .80$). The other 13 items (3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 39, 58 and 64) were removed, as they did not achieve sufficient values in any of these three requirements.

Therefore, 60 items did cover the representative elements of all the proposed orthographic areas, so no new items had to be developed. Nonetheless, the research team made changes to seven items as suggested by the experts: in items 1, 16, 37 and 66, terms included in the distractors that could lead to an error were replaced; in item 10, two of the distractors were replaced as one of the experts considered them to be very easy; in item 60, the incorrect typology of one of the distractors was changed; and in item 72, two distractors were replaced as they did not assess the spelling area to which the item belonged (D: accentuation). No changes were made to the other 53 items that were deemed suitable by the experts.

Lastly, the research team selected the items that would form the refined version of the TCORT, starting from the 60 items deemed suitable by the experts. The selection included the following items: in A) spelling of letters, items 1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 19, 23, 27, 29 and 33; in B) upper case and lower case letters, items 36, 37 and 40; in C) prefixation and composition, items 48, 49, 51 and 52; and in D) accentuation, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 70, 71, 72 and 73. As a result of this refining process, the TCORT was made up of 37 items, which represented all constituent elements of all the spelling areas.

3.2. Validity evidence based on the internal structure

The matrix was appropriate for factorizing as Bartlett's test of sphericity was sig-

nificant ($p < .001$), and the KMO value was .94, greater than .70.

The average scores of the 37 items ranged between .34 ($SD = .49$) and .91 ($SD = .29$). The values of skewness varied between -2.88 and 0.83 and those of kurtosis between -1.99 and 6.28. Mardia's test was significant for kurtosis ($M_k = 1462.34$, $p < .001$), but not for skewness ($M_s = 220.53$, $p > .05$).

3.2.1. Dimensionality

The results of EFA showed a unidimensional factor solution when the analysis was based on the 95th percentile. However, the solution was bifactor when the analysis was conducted based on the average. Although the unidimensional factor solution based on the 95th percentile was the most appropriate in this case, additional analyses were conducted in order to confirm whether the unidimensional model was the most suitable. Analysis of the H index of the single-factor solution ($H = .947$) was greater than that obtained in each of the factors of the bifactor solution ($H = .937$ for the first factor and $H = .911$ for the second factor). In both cases, values were given that supported the fact that the construct measurement used ($H > .07$) was appropriate to be used in research (Hancock & Mueller, 2000). Furthermore, the values for FDI were again greater for the single-factor solution (.973) than for the bifactor solution (.968, first factor; .954, second factor). Thus, the values in both solutions supported the fact that the estimations of factor scores represented the scores of

latent factors, therefore the aforementioned scores could be used in research (Gorsuch, 2003).

In addition, the values of UniCo (.977), ECV (.871) and MIREAL (.189) were found to be within the expected ranges (UniCo $\geq .95$; ECV $\geq .85$; MIREAL $\leq .30$). An analysis was also carried out of the fit of data for the single factor model (RMSEA = .041; RMSR = .080), which were maintained within the maximum error range of .08 (Hooper et al., 2008). As regards the items, 31 of the 37 items had commonalities below .20 (Child, 2006). In particular, items 19, 20, 21, 23, 27 and 37 did not meet this criterion (see Table A.2 of the Annex).

CFA was carried out with the second sub-sample considering a single-factor model and using the WLSMV estimation method. Two models were considered for CFA: single factor with 31 items (exclusion of the six items with commonalities below .20 in EFA) and single factor with 37 items (inclusion of the six items with commonalities below .20 in EFA). As regards the first model (31 items), acceptable fit indices were obtained (TLI = .952; CFI = .949; RMSEA = .041 with a CI = .037-.045; SRMR = .075). The 31 items

of the tool were seen to be significant according to this model ($p < .001$, standardised coefficients between .847 and 1.678). As regards the second model (37 items), acceptable fit indices were obtained, although these were lower than the previous model (TLI = .947; CFI = .945; RMSEA = .051 with a CI=c.045-.056; SRMR = .089). All items of the tool were again seen to be significant according to this model ($p < .001$, standardised coefficients between .663 and 1.630). Table 2 shows the indices obtained when analysing the fit of both models.

The data show an acceptable fit to both models, which highlighted the need to compare them using AIC and BIC criteria. While the model with 31 items obtained an AIC = 20.317 and a BIC = 20.727, the model with 37 items obtained an AIC = 21.572 and a BIC = 22.023. Therefore, in comparison, the first one fitted better than the latter. Thus, for the rest of the analysis, the single-factor model with 31 items was considered.

3.2.2. Measurement invariance

As regards multigroup analysis, as stated in Table 3, scalar invariance was achieved when assessing the fit of the model between sexes (male and female).

TABLE 2. Fit indices for models assessed in CFA.

	χ^2	p-value	TLI	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA(CI)
TCORT-31 items	876.28	<.001	.952	.949	.075	0.041 (0.037-0.045)
TCORT-37 items	887.56	<.001	.947	.945	.089	0.051 (0.045-0.056)

TABLE 3. Analysis of variance according to sex (male-female).

Variables	χ^2 (df)	p-value	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	Contrast	Δ				
								χ^2 (df)	p	CFI	RMSEA	Decision
Model 1. Configural	1040.67 (868)	<.001	.981	.980	.026 (.019- .031)	.065	---	---	---	---	---	
Model 2. Metric	1246.65 (898)	<.001	.974	.973	.036 (.031- .040)	.070	2 vs 1	205.98 (30)	.000	-.007	-.010	Accept
Model 3. Scalar	1276.04 (898)	<.001	.974	.910	.035 (.030- .040)	.068	3 vs 2	29.39 (30)	.000	.000	-.001	Accept

NOTE: Sex: 1 = Male (n = 288); 2 = Female (n = 321).

The results showed a considerable factorial invariance as regards sex (male and female), as following the comparison of models, the $\Delta CFI \leq .02$ and $\Delta RMSEA \leq .15$ criteria were met (Chen, 2007).

3.3. Reliability

In terms of the reliability test, both Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega reached sufficient values ($\alpha = .90$; $\omega = .89$). Table 4 shows the psychometric properties of the items: difficulty, discrimination and α of the test when each item is removed.

The average difficulty index of the test was .396. The most difficult items were 4 (.100), 9 (.143) and 11 (.172), while the easiest ones were items 1 (.795), 28 (.667) and 27 (.604). As regards item discrimination, the 31 items of the scale were suitably discriminated against (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), with a range between .304 and .587. The items with the lowest discrimination indices were 16 (.304), 17 (.362) and 12 (.372); and those with the highest discrimination indices were 20 (.587), 11 (.570) and 8 (.554). Lastly, the α index when removing an item showed that the overall reliability of the scale did not increase when any item was removed. The final version of the TCORT (31 items) is included in Table A.3 of the Annex.

3.4. Validity evidence based on the relations to other variables

Table 5 shows the results obtained when analysing the correlations between scores in the TCORT and those obtained in other tools. The total score in the TCORT ($A = 19.31$, $SD = 7.03$) correlated significantly, in a positive but weak way, with

previous performance ($r = .37$, $p < .01$) and with the total score of the BAT ($r = .30$, $p < .01$).

In relation to BAT scales, the greatest associations of TCORT were seen to be significant and moderate ($r = .45$, $p < .01$) with spelling (BAT-O) and significant and weak ($r = .27$, $p < .01$) with verbal reasoning (BAT-V). Furthermore, TCORT correlated significantly with other problem-solving scales without verbal content, as in the case of reasoning (BAT-R; $r = .25$, $p < .01$) and numerical reasoning (BAT-N; $r = .18$, $p < .01$). No significant associations were found with mechanical reasoning (BAT-M).

4. Discussion and conclusions

The objective of this study was to develop a tool to assess spelling competence in incoming Spanish university students and obtain validity evidence to support the intended use of the test. To this end, the instructions described by AERA et al. (2014) were followed, designing a study aimed at collecting validity evidence based on content, internal consistency and the relationship with other variables. Inclusion of information provided by the experts and the responses from participants of the pilot study has made it possible to support use of the test in order to measure spelling competence in incoming university students. In this sense, results have shown that test content represents the intended construct (validity evidence based on content), items are organised into the dimensions described in order to define the construct (validity

TABLE 4. Psychometric properties of the 31 items of the Test of Spelling Competence (TCORT).

Spelling area	Item	Difficulty	Discrimination	α if the item is removed
Use of <i>b/v</i>	1	.795	.397	.888
Use of <i>g/j + e/i</i>	2	.241	.423	.888
Use of <i>c/z</i>	3	.322	.434	.888
Use of <i>s/z</i>	4	.1	.551	.887
Use of <i>ll/y</i>	5	.182	.443	.888
Use of <i>s/x</i>	6	.302	.447	.887
Use of <i>d/z</i>	7	.195	.519	.887
Use of <i>c/cc</i>	8	.268	.399	.888
Use of silent <i>h</i>	9	.143	.554	.886
Use of <i>r</i>	10	.328	.484	.887
Use of <i>m/n</i>	11	.172	.541	.886
Use of conjunctions	12	.2	.570	.886
Upper case and lower case letters	13	.363	.372	.889
Upper case and lower case letters	14	.404	.466	.887
Upper case and lower case letters	15	.333	.416	.888
Prefixation and composition	16	.36	.461	.887
Prefixation and composition	17	.468	.304	.890
Prefixation and composition	18	.479	.362	.889
Accentuation	19	.568	.384	.889
Accentuation	20	.558	.375	.889
Accentuation	21	.319	.587	.885
Accentuation	22	.478	.439	.888
Accentuation	23	.478	.489	.887
Accentuation	24	.512	.438	.888
Accentuation	25	.517	.433	.888
Accentuation	26	.529	.408	.888
Accentuation	27	.604	.485	.887
Accentuation	28	.667	.376	.889
Accentuation	29	.576	.379	.889
Accentuation	30	.342	.456	.887
Accentuation	31	.473	.439	.888

TABLE 5. Bivariate correlations between TCORT, BAT and previous performance.

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>DT</i>	PAU	BAT(O)	BAT(V)	BAT(T)	BAT(E)	BAT(A)	BAT(R)	BAT(N)	BAT(M)
TCORT	602	19.31	7.03	.37**	.45**	.27**	.30**	.09*	.11**	.25**	.18**	.02
PAU	601	7.41	1.13	1	.31**	.21**	.23**	.09*	.06	.19**	.20**	.01
BAT(O)	624	21.80	5.17		1	.38**	.49**	.13**	.12**	.19**	.30**	.11**
BAT(V)	624	20.37	4.42			1	.74**	.40**	.27**	.41**	.44**	.48**
BAT(T)	601	7.41	1.13				1	.70**	.55**	.70**	.74**	.67**

TCORT: Test of Spelling Competence; PP: previous performance scores obtained in PAU; BAT(O): BAT scale-spelling; BAT(V): BAT scale-verbal reasoning; BAT(T): Total BAT score; BAT(E): BAT scale-spatial reasoning; BAT(A): BAT scale-attention; BAT(R): BAT scale-reasoning; BAT(N): BAT scale-numerical reasoning; BAT(M): BAT scale-mechanical reasoning; **p* < .05, ***p* < .01.

evidence based on the internal structure) and scores of the test are related to scores of other tools as is theoretically defined (validity evidence based on the relationships with other variables). Furthermore, the analyses carried out with responses from the pilot study have shown that the TCORT provides accurate and reliable data which are invariant between sexes. This study, therefore, provides a tool in which both the creation and validation process has been based on the collection and inclusion of varied evidence from several information sources in order to, as proposed in the mixed methodology framework, favour compression of the phenomenon being studied (Hubley & Zumbo, 2011), and enrich and improve the interpretation of evidence collected (Zhou, 2019).

Likewise, each phase of the validation study incorporates processes and evidence that make the conclusions stronger. On the one hand, assessment of the agreement among experts has proven to be useful in analysing tools that measure education variables, such as learning skills and critical thinking (Khoiriyah et al., 2015), reflective ability (Alsina et al., 2017), and attitudes towards subjects (Palacios et al., 2014). In this study, the aforementioned process made it possible to identify the most appropriate items to make up the test and detect any elements in the items that could be changed in order to ensure better quality.

Varied and additional results were obtained in the pilot study. On the one hand,

the analyses of dimensionality confirmed the starting unidimensional theoretical structure, which included the most relevant spelling areas for assessment of spelling competence (Gómez-Torrego, 2015). These data are congruent with other assessments of spelling competence in the Spanish language, such as the word dictation test for the assessment of spelling level TEO-D (Cuadro et al., 2013) or the spelling subtest of the BAT (BAT-O) (Arribas-Águila et al., 2013), where a unidimensional structure of the construct is proposed.

Relationships between TCORT scores and problem-solving tasks with verbal content (BAT-V and BAT-O) confirmed the association of TCORT with tasks involved in crystallized intelligence, as is the case of verbal reasoning and spelling, elements of reasoning which are theoretically related to spelling competence and go beyond the word acquisition process (Cejudo et al., 2017; Pascual-Gómez & Carril-Martínez, 2017).

Correlations with previous performance and total score of the BAT showed spelling competence as a parsimonious variable that may be a source of transfer to other transversal competences for university students (Romero-González & Álvarez-Álvarez, 2020). In particular, the TCORT scores were associated with scores in tasks without verbal content, such as reasoning (BAT-R) and numerical reasoning (BAT-N). In this respect, although spelling is suggested as a competence that may be learned through educational processes different to other

aspects of language, such as morphology and lexicon (Martín-Sánchez, 2010), the main evidence trend seems to indicate that the assessment of spelling includes not only elements of verbal problem solving (Gómez, 2007) but also other fluid reasoning tasks (Ramírez-Uclés et al., 2013).

All of these results are evidence which supports the use of the TCORT to assess spelling competence in incoming university students, meaning that this study provides a new tool to measure a core competence in university assessment, firstly, by starting with an updated map of spelling areas and, secondly, due to its relationship with other relevant elements of language in higher education.

On the other hand, it is important to note the growing interest in spelling as a transversal competence in the context of new policies, such as the proposal in the 21st-century skills approach, which incorporates key linguistic components such as communication and collaboration, where the assessment of spelling competence is relevant (Binkley et al., 2012; Seifart, 2006). The tool created in this study contributes to the assessment of a competence that may facilitate profile creation from a more comprehensive approach. This, in turn, will benefit the identification of potential deficiencies in student, and the development of resources and programmes to counteract possible performance deficits during their time at university. One of the reasons for which the TCORT has been developed

is to encourage education agents to use university resources that contribute to student education, as occurs in other assessments of spelling competence in which improvement programmes are included throughout the university (Cejudo et al., 2017). It is also easier to use and apply as it is a tool which is freely available.

The limitations of the study are mainly associated with the homogeneity of the sample. Given that all participants belonged to the same university, it is possible that their characteristics are different to those of students from other Spanish universities. However, the large sample size makes it easier to generalise the results obtained in terms of the potential usefulness of the test. On the other hand, since this tool has been created to assess university students, it would be advisable to analyse possible differences in the way in which it works among students from different academic disciplines. Future studies should address the analysis of metric invariance among students from different areas.

The TCORT has proven to have sufficient internal consistency, and its total scores have reflected the expected theoretical relationships, which in turn supports the fact that spelling competence is transversal and must be taken into account in order to be incorporated into future higher education protocols.

In this regard, the applicability of a tool such as TCORT will make it possible to carry out assessments in the university

context aimed at detecting educational needs in a transversal competence as relevant as spelling. Students may be seen to benefit in early periods of university entry if they start using university resources

that promote certain academic competences such as this one. Assessment of this competence is expected to gain more relevance in university policies and actions aimed at optimising student resources.

ANNEX.

TABLE A.1. Results of the expert assessment.

Area	Initial item no.	Final item no.	Correct choice of the item*	Expert assessment			Decision	Changes made
				Repre	Fam	Und		
A: <i>b/v</i>	1	1	No <i>tubo</i> mucha suerte con la ortografía.	.83	.83	1	Pass	The distractor “Me he tomado un viski antes de venir al examen de Matemáticas” is replaced by “No me cuentes nada: tus asuntos no me incumben”.
A: <i>b/v</i>	2		Cierra con llave, <i>haber</i> si nos van a robar.	.83	1	1	Pass	No changes
A: <i>b/v</i>	3		Es posible que no <i>valla</i> a trabajar hoy.	.67	.67	1	Fail	
A: <i>g/lj</i> + <i>e/i</i>	4		Mi coche está estropeado y lo he llevado al <i>garage</i> .	.83	.58	.67	Fail	
A: <i>g/lj</i> + <i>e/i</i>	5	2	No me ha dado tiempo a <i>cojer</i> el tren.	.83	1	1	Pass	No changes
A: <i>g/lj</i> + <i>e/i</i>	6		Deja el paraguas en el <i>paraguero</i> para no mojar el suelo.	.08	1	1	Fail	

A: c/z	7	3	Este estudio profundiza en las raíces del flamenco.	.83	1	1	Pass	No changes
A: c/z	8		Antes de hacer el relleno, tiene que <i>coser</i> la pasta.	.67	1	1	Fail	
A: c/z	9	4	El último <i>ejercicio</i> es el más difícil.	.83	.92	1	Pass	No changes
A: ll/y	10	5	Ojalá <i>halla</i> mucha gente en la fiesta.	.92	.83	1	Pass	The distractor “Una llovizna fina moja la ropa” is replaced by “Tropezó con una piedra cuando iba por el monte y se cayó”.
A: ll/y	11		Tal vez <i>valla</i> esta tarde al río.	.83	.83	1	Pass	No changes
A: ll/y	12		Esta tarde he comprado tres <i>jerseys</i> .	.67	.67	.67	Fail	
A: s/x	13	6	Hace un sol <i>expléndido</i> para pasear.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
A: s/x	14		Hace tiempo que se abolió la <i>exclavitud</i> .	.67	.58	1	Fail	
A: s/x	15		La <i>cohesión</i> es una propiedad de los textos.	.58	.75	.92	Fail	

A: d/z	16	7	No pises el <i>céspedes</i> , está sembrado.	.83	.83	1	Pass	The distractors “El abad del monasterio parece muy joven” and “Hay que advertir a los presentes que no pueden usar el móvil” are replaced by “He preparado la habitación con mucha ilusión para recibir al huésped” and “El capataz de la obra se comporta como un tirano”.
A: d/z	17		¡Correr, correr que nos pilla mamá!	.42	1	1	Fail	
A: d/z	18		He dado tantas vueltas que me he <i>perdío</i> .	.67	.58	.67	Fail	
A: c/ cc	19	8	Hay que repasar los mecanismos de <i>sujec-ción</i> .	1	.83	1	Pass	No changes
A: c/ cc	20		Durante el mes de enero, ha subido la <i>inflacción</i> .	1	.67	1	Fail	
A: c/ cc	21		A tu trabajo le falta <i>con-crección</i> .	.92	.92	1	Pass	No changes
A: silent h	22		El político hizo <i>incapié</i> en las reformas que iba a proponer.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes

A: silent <i>h</i>	23	9	De haberlo sabido, te lo <i>abría</i> dicho.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
A: silent <i>h</i>	24		Hay que <i>proibir</i> el tráfico de personas.	.92	.92	.92	Pass	No changes
A: <i>r</i>	25		He comprado una tierra en el <i>extraradio</i> .	.92	1	1	Pass	No changes
A: <i>r</i>	26		Han acudido a la manifestación <i>alrededor</i> de mil personas.	.92	.92	1	Pass	No changes
A: <i>r</i>	27	10	Es tan alegre que no deja de <i>sonreír</i> .	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
A: <i>m/n</i>	28		El fin de semana me he pillado un buen <i>costipado</i> .	1	.83	1	Pass	No changes
A: <i>m/n</i>	29	11	La herida es tan grave que hay que <i>anputar</i> .	1	.83	1	Pass	No changes
A: <i>m/n</i>	30		No es el primer <i>referéndun</i> que se celebra en la Unión Europea.	1	.92	1	Pass	No changes
A: con- junc- tions	31		Coge aguja y hilo y ponte a coser.	1	1	.92	Pass	No changes
A: con- junc- tions	32		¿Prefieres que ponga el cuadro vertical <i>o</i> horizontal?	1	.83	.92	Pass	No changes

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A: con- junc- tions	33	12	Mis mejores amigos son Luis y Ignacio.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
B	34		Excelentísimo Señor Don Juan Ruiz Linares.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
B	35		La asignatura de matemáticas es obligatoria en mi carrera.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
B	36	13	Me encanta la <i>Historia</i> de los aztecas.	1	.92	1	Pass	No changes
B	37	14	No podré ir el <i>Lunes</i> a revisar el examen.	.89	1	1	Pass	The distractor "En esta ciudad, no se nota el cambio de estación" is replaced by "La cordillera de los Andes es tan extensa que es imposible recorrerla".
B	38		Hay fiesta en toda España el <i>día</i> de la Constitución.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
B	39		Un <i>Rey</i> debe ser fiel a su pueblo y actuar con humildad.	.67	1	1	Fail	
B	40	15	La universidad de <i>el</i> Cairo es muy famosa.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
B	41		La <i>Iglesia</i> de San Esteban es una joya arquitectónica.	1	1	.92	Pass	No changes

C	42	16	Ha llovido, <i>por que</i> el suelo está mojado.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
C	43		Ese fue el motivo <i>porque</i> dimitió el director.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
C	44	17	Esta es la novela <i>con-</i> <i>que</i> el profe- sor ganó el Planeta.	1	1	.83	Pass	No changes
C	45		<i>Con que</i> pensabas que el examen te había salido bien.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
C	46		La clase <i>adónde</i> voy es espa- ciosa.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
C	47		No estudia; por lo <i>de</i> <i>más</i> , es buen chico.	.83	.92	1	Pass	No changes
C	48	18	Me contó una noticia <i>a parte</i> .	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
C	49	19	<i>Asímismo</i> , todos en- tregaron un regalo.	.83	1	1	Pass	No changes
C	50		No apro- barás <i>sino</i> estudias.	1	.92	1	Pass	No changes
C	51	20	No conozco a tu novio <i>si</i> <i>no</i> en foto.	1	.83	1	Pass	No changes
C	52	21	El juez ha prohibido a su <i>ex mari-</i> <i>do</i> que se acerque.	.83	.83	1	Pass	No changes

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D	53	22	Si pudiera repetir este <i>examen</i> , lo haría mucho mejor.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	54	23	No me dijiste que <i>estábais</i> en la playa.	.83	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	55	24	Siempre he creído, <i>erroneamente</i> , que eras de Cádiz.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	56	25	<i>Ojala</i> llueva antes de la noche.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	57	26	El avión croata sobrevolaba el espacio <i>aereo</i> español.	1	.92	1	Pass	No changes
D	58		Tengo que ir a comprar, me he quedado sin <i>pintauñas</i> .	.58	1	1	Fail	
D	59	27	Créeme, <i>Raul</i> : Walt Disney nunca fue congelado.	.92	.92	1	Pass	No changes
D	60	28	Si tiras eso a la ducha, la vas a <i>obstruir</i> .	.92	1	1	Pass	In the distractor “Me encanta la película «Náufrago»”, the word “Náufrago” is now written without quotation marks and in italics.
D	61	29	No domina los principios <i>lingüísticos</i> .	1	.92	1	Pass	No changes

D	62	30	No tienes <i>porque</i> enfadarte.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	63	31	No <i>se</i> nada del asunto.	.92	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	64		Si fuera por <i>tú</i> ya estaríamos en casa.	.75	1	1	Fail	
D	65	32	Eso es para <i>mi</i> , amigo mío.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	66	33	A quien más perjudica todo esto es a <i>tú</i> .	.92	.92	1	Pass	The distractor “Cómo sois los andaluces, siempre de broma” is replaced by “Tiene la costumbre de tomarse un té a las cinco”.
D	67		No sé <i>que</i> querías decir en realidad.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	68		Hizo fotocopias de su <i>guión</i> y lo envió a la productora.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	69		<i>¡Cuanto</i> has tardado en llegar! ¿Había tráfico?	.92	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	70	34	<i>Cuándo</i> salgas, hazme una llamada perdida.	1	1	1	Pass	No changes
D	71	35	El perro <i>ése</i> es el que ha atacado a tu hijo.	.92	1	1	Pass	No changes

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D	72	36	Este me gusta más que <i>aquél</i> .	.83	1	1	Pass	The distractors “No es eso lo que quiero decir” and “Me dijeron todas esas cosas maravillosas” are replaced by “No tiene problemas de salud: aún es joven” and “La partitura está pensada inicialmente en si bemol”.
D	73	37	Yo no insinúo nada: <i>sólo</i> digo que le falta esfuerzo.	.83	1	1	Pass	No changes

A: spelling of letters; B: upper case and lower case letters; C: prefixation and composition; D: accentuation; Repr: content validity ratio of representativeness; Fam: content validity ratio of familiarity of terms; Und: content validity ratio of understanding of understanding of sentences.

*The spelling error in each item appears in *italics*.

TABLE A.2. Commonalities of the TCORT items obtained in EFA.

Item no.	Commonalities
1	.281
2	.288
3	.315
4	.569
5	.335
6	.319
7	.445
8	.250
9	.521
10	.355
11	.397
12	.468
13	.266
14	.310
15	.302
16	.324
17	.213
18	.255
19	
20	
21	
22	.252
23	
24	.211
25	.462
26	.372
27	
28	.281
29	.367
30	.321
31	.276
32	.311
33	.214
34	.274
35	.296
36	.310
37	

NOTE: commonalities with values below 0.2 are not shown.

TABLE A.3. Final version of TCORT.

Item no.	Correct choice	Distractor 1	Distractor 2	Distractor 3
1	No <i>tubo</i> mucha suerte con la ortografía.	No me cuentes nada: tus asuntos no me incumben.	Siempre le ha gustado mucho observar los pájaros.	Hay que rebelarse contra los tiranos.
2	Es tan alegre que no deja de <i>sonreír</i> .	He comprado un rotulador para subrayar.	Los rayos infrarrojos no son perjudiciales para la salud.	Honrarás a tu padre y a tu madre.
3	La herida es tan grave que hay que <i>anputar</i> .	Han condenado al periodista por calumnias.	Mi novio es un vampiro emocional: estoy agotada.	El terrorista se inmoló después de detonar la bomba.
4	Mis mejores amigos son Luis y Ignacio.	Hay que indicar en el escrito si es obligatorio u opcional.	Verano e invierno apenas se diferencian aquí.	Para resolver el problema, lee e investiga.
5	Me encanta la <i>Historia</i> de los aztecas.	La Universidad de Salamanca tiene varios campus.	La Facultad de Psicología es de las mejores de España.	El general no quiere dar la orden de atacar.
6	No podré ir el <i>Lunes</i> a revisar el examen.	Volveré a Estados Unidos en enero.	La primavera es terrible para los alérgicos.	La cordillera de los Andes es tan extensa que es imposible recorrerla.
7	La universidad <i>de el</i> Cairo es muy famosa.	Mi sueño es viajar a la Antártida.	En un lugar de la Mancha de cuyo nombre...	El mar Mediterráneo es ideal para ir de vacaciones.
8	Ha llovido, <i>por que</i> el suelo está mojado.	El Barça ganó porque es mejor.	El viaje es más barato porque había una oferta.	Desconozco el porqué de tu angustia.
9	Esta es la novela <i>conque</i> el profesor ganó el Planeta.	¡Conque ibas a ser más puntual!	¿Con qué habéis montado vuestra presentación?	No has estudiado suficiente, conque termina ya el examen.
10	Me contó una noticia <i>a parte</i> .	Los que sois del Madrid, poneos aparte.	Las medidas favorecieron a parte de la población.	No hace nada aparte de molestar.

11	Si pudiera repetir este <i>exámen</i> , lo haría mucho mejor.	Ángel es uno de mis enemigos más reconocidos.	Si no lo quieres, dámelo que yo sí le doy uso.	El referéndum sobre la Constitución fue aprobado por mayoría.
12	No me ha dado tiempo a <i>cojer</i> el tren.	¡Qué coraje me da! ¡Esta la sabía!	Tengo un dolor agudo de faringe.	Soy un auténtico inútil con el bricolaje.
13	Siempre he creído, <i>erroneamente</i> , que eras de Cádiz.	Tiene solo dieciséis años y es un portento físico.	Díselo a tu madre: yo te recojo.	Cómpratelo, te sienta muy bien.
14	<i>Ojala</i> llueva antes de la noche.	Ten en cuenta que no hay café en la cafetera.	Lávate las manos con jabón, por favor.	Ahí está el bar en el que celebré mi cumpleaños.
15	El avión croata sobrevolaba el espacio <i>aereo</i> español.	No me gustan los héroes americanos: prefiero los españoles.	He visto una película de samuráis trepidante.	Os propongo que bailéis hasta el amanecer.
16	Si tiras eso a la ducha, la vas a <i>obstruir</i> .	Me encanta la película <i>Náufrago</i> .	Había una chaqueta colgada en la silla.	El cuadro tiene un aire de melancolía.
17	No domina los principios <i>lingüísticos</i> .	Es del sur, así que no soporta el frío.	En el mundo, hay muchos héroes anónimos.	Tienes que meter el cajón por el raíl.
18	No tienes <i>porque</i> enfadarte.	Aún no sé por qué no me lo has dicho.	¡Por qué seré tan cabezota!	Tápate, porque hace bastante frío.
19	No <i>se</i> nada del asunto.	Tú, hijo, come bien.	Quiero un té con leche.	¡Ojalá me dé un regalo después de clase!
20	Eso es para <i>mi</i> , amigo mío.	No me dio la razón ni tampoco se la pedí.	No me des más la paliza, por favor.	Di a Rosa que cancelamos la cita.
21	A quien más perjudica todo esto es a <i>tí</i> .	Tengo mucha fe en que, al final, ella tendrá suerte.	Tiene la costumbre de tomarse un té a las cinco.	Dio un traspíe antes de caerse.
22	<i>Cuándo</i> salgas, hazme una llamada perdida.	Solo con verlo sabes cuánto vale.	Quiero que respondas cuando te pregunte.	Mira lo que ha pasado en donde veraneamos.

23	Este estudio profundiza en las <i>raíces</i> del flamenco.	He comprado un cabecero nuevo para la cama.	No tengo cenicero y la ceniza se va a caer al suelo.	No me gusta tu trabajo y debo prescindir de tus servicios.
24	El perro <i>ése</i> es el que ha atacado a tu hijo.	Ese asunto es el que me tiene preocupado.	Veo a ese y pienso en mi hermano.	Aquel que llegue primero ganará.
25	Este me gusta más que <i>aquél</i> .	Aquella no es tu casa, ¿verdad?	No tiene problemas de salud: aún es joven.	La partitura está pensada inicialmente en si bemol.
26	El último <i>ejercicio</i> es el más difícil.	Este jarabe es muy eficaz para la tos.	Hay que tener confianza en el futuro.	La paciencia no es una de mis virtudes.
27	Ojalá <i>halla</i> mucha gente en la fiesta.	Me encanta la yema del huevo.	La cría de la vaca es un novillo.	Tropezó con una piedra cuando iba por el monte y se cayó.
28	Hace un sol <i>expléndido</i> para pasear.	Suspendí por la sintaxis.	La asfixia acabó con la vida de mi perro.	Esta película ha sido vista por millones de espectadores.
29	No pises el <i>césped</i> , está sembrado.	El capataz de la obra se comporta como un tirano.	Esperad, no habléis todos a la vez.	He preparado la habitación con mucha ilusión para recibir al huésped.
30	Hay que repasar los mecanismos de <i>sujección</i> .	He repasado la traducción de tu libro y es perfecta.	Declaré en el juicio bajo coacción.	Tus argumentos son una pura contradicción.
31	De haberlo sabido, te lo <i>abría</i> dicho.	En cinco minutos, va a haber una nueva conferencia.	Conseguí llegar hasta el hospital a pesar del mareo.	Ahí tienes las consecuencias de tus acciones.

NOTE: the part of the correct choice which is written incorrectly appears in *italics*.

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