# TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI

## PUJILÍ CAMPUS

## UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

### DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

### ENGLISH MAJOR

### MODALITY: RESEARCH REPORT

**THEME:**

**The role of Spanish (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classrooms teachers and Students perspectives**

Research report before obtaining the bachelor degree in National and Foreign Language Pedagogy, English Major

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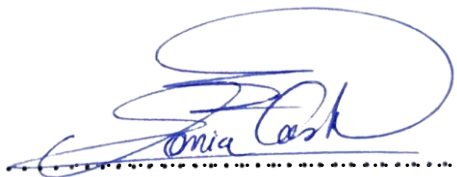
**PUJILÍ-ECUADOR**
**FEBRUARY-2023**

## TUTOR'S ENDORSEMENT

In my capacity as a supervisor of the research report entitled "**The role of Spanish (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classrooms teachers and Students perspective**", and researched by Danny Andrés Gutiérrez Guanoluisa and Jairo Joel Estrella Criollo, ID numbers 0503685463 and 1729271872, for obtaining the bachelor's degree in National and Foreign Language Pedagogy, English Major.

## I CERTIFY THAT:

This research report has been fully revised and has the requirements and merits to be submitted for evaluation by the assigned revision Committee and its presentation and defense.

Pujilí, February 2023

Sonia Jimena Castro Bungacho, Mg.
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# COMMITTEE APPROVAL

The research report entitled "**The role of Spanish (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classrooms teachers and Students perspectives**" has been revised, approved, and authorized for printing and binding, before obtaining the bachelor's degree in National and Foreign Language Pedagogy, English Major; this meets the substantive and formal requirements to hand in for the presentation and defense.
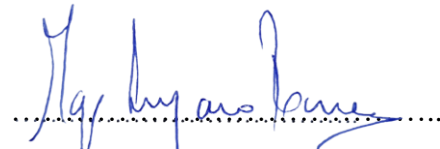
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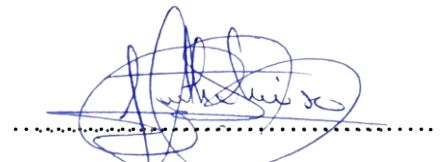Olga Lorena González Ortiz,PhD
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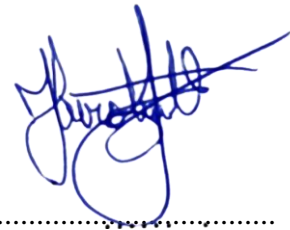Committee,
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**TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF COTOPAXI**

**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM**

**DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY**

**ENGLISH MAJOR**

**THEME: The role of Spanish (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classrooms teachers and Students perspectives.**

**Author:** Danny Gutiérrez and Jairo Estrella

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## ABSTRACT

The exclusive use of the English language (L2) to interact in the English as a Foreign Language classroom has been a controversial subject. The investigation problem is that students feel confusion when the teachers talk only in English. As a result, they are not able to follow the instructions or understand the lessons correctly. They understand only some parts of the lessons or instructions. So then, they have difficulties completing the activities or understanding the topic. This research has the purpose to analyze the use of the Spanish language (L1) in EFL classrooms, based on the criteria and perspectives of teachers and students, determining the role that L1 plays in the English language (L2) teaching-learning process. The study had a qualitative approach and followed the parameters of the multiple case study methodology. The use of Spanish (L1) during the instructional period of the English class was compared by observing six lessons, and a survey was applied to teachers and students. The participants were 10 teachers and 37 students from two high schools belonging to Pujilí. The results showed that the role of Spanish (L1) in the English classroom is to provide permanent assistance to the adequate understanding of English language (L2), and on occasions, it serves as a referential guide to deduce certain aspects of L2. Furthermore, the investigation concludes that there are serious difficulties in the foreign language (L2) production, making that the interaction becomes a challenge that teachers and students face in each class. For this reason, both must work towards strengthening and generating new knowledge; the native language (L1) can be an important tool that contributes to achieving this goal.

*Keywords:* English language production, language acquisition, language learning, native language, target language

# RESUMEN

El uso exclusivo del idioma inglés (L2) para interactuar en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera ha sido un tema controvertido. El problema de la investigación es que los estudiantes se sienten confusos cuando los profesores hablan solo en inglés. Como resultado, no pueden seguir las instrucciones o comprender las lecciones correctamente. Entienden solo algunas partes de las lecciones o instrucciones. Entonces, tienen dificultades para completar las actividades o comprender el tema. Esta investigación tiene como propósito analizar el uso del idioma español (L1) en las aulas de inglés como lengua extranjera, a partir de los criterios y perspectivas de docentes y estudiantes, determinando el papel que juega la L1 en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma inglés (L2). El estudio tuvo un enfoque cualitativo y siguió los parámetros de la metodología de estudio de caso múltiple. Se comparó el uso del idioma español (L1) durante el período instructivo de la clase de inglés mediante la observación de seis lecciones y se aplicó una encuesta a ambas partes. Los participantes fueron 10 docentes y 37 alumnos de dos colegios pertenecientes a Pujilí. Los resultados mostraron que el rol del español (L1) en el aula de inglés es brindar una ayuda permanente a la adecuada comprensión del idioma inglés (L2) y en ocasiones sirve como guía referencial para deducir ciertos aspectos de la L2. Además, la investigación concluye que existen serias dificultades en la producción del idioma extranjero (L2), haciendo que la interacción se convierta en un reto que enfrentan docentes y estudiantes en cada clase, por ello, ambos deben trabajar en el fortalecimiento y generación de nuevos conocimientos; la lengua nativa (L1) puede ser una herramienta importante que contribuya a lograr este objetivo.

*Palabras clave:* producción del idioma inglés, adquisición del idioma, aprendizaje de idiomas, idioma nativo, lengua meta.

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**UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE WORK STRUCTURE**

1. **General Information**

   **Theme:** The role of Spanish (L1) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classrooms teachers and Students perspectives.
   **Starting Date:** October 2022

   **Ending Date:** March 2023

   **Place of Research:**
   Unidad Educativa "Unión y Progreso" and Unidad Educativa "Pujilí"
   **Sponsoring Faculty:**
   Technical University of Cotopaxi, Campus Pujilí
   **Sponsoring Career:**
   National and Foreign Language Pedagogy English
   **Work Team:**
   Tutor: Mg. Sonia Jimena Castro Bungacho
   Students: Danny Andrés Gutiérrez Guanoluisa
   Jairo Joel Estrella Criollo
   **Knowledge area:**
   Education
   **Research line:**
   Innovation in the teaching and learning of the English language as a foreign language
   **Research line of the career:**
   Training of the personal and professional development of the English teacher

## 2. Problem Statement

What is the reason that teachers use L1 to teach L2 in an EFL classroom? The teaching of the target language is usually supported by the native language in the EFL classroom. According to Inada (2021), "there are likely to be controversies over the proper balance between the use of the target language (TL) and the first language (L1) in EFL classrooms" (p. 1). The moderate use of Spanish allows the development of the EFL classroom in a successful way. While, the excessive use of Spanish impedes the development of communication skills in a second language. But it is difficult to determine the correct balance in the use of L1 to teach L2 in language.

The students feel confusion when the teachers talk only in English. As a result, they are not able to follow the instructions or understand the lessons correctly. They understand only some parts of the lessons or instructions. So then, they have difficulties completing the activities or understanding the topic. As a consequence, students feel anxiety and develop a dislike for English classes. On the other hand, if the teachers use Spanish too much during the English lessons, students may lose interest in practicing the L2.

Teachers and learners of a second language must find an appropriate balance in the use of the target language and the native language for second language education. Otherwise, students will not be able to develop communication skills in the English language efficiently. This research will contribute with a general model of the use of Spanish in the teaching of English within two educational institutions. It also presents perspectives of teachers and students on the use of the native language.

**Research Questions**

What are the L1 and L2 implications in the foreign language production and interaction?

What are school teachers' and learners´ perceptions about the use of Spanish (L1) during the English classes in the Pujilí district?

How does the L1 (Spanish) contribute to the English teaching-learning process?

### 3. Objectives

### 3.1 General Objective

- To analyze the use of the Spanish language (L1) in EFL classrooms, based on the criteria and perspectives of teachers and students, determining the role that L1 plays in the English language (L2) teaching-learning process.

### 3.2 Specific Objectives

- To describe the L1 and L2 implications in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language through  searching for theoretical foundations that reveal how this process occurs.
- To provide criteria and conceptions about the role that L1 takes in the L2 teaching and learning, by reflecting on the information collected showing data about in which class parts the L1 is most used.
- To establish suggestions according to the current educational context, which guide instructors on the way that L1 contributes to teaching the L2 in the EFL classroom at the high school level.

**4.** **Activities and Task System in Relation to the Objectives Proposed**

**Table 1**

| Specific Objective | Activities | Verification Means |
|---|---|---|
| To analyze the use of the Spanish language (L1) in EFL classrooms, based on the criteria and perspectives of teachers and students, determining the role that L1 plays in the English language (L2) teaching-learning process. | Search previous studies related to this study Select topics to develop in the theoretical framework Research the theoretical foundations of previous studies | Research Background and Theoretical framework |
| To provide criteria and conceptions about the role that L1 takes in the L2 teaching and learning, by reflecting on the information collected showing data about in which class parts the L1 is most used. | Identify the variables. Select data collection instruments. Choose the participants. Conduct the teachers' and learners' survey. Conduct the teachers' and learners' checklist. Coding the data. Analyze the data. Contrast the data with results from previous studies. | Checklist and Survey. Analysis and Discussion of Results. |

| To establish suggestions according to the current educational context, which guide instructors on the way that L1 contributes in the EFL classroom at the high school level. | Analyze and infer about the results of the figures and charts. Reflect on the data. Do contextualized ideas from the analysis and discussion of data. Establish suggestions based on what is concluded. | Conclusions and recommendations |
| --- | --- | --- |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

### 5.     Justification

English language learning at these times has become an important element in the academic growth of foreign language teachers and students. The teaching evolution of a second language has caused a big demand between people who are searching in some ways to speak more than one language. English language learning means, for many people, the benefit of obtaining better jobs and the satisfaction from knowing a language different from the mother tongue. The acquisition of a second language then becomes an important tool that helps to connect people from many countries, cultures and different lifestyles.

Nevertheless, the mother tongue in many ways plays a fundamental role in language learning because it helps to develop unique linguistic knowledge that helps to improve learning skills progressively.  The L1 use in English classrooms has generated controversy because there are investigations that argue that its use is necessary in language learning. The low use of L2 can negatively affect the acquisition of language, Teking and Garton (2020) in their study support that "teachers' L1 use is seen as reducing the amount of L2 input, and therefore adversely affecting the learning process. This is regarded as a particularly valid

argument against L1 use in foreign language settings where learners have limited opportunities to engage with L2 out of class" (p. 78). Galali and Cinkara (2017) suggest that the mother tongue can favor second language acquisition, although it shouldn't be used for a long time in English classrooms. Estimating these previous arguments and analyzing several doubts has been taken into account to carry out this research.

It is necessary to know the importance of mother tongue use in new language acquisition, "(...) using the learners' first language to teach grammar, to explain difficult vocabulary, to confirm meaning, to manage the classroom, to make students feel more comfortable, and in particular, to communicate with learners at lower levels of proficiency" (Morales et al., 2022, p. 458). That means that the use of the first language together with the target language when students are starting with their acquisition, results useful.

There are divided ideas between English teachers about how necessary the use of L1 for English classrooms is because "the learners customarily rely on their mother tongue in learning English" (Fatiha, 2021, p. 359) however, it's not mandatory.

It should be emphasized that this research wants to visualize what the role of the L1 is to English language learning and recognize different perspectives from English teachers. There are some challenges with L2 learning because of using the L1 at the same time and discovering the benefits, techniques, and basic aspects that future English teachers can apply in their classrooms.

**6.     Scientific and Technical Foundation**

**6.1.     Research Background**

De la Campa and Nassaji (2009) led a qualitative research to collect the reasons why L1 is used in L2 classrooms. The research took place in higher education. The study was developed in two classrooms belonging to the second level of German as a foreign language course in the Anglophone University from Canada. Both classrooms contained 18 students. The average age of participants was from 18 to 55. Researchers applied three sources of data collection like video and audio recordings of the German classes, instructor interviews, and stimulated recall sessions immediately following the class recordings. The study showed that these instructors used a noticeable amount of L1 in their classrooms for a variety of purposes such as to clarify class topics or explain better some grammatical issues. So then, the instructors in this study used a low but noticeable amount of L1 in their classes, and that they did so for important instructional purposes. Educators consider that L1 usage is essential for teaching an L2 because it can be used as a teaching tool.

Del Pozo and Rivadeneira (2020) carried out a study using a mixed method to reveal the attitudes of teachers and students about the use of Spanish in English classes to contribute to the understanding of the teaching-learning processes of the language in the English training careers of the Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil. Researchers applied two surveys and an interview to 42 students and 8 teachers from the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages English course at the Catholic University of Santiago de Guayaquil. Investigators found that 76.19% of the students reported that teachers sometimes use Spanish in classes where the language of instruction is English and consider that the frequency is appropriate. 87.5% of teachers confirmed that they sometimes use the Spanish language in their classes, concluding that the mother tongue is a tool that can be used especially by beginner students; however, the students in the translation and teaching specializations also need this strategy as part of their training. This practice should not be ignored or seen as negative since it has been proven that students and teachers

can use this strategy to take advantage of the cognitive processes that they use to develop their linguistic processes.

Quinn (2019) carried out a study to explore English teachers' perceptions and attitudes regarding the use of the mother tongue, in this case, Spanish, in the monolingual English classroom and to analyze the motives for excluding or including it in their teaching practice. The research has been conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Researchers applied a questionnaire, personal interviews, group interview (focus group discussions), and extension written narratives. The survey was fulfilled by 140 people in a period of 2 weeks. The interview was applied to 11 teachers from academies and schools. Data showed that in spite of the common held assumption that the mother tongue hinders the second language learning process, the majority of English teachers in Spain adopt a strong belief that it is necessary to use Spanish to teach English, especially to treat students' personal issues, to relate and contrast both languages and make clear some lexical items. Consequently, this study removes the notion that L1 impedes L2 learning. Participants agree that students have to be involved in an English interaction environment as much as possible. However, a measured use of L1 is a useful teaching strategy which facilitates students' L2 learning.

Muñoz (2005) conducted an investigation to contribute to the discussion about the use of the (L1) and the (L2) in foreign language teaching, considering perspectives of interactional and sociocultural sociolinguistics and keeping constant links with studies in second language acquisition and studies abroad. The researcher applied participative research as a research method. The participants were 48 students of the Inter-University Master's Degree in Spanish Language and Culture of the University of Salamanca. Lessons were implemented where participants met for one hour and forty minutes from Monday to Friday for five weeks. The study applied interviews, surveys, and observation to obtain data about the topic. The study revealed that participants consider that it is impossible not to use L1 in L2 interaction, especially when foreign language speakers have a limited vocabulary to perform in different issues of communication. In conclusion, the use of L1 seems to be linked with actions of the students in their effort to carry out class

activities or to learn more about the language or the topic they are working on in class.

Cadena et al. (2018) carried out a study using a qualitative multiple case study design as a research method. This one had the purpose to analyze the Ecuadorian instructor's and learners' perceptions about the use of Spanish during the English classes in two Universities in Ecuador. One group of the participants was observed. It consisted of three EFL Teachers who are Ecuadorian non-native teachers of English holding a BA in Teaching English, another group consisted of 16 instructors from the Language Center at ESPOCH and Universidad Catolica who answered a survey in a random way. The analysis showed that the use of L1 in the classroom does not seem to hinder the learning of an L2 and seems to facilitate it in some of the lesson stages. Results also showed that L2 can facilitate learning and lead to improvements. In conclusion, the use of L1 is necessary, but unluckily, sometimes its use is abused by learners and instructors. While the learners' performance of L2 increases, the use of L1 decreases. That is to say, when L2 learners achieve a higher level of linguistic competence, the use of L1 will be less.

## 6.2. Theoretical Framework

### 6.2.1. Elements Involved in Speech

The brain is essential for language. Tomakin (2020) argues that the brain has two parts called the cerebral hemispheres. Each one is ubicated on the left and right of the brain. The corpus callosum connects the two hemispheres. The hemispheres perform specific functions for the successful functioning of the brain. According to Chuang (2006):

> The left brain takes in information in logical, rational, linear, analytical, and sequential ways. It seeks detail and specificity. This being the case, it controls the manipulation of symbols, namely structurally proficient in language functions. The right brain, on the other hand, takes in  information in simultaneous, holistic, metaphoric and analogic ways. It looks toward larger systems of relationships and is more involved in visual and spatial

reasoning. (p. 2)

The learners employed both hemispheres to acquire skills in a second language. If the instructors unknown the correct working of brain, they may not be able to develop the abilities in an efficient way. "Both right brain and left brain learning modalities are subsumed to ensure students are able to learn English" (Chuang, 2006, p. 3).

### 6.2.2. Learning English as a Foreign Language

Language English is a global request in the environment of business or, especially, in the environment of education. So, in this case, "The process of foreign language learning is strongly influenced from learners' weakness, both motivation and their language skill" (Arjulayana, 2018, p. 1). Online education has challenges to motivate students to learn or acquire a second language. While, the language studied is referred to as the target language, and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is the study of this learning process. English as a Second Language is learned in a country where English is spoken naturally, while EFL is learned in countries where English is not spoken as an official language (Wold, 2006, p. 7).

### 6.2.3. Language Acquisition Process

This process has a close relation with the word "acquisition" that means adopt. People adopt things over the lifetime to develop intellectual capacities that help them function in the collective environment of society. For instance, a baby develops the ability of walking through his vision when he sees others to move their feet, then he adopts that ability and begins to develop little by little. Something that is evident when an acquisition process is talked about is that it occurs in a subconscious way; that is to say, "the process of language acquisition is done naturally since an infant is exposed to the language" (Safitri, 2020, p. 158). Due to this, children develop the first language informally, consequently the L1 is adopted without considering the language usage norms, hence the speech is understandable but it can contain mistakes in its written form. grammatical, lexical or morphological mistakes.

### 6.2.3.1. Second Language Acquisition

> Second language acquisition, or SLA, has two meanings. In a general sense it is a term to describe learning a second language. More specifically, it is the name of the theory of the process by which we acquire - or pick up - a second language. This is mainly a subconscious process which happens while we focus on communication. (Hoque, 2017, p. 1)

Namely, the term second language acquisition can be used to refer to the fact of learning another language apart from the mother tongue, also it focuses on the process that learners use to adopt a second language. The subconscious aspects through the intercommunicative procedure is the main characteristic of SLA because contrasting with the second language learning process, in this case learner does not go to school to take lessons about the standardized rules to use a particular language correctly; nor is it concerned with the progressive and equitable development of the four communication skills. Rather, the process of acquiring a language provides an environment of interaction emphasized in oral communication, introducing the pupil into a field of compulsory use of the second language, this being a procedure similar to how children acquire the mother tongue.

### 6.2.3.2. Language Learning Process

In order to understand how students, learn a particular language it is important to assimilate the stage that involves learners in a language learning process, in this case English. First of all, how it is understood is the word "learning"; it means the action or activity that people do with the purpose of keeping in mind any information allowing them to master such activity or topic. Moreover, another fundamental aspect that requires learning something is that people manage the action or activity in a conscious way using all his senses, disposition and effort in what they want to understand to later produce or apply as the need arises.

Now, what occurs with the language learning process, as before was explained with the action of learning; it "depends on an assumption that students consciously perform activities to achieve certain goals, and learning strategies can be considered as instructions and learning techniques that are intentional" (Mat, 2013, p. 16). That

is to say, learning a language involves the voluntary disposition to study the structural aspects of target language such as grammatical rules and structures, morphology of words, vocabulary, idioms, expressions used in its culture and so on. Based on the above, the language learning process means to go to a language educative center where an instructor teaches the language aspects that allow learners to comprehend the correct use of language contrasting between the formal and informal style of foreign tongue.

### 6.2.4. English as a Foreign Language Environment

The EFL environment is a place "where learners are exposed to English only in the classroom and there is no social use of English" (Cadena et al., 2018, p. 62). Therefore, the learners only have access to the English language in the EFL classroom. According to Abdalla (2022), "Learning a foreign language is not an easy task" (p. 1). The students and teachers face the challenge to learn the English language. The teachers and students face difficulties to practice the language English outside of the classroom. There are not spaces to practice the target language. According to Alaraj (2016), talking to the students, "they have the potential abilities to do so, most of them fail because they encounter some obstacles and difficulties which should be intentionally identified and recognized" (p. 484).

### 6.2.5. The Ecuadorian Context for English Language Learning

There are different methods and approaches applied to teach a second language. To understand the educational system in Ecuadorian schools it's essential to know some concepts, such as approach, method, and technique. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014):

> Approach is the level at which assumptions and beliefs about language and language learning are specified; method is the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, the content to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented. (p. 21)

Ecuador applies a specific approach and method in educational institutions to guide the teaching of English. Cadena et al (2018) argue that the ministry of education

recognizes the communicative approach (CLT) in Ecuador as the primary approach to teaching a second language. Authorities in Ecuador establish the (CLIL) as a method. "Ecuadorian educational policy for English as Foreign Language instruction in Ecuador mandated in 2016 to introduce Content and Language Integrated-Learning (CLIL) methodology to improve the teaching and learning process" (Villafuerte and Barre, 2021, p. 99). The system of education in a second language is regulated by the Ministry of Ecuador to obtain a similar context of education in all schools of Ecuador.

### 6.2.6. The Input in the Instruction of a Second Language

The instructor of a second language presents the information all the time during class. Taking into account that, the teacher should have knowledge about comprehensible input. VanPatten (2003) argues that input is the information that the learners receive of the environment. Therefore, the concept of input refers to the target language presented to the students for the teachers in EFL classrooms. During the English lessons, the students usually try to understand the second language only using their previous knowledge. The students do not need to know each word presented by the teacher. According to Ash (2017):

> Although Comprehensible Input (CI) has become a buzzword in language education, teachers would be mistaken to disregard CI as yet another education fad; the theory behind CI is solidly built upon decades of hypotheses and their respective research, and is the source from which current Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory has evolved. (p. 71)

The input processing indicates that it occurs when the learners receive information. According to Alabdullah (2021), "The input processing theory is concerned with (i) moment-by-moment connection of form to meaning and (ii) moment-by-moment computation of sentence structure during comprehension" (p. 271). Therefore, the process occurs when the teachers teach vocabulary or present a new grammatical structure to the students. The learners catch the information of the environment and they try to understand the meaning of the new vocabulary or sentences.

### 6.2.7. The Output in the Teaching of English

The term "output" in the education of English refers to an activity where the students produce the language in a written and spoken way. López (as cited in Ellis, 2003) argues that the output "reflects what learners can produce when they are forced to use target language" The students of the English language realized different activities to improve their skills in the L2. The environment influences the learning of the English Language due to the following reason. If the learners practice the target language in their environment, they may develop their skills with the continuous repetition. On the other hand, if the students do not practice the second language, they may not develop their skills. "This movement allows learners to stretch their interlanguage and improve their grammatical competence as long as such an output is meaningful and contextualized" (López, 2020, p. 90). Practicing is useful for the students because "The output allows students to receive feedback from others – whether by the teacher or by other students" (DiSabatino, 2019, p. 15).

The students can develop different activities to improve their skills in a second language, according to their level. According to DiSabatino (2019), "output will look different depending on the level of the learner. Just because a learner is at the novice level, does not mean they cannot do something with the input that they are receiving" (p. 25). On the other hand, the teacher of L2 should choose carefully the exercises to avoid a negative attitude from students. According to DiSabatino (2019):

> When students are unable to produce what they are being asked to produce, the anxiety levels rise and they can shut down. It is up to the teacher to gauge where the students are in production and differentiate the output expected based on each student. (p. 26)

### 6.2.8. Elements of Speaking

Speaking is considered the most important in the language. "So severe and essential is a speaking activity that humans forget how to speak well and interestingly and struggle to acquire these skills, which also involve elements and skills of linguistic competence and maturity." (Sudarmo, 2021, p. 113). Sadullayeva (2021) supports

that the speaking skills in foreign language students takes a lot of importance because it provides better understanding, excellent academic success and conduct to the best professional aspirations. Speaking skill as a macro ability is the main goal to communicate with anyone, also integrate in the development of any kind of conversation, students can improve their pronunciation and vocabulary fluency. "The use of more domain-specific measures to assess the language-learning environment seems to be more promising way to predict vocabulary development" (Hansen and Broekhuizen, 2021, p. 304). Saduyalleva (2021) supports that to have better pronunciation it is important to have a good fluency, that is why students need to be confident when they are acquiring a second language. Speaking ability helps to understand the language.

### 6.2.9. Oral Production

The oral production is not just producing the words' sounds correctly, choosing the words according to the communicative context, or expressing sentences following grammatical rules rather. It includes all the elements about human ability to communicate properly inside speech context. That is to say, speaking is a productive skill that requires learners make a connection between the brain and speech apparatus working together to produce their own ideas and not memorize them (Rodríguez, 2017). In order to support this definition, Pomposo (2016) also mentions that in the oral production performance "we must consider whether it occurs spontaneously or if the speech has already been prepared beforehand. In the first case, the use of language is more natural and improvised" (p. 4).

Additionally, Hughes (as cited in Pomposo, 2016) identifies some features which are evident when oral production is spontaneous:

> Spontaneous oral production is full of pauses and hesitations, even for native speakers. Although one may appreciate more the expressive power of language in real time, vocabulary will be more limited, grammar mistakes will be more common and repetitions to fill the speech will be more commonly used. (p. 4)

Regarding its importance, Hernández and Arturo (2019) consider that oral production is one of most important skills that learners have to develop because "it is an instrument that helps each person to create an assertive communication in different contexts. (…) creating an environment in which they will be able to express their own ideas and thoughts" (p. 25).

### 6.2.10. Oral Interaction

Oral interaction means talking with someone or a group. The process of communication involves establishing a degree of empathy among speakers and listeners to receive the message accurately. In the oral interaction performance, listeners have to realice not just what is said by the speaker, but also the expressions and states which show the affective and cognitive side. In simple words, oral interaction involves considering the elements mentioned before to receive the message and this is properly understood by listeners. Otherwise, communication is not effective when listeners make faded presuppositions or assumptions about speaker oral production. However, it is not hard to reach empathetic communication because the interaction enables the existence of instantaneous feedback from the listener. In this way, if there are misunderstood words, phrases or ideas, they can be questioned by listener and speaker to clarify them with the purpose of the message having a better interpretation (Lafont, 2007).

Nóbrega (2008) corroborates the idea that oral interaction analysis requires to consider the extralinguistic elements such as gestures and affective aspects of language, which ones influence and complement the verbal linguistic activity, " That is, cognitive, social and affective aspects as well as gestures with their social attributes interfere in the production and interpretation of speech act" (p. 3).

In the L2 learning process, the interaction among the classroom members is essential not just to manage and understand task instructions. The teacher-students and students-students interaction help significantly in the foreign language development. It is argued that interaction among the classroom members will facilitate language development and will lead to better language learning (Rahimpour and Magsoudpour, 2011, p. 171).

### 6.2.11. Teacher and Students' Talking Time

The amount of talking time between teacher and students is a controversial issue, with respect to establishing a specific period of time to use during the English classes because it must be considered several aspects before determining a proper time to talk for each classroom participant. In fact, starting with the teacher's English level which is clearly higher than the students. It can even depend on the specific learning goals of the syllabus adopted and the government teaching policy (Hitotuzi, 2005). Nunan (as cited in Hitotuzi, 2005) also considers that "for teachers to spend 70 or 80 per cent of class time talking will depend on the objectives of a lesson and where it fits into the overall scheme of the course or programme" (p. 99).

Considering the elements that have inference in the talking time usage by the teacher and students during the stages of the lesson. They are mainly to greet, present the class topic, explain it, clear up doubts and practice. Kostadinovska (2019) suggests that "the teacher should roughly limit his speaking to 20% to 30% of the class time, with the remainder devoted to speaking/use of the language by the students" (p. 26). While the author establishes that 80% of talking time must be used by students, these activities must be aimed at developing and improving the expressive, communicative and participatory ability of students using speech, which will consequently facilitate the process of familiarization with the foreign language.

In short, despite the fact that several researchers suggest that class talking time should be distributed in percentages of 30% for teachers and 70% for students. It does not establish a standardized time limit which should be applied in the EFL classrooms. Independently of the circumstances in which it is immersed, these percentages are suggested in order to develop as much as possible the ability to produce the target language.

### 6.2.12. Speaking Skill

Speaking is considered the most important in the language. "So severe and essential is a speaking activity that humans forget how to speak well and interestingly and struggle to acquire these skills, which also involve elements and skills of linguistic competence and maturity." (Sudarmo, 2021, p. 113). Sadullayeva (2021) supports that the speaking skills in foreign language students takes a lot of importance because it provides better understanding, excellent academic success and conduct to the best professional aspirations. Speaking skill as a macro ability is the main goal to communicate with anyone, also integrate in the development of any kind of conversation, students can improve their pronunciation and vocabulary fluency. "The use of more domain-specific measures to assess the language-learning environment seems to be more promising way to predict vocabulary development" (Hansen and Broekhuizen, 2021, p. 304). Saduyalleva (2021) supports that to have better pronunciation it is important to have a good fluency, that is why students need to be confident when they are acquiring a second language. Speaking ability helps to understand the language.

### 6.2.13. The Importance of Speaking Skills for Learners

Speaking ability is useful for different contexts, exchanging information between two or more languages, and also just for communication. In fact, "Speaking is the most important skill to acquire foreign or second language learning" (Parupalli, 2019, p. 8). However, this doesn't mean that it is an easy skill to take control of. Actually, "speaking is the most difficult skill for most learners who learn it as a second or foreign language due to their low proficiency" (Gudu, 2015, p. 56). In other words, speaking ability cannot be easy, but it is crucial if students want to learn or acquire a second language.

However, teachers have a great challenge that is to teach students to speak. Therefore, teachers must take into account some aspects such as promoting the speaking skills of students, allowing the development of communicative competence and the level of language proficiency (Ibnerrays, 2019). Therefore, speaking can only improve by speaking more. On the other hand, it is the teacher's

duty to create appropriate tasks to give students the best opportunities to practice speaking.

### 6.2.14. L1 Teacher's Interaction

The instructor uses the language to present the activity in class that action is called "Teacher talk: verbal input delivered by a language teacher that is comprehensible for their students" (DiSabatino, 2019, p. 7). In the education of a second language, "it is common for EFL teachers to use the students' mother tongue as a tool for conveying meaning as a means of interaction both in English language institutes and in the classroom" (Nazary, 2008, p. 138). The L1 facilitates the learning of a second language. According to Grim (2010), "teachers utilize the L1 primarily for practical functions, such as facilitating comprehension, overcoming grammatical obstacles and saving time in lengthy L2 task explanations" (p. 207). The teacher of a second language should use the mother tongue according to the level of knowledge of the students. "One must also keep in mind that an appropriate quantity of L1 use by teachers cannot be defined universally because it depends on students' proficiency levels" (Pan, 2010, p. 94).

### 6.2.14.1. The Use of L1 to Teach L2

The teacher employs the mother language to teach a foreign language in specific cases. "The use of L1 is justified when the comprehension of the lesson (e.g. difficult concepts) or some items (e.g. complex grammar points) of TL is more important than the exposure to TL itself" (Shuchi and Islam, 2016, p. 70). Accurate instructions are essential to developing the class activity. If the students do not understand the class activity, the activity will take more time (Debreli, 2016). Therefore, the mother tongue is a tool to guide the students. Additionally, the teachers utilized L1 to give the meaning of some words in L2. According to Cho and Kim (2017), "L1 translation not only helps the tutees clarify their intended meaning in their texts, but also serves as a successful tool for cognitively scaffolding tutee learning—in the forms of pump, hint, and prompt—by helping both" (p. 15).

**6.2.14.2. Use of L1 to Create a Friendly Environment**

The L1 is used to control the discipline in the classroom. Jingxia (2010) argues that the learners realized an activity that interrupted the discipline in the classroom, and the teachers switched the L2 to the mother language with the object of maintaining discipline in the classroom. The teacher used the L1 to maintain the humor in the EFL classroom. Ford (2009), "the majority stated that they tried to use English as much as possible, various teachers highlighted the occasional conscious use of L1 for humor and effect, with the purpose of creating a positive, friendly classroom atmosphere conducive to learning" (p. 71).

**7.    Methodology**

**7.1.    Research Design**

This study has a descriptive scope because it searches to present an accurate visualization of the moments in which teachers and students use L1 during English lessons, and based on this, present the aspects and characteristics found regarding the research problem. The investigation adopts a qualitative approach because it analyzes the perceptions that learners and educators have respect for the use of Spanish (L1) to teach English (L2). That is to say, this approach enables to obtain results from the analysis and interpretation of the factors, characteristics, and events that the research problem presents. Moreover, it adopts a multiple case study method because the investigation is carried out in two contexts where the same phenomenon is observed.

**7.2.    Participants**

The study took place in two educational centers from Pujilí. The first one is the "Unidad Educativa Union y Progreso" located in the rural sector called Cuturivi Grande village. This place is populated by an indigenous community. Therefore, it is considered that their L1 is the Kichwa language, but the language used in the educational center is Spanish. Hence, it is established that the ancestral language does not represent an obstacle for the development of the investigation. The second educational center is the "Unidad Educativa Pujilí" belonging to the urban sector in Pujilí. The participants are students of the first course, and they are native speakers of Spanish. Also, the instructor of English is of female gender. The participants in the research are 19 female and 18 male students from first and second high school level, who are around fifteen and sixteen years old. On the other hand, 10 English teachers who work at the same educational level were surveyed, but only one female and one male teacher were observed.

### 7.3. Instruments

In order to acquire the necessary information, the researchers used two methods, which are checklist and survey. Both teachers and students were surveyed in a face-to-face way where investigators provided the survey template physically. At the same time, the observation was made through the checklist applied to three English lessons in each educational institution. The data collection instruments were taken from Cadena et al. (2018).

### 7.4. Data Analysis

The researchers observed three English classes using a checklist. According to Hales and Pronovost (2006), "A checklist is typically a list of action items or criteria arranged in a systematic manner, allowing the user to record the presence/absence of the individual items listed to ensure that all are considered or completed" (p. 231). The data showed the use of L1 of teachers and students to support the English class. The data of the checklist was organized in a graphic of excel which represented the use of L1 employed by teachers and students. The checklist was taken from Cadena et al (2018).

The researcher used a survey to collect information about the role of L1 in the EFL classrooms. According to Frederick and James (2006), "A survey is a method of collecting information from people for descriptive or prepredictive porpuse. A survey can be used to gather information" (p. 114). The data were coded by the statistical data analysis app called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) which analyzes large amounts of data quickly and efficiently. The data represents the perspectives of teachers and students. The survey was taken from Cadena et al (2018).

The present study was developed through data triangulation. According to Hales (2010).

> Data triangulation is the use of a variety of data sources, including time, space and persons, in a study. Findings can be corroborated and any

weaknesses in the data can be compensated for by the strengths of other data, thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the results. (p. 14)

The researchers applied a survey to the teacher, a survey to the students, and a checklist to collect the perspective of the students and teacher about the use of L1 in the EFL classroom.  The instruments provide relevant information. This was analyzed through a data triangulation process.

### 7.5.    Ethical Considerations

It was essential to follow some steps to manage the research. First, the researchers sent consent letters to the participants. In this manner, the participants are allowed to use their information in the research. Second, the instructors of the English language provided the data required for the investigation. Finally, the researchers protect the privacy of the participants in this study. For that reason, the names are not mentioned. The participants are denominated as Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, with the objective to keep their identities hidden.

## 8.    Analysis and Discussion of Results

### 8.1. Analysis of the checklist realized to the teachers

The following figure presents the stages of English lessons where the teacher employed the L1 to support the teaching of the second language. The red color shows the use of the English language. The blue color indicates the use of Spanish language during the English class. The researchers observed 6 EFL lessons by conducting the teacher's checklist. As a result, the research showed the following information:

**Figure 1**

*Teachers' L1 use during the instruction of L2*
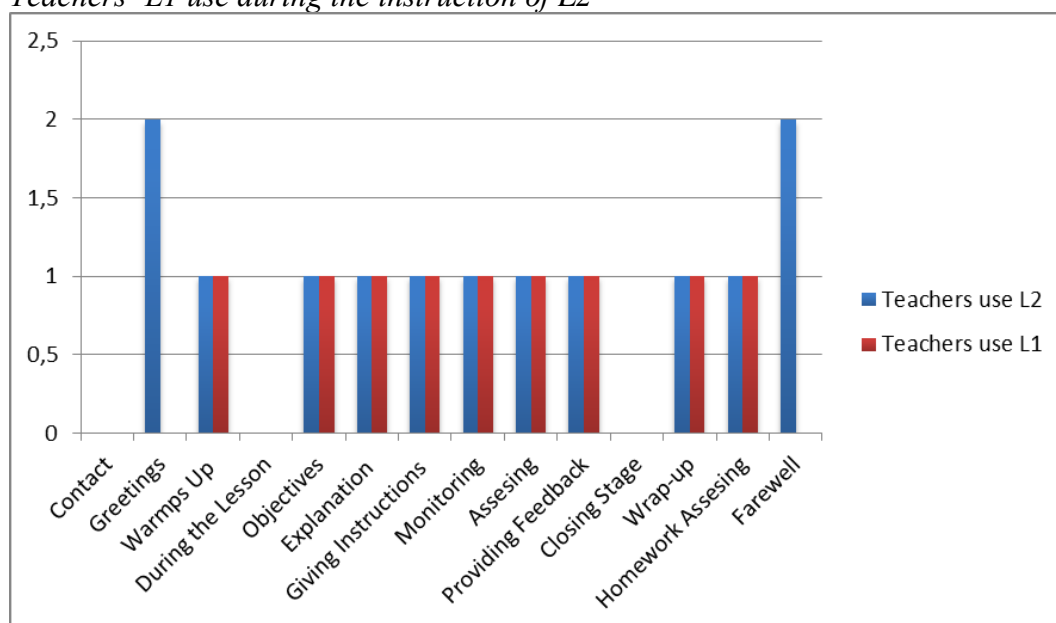


Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

The above figure allows researchers to appreciate the use of the mother tongue to teach the English language in the three stages of the class. The first stage was contact where the teacher developed two activities: greeting and warming up. In the greeting it was not necessary that the teacher employed Spanish because the students know perfectly the greeting in English. On the other hand, the warm-up was supported by the use of the native language because the students had difficulties understanding the activity. Teacher 1 and teacher 2 explained the activity in the target language. After that, they supported the instructions using L1.

The second stage is during the lesson where the teachers developed six activities which had the following indicators: explanation, giving instruction, monitoring, assessing, and providing feedback. Teacher 1 and teacher 2 explained the activity in the English language using their body language, keywords, and drawings. Nevertheless, the students looked confused for this reason, the teacher supported the activities with the use of L1 to clarify doubts or answer questions from students. The learners participated with short phrases to ask for permission or to participate in classes.

The third stage was the closing stage where the teachers developed two activities which were homework and farewell. Teacher 1 and teacher 2 sent homework. They gave the instruction using the target language, but it was necessary to use L1 in order to clarify doubts about the homework. Finally, the last activity was farewell. In this activity it was not necessary to use Spanish.

### 8.2. Analysis of the checklist realized to the students

The next figure evidences the average number of students who use Spanish (L1 - red color) and English (L2 - blue color) among the different class stages. This data arose from the observation of six EFL lessons by conducting the student's checklist. As a result, the researchers found the following information:

**Figure 2**

*Students L1 use during the instruction of L2*
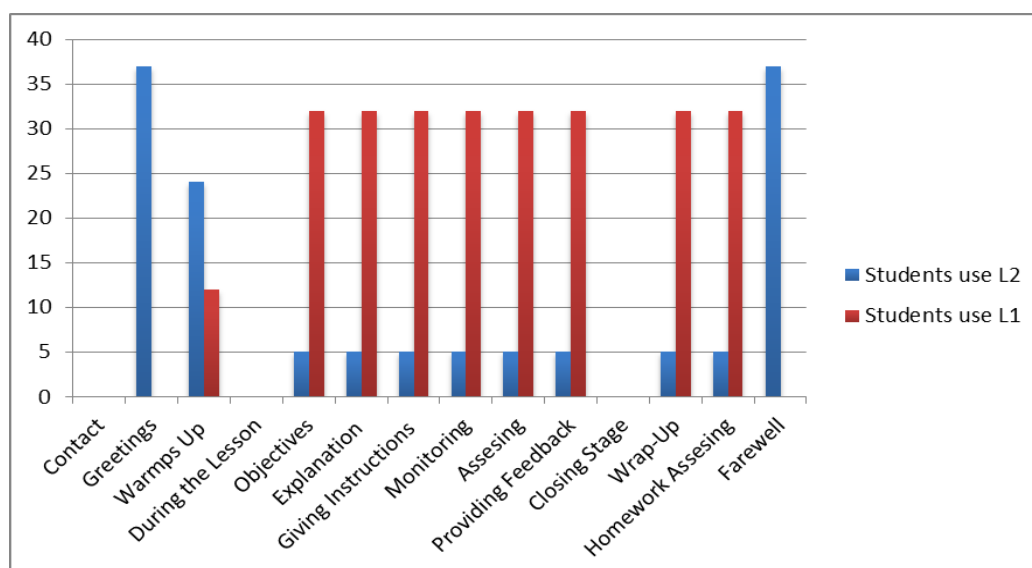


Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

The above figure shows the analyzed information based on the time that students speak in L1 and L2 during the whole English lesson. According to the indicators, it is evident that none of the students need to use L1 in the greeting and farewell stages because the vocabulary used in these parts of the class is repetitive. Therefore, the students master them. The second indicator (warm-ups) marks a decreasing intermediate use of L1, which is represented by approximately 12 students. The reason is that students do not catch how to perform the dynamic at first. While unlike the indicators that were previously considered, absolutely all the indicators that comprise the warm up stage during the lesson indicate an evident low index of L2 use; consequently, the time used to speak in L1 yields high indexes because the students need the teacher to use L1 to have a precise understanding of the topic explanation and the instructions to develop the activities. In the closing stage, a case similar to the previous stage is presented. In fact, the indicators indicate the same range of L2 use in relation to the time spent speaking it. Among the reasons why this happens, apart from those determined in the previous stage, is that the students lack a large vocabulary. This means that there is a null understanding, and even worse, they cannot produce the target language.

**8.3. Case Processing Summary Teachers' Survey**

**Chart 1**

*Case processing summary teachers' survey*

| Cases | Valid | | Lost | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | percentage | N | percentage | N | percentage |
| The communicative approach is well developed in my lessons | 10 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 10 | 100,0% |
| Lessons I teach are student centered | 10 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 10 | 100,0% |
| Speaking is the most useful skill developed in my classes | 10 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 10 | 100,0% |
| I feel the necessity of using Spanish during the instruction provided to your learners | 10 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 10 | 100,0% |
| My learners require the use of Spanish during instruction | 10 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 10 | 100,0% |
| There are policies that forces me to speak only in English to my learners | 10 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 10 | 100,0% |
| My learners complain about the use of Spanish during the instruction | 10 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 10 | 100,0% |
| Parents complain about the use of Spanish during instruction. | 10 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 10 | 100,0% |
| There is a school policy that promotes the use of English outside the classroom. | 10 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 10 | 100,0% |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

**Chart 2**

*The communicative approach is well develop in my lessons*

| | | The communicative approach is well developed in my lessons | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Always (4) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| | Male | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Total | | 6 | 4 | 10 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

Most teachers throughout their classes always promote L2 communicative practice, while only 4 of them selected that they usually intend to emphasize the communicative part of English classes.

**Chart 3**

*Lessons I teach are student centered*

| | | Lessons I teach are student centered | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Always (4) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| | Male | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | | 8 | 2 | 10 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

Most of the surveyed assumed that their classes always are focused on their students, while only 2 of them mentioned that they usually focus the class on the students.

**Chart 4**

*Speaking is the most useful skill developed in my classes*

| | | Speaking is the most useful skill developed in my classes | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Always (4) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 2 | 2 | 3 | 7 |
| | Male | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Total | | 2 | 3 | 5 | 10 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

A considerable number of teachers assumed that speaking is usually the most useful skill developed in the classroom, while only 3 of them mentioned that speaking is sometimes the most useful skill developed in the classroom. Finally, 2 participants selected that speaking is always the most useful skill developed in the classroom.

**Chart 5**

*I feel the necessity of using Spanish during the instruction provided to your learners*

| | | I feel the necessity of using Spanish during the instruction provided to your learners | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| | Male | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | | 9 | 1 | 10 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

All teachers except one mentioned that they sometimes feel the necessity of using Spanish during the instruction of English language, while one teacher

assumed that she "usually" feels the necessity of using Spanish during the instruction of English language.

**Chart 6**

*My learners require the use of Spanish during instruction*

| | | My learners require the use of Spanish during instruction | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Always (4) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 1 | 3 | 3 | 7 |
| | Male | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Total | | 2 | 4 | 4 | 10 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

Four teachers assumed that the learners usually require the use of Spanish during English class, while 4 of them mentioned that the learners sometimes require the use of Spanish during English class. Finally, 2 surveyed teachers assumed that the learners always require the use of Spanish during English class.

**Chart 7**

*There are policies that forces me to speak only in English to my learners*

| | | There are policies that forces me to speak only in English to my learners | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Always (4) | Never (1) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 2 | 3 | 2 | 7 |
| | Male | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Total | | 2 | 5 | 3 | 10 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

A considerable number of teachers assumed that there are not policies that force to the students to speak only in English to the students, while 3 of them mentioned that they are usually forced to speak only in English to the students.

Finally, 2 surveyed teachers mentioned that they are always forced to speak only in English to the students.

**Chart 8**

*My learners complain about the use of Spanish during the instruction*

| | | My learners complain about the use of Spanish during the instruction | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Always (4) | Never (1) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| | Male | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | | 1 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 10 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

Most of the teachers surveyed mentioned that the students never complain about the use of Spanish during the English class, while 2 of them assumed that the students sometimes complain about the use of Spanish during the English class. On the other hand, 1 surveyed teacher selected in the range of frequency that the students usually complain about the use of Spanish during English class. Finally, 1 surveyed teacher mentioned that the students always complain about the use of Spanish during English class.

**Chart 9**

*Parents complain about the use of Spanish during instruction.*

| | | Parents complain about the use of Spanish during instruction. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Never(1) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| | Male | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | | 7 | 2 | 1 | 10 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

Most of the surveyed teachers assume that the parents never complained about the use of Spanish during instruction, while only 2 of them mentioned that the parents

sometimes complained about the use of Spanish during instruction. Finally, only 1 teacher considered that the parents usually complain about the use of Spanish during instruction.

**Chart 10**

*There is a school policy that promotes the use of English outside the classroom.*

| | | Never (1) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Female | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| | Male | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Total | | 6 | 2 | 2 | 10 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

Most of the surveyed teachers assumed that there is not a school policy that promotes the use of English Language outside the classroom, while only 2 of them mentioned there is sometimes a school policy that promotes the use of English Outside the classroom. Finally, 2 survey teachers selected in the range of frequency that there is usually a school policy that promotes the use of English Outside the classroom.

**8.4 Students' Survey Case Prosessing Summary Student's Survey**
 **Chart 11**

*Student's survey case processing summary*

| Cases | Valid | | Lost | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | percentage | N | percentage | N | percentage |
| I learn how to communicate in English during my English lessons | 37 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 37 | 100,0% |
| I participate actively during my English classes | 37 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 37 | 100,0% |
| I speak English in every lesson | 37 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 37 | 100,0% |
| I need my teacher to speak Spanish to me | 37 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 37 | 100,0% |
| I ask my teacher to use Spanish during classes | 37 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 37 | 100,0% |
| I am forced to speak only in English in classes | 37 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 37 | 100,0% |
| Your classmates complain about speaking Spanish in classes | 37 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 37 | 100,0% |
| Parents have complain about speaking Spanish in classes | 37 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 37 | 100,0% |
| There is a school policy that promotes the use of English outside the classroom | 37 | 100,0% | 0 | 0,0% | 37 | 100,0% |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

**Chart 12**

*I learn how to communicate in English during my English lessons*

| | | I learn how to communicate in English during my English lessons | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Always (4) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 13 | 6 | 19 |
| | Male | 14 | 4 | 18 |
| Total | | 27 | 10 | 37 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

A considerable number of students affirm that they always learn new ways of communicating which help them to have initiatives to communicate during the class period. while only 10 of them express that they usually learn how to communicate in each lesson.

**Chart 13**

*I participate actively during my English classes*

| | | I participate actively during my English classes | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Always (4) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 1 | 6 | 12 | 19 |
| | Male | 2 | 6 | 10 | 18 |
| Total | | 3 | 12 | 22 | 37 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

Regarding active participation in classes, this is divided into three frequency ranges, the option "usually" being the one that was adopted by 22 students; it is followed by the degree of frequency "sometimes" with 12 students who identify with this response option, and finally, the "always" option was chosen by only 3 of them.

**Chart 14**

*I speak English in every lesson*

| | | I speak English in every lesson | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Always (4) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 2 | 8 | 9 | 19 |
| | Male | 7 | 5 | 6 | 18 |
| Total | | 9 | 13 | 15 | 37 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

The degree of the frequency with respect to whether students produce the English language in all classes presents three response options, the highest being "usually", followed by the option "sometimes" with 13 students who opted for it, and the reduced number of 9 of them chose the rank "always".

**Chart 15**

*I need my teacher to speak Spanish to me*

| | | I need my teacher to speak Spanish to me | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Always (4) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 6 | 5 | 8 | 19 |
| | Male | 2 | 2 | 14 | 18 |
| Total | | 8 | 7 | 22 | 37 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

According to the need that the students have for their teacher to speak to them in Spanish, it is indicated that most of them need that with the degree of frequency "usually", while 8 of them mention that they always need it, and only 7 students opted for the answer "sometimes".

**Chart 16**

*I ask my teacher to use Spanish during classes*

| | | I ask my teacher to use Spanish during classes | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Always (4) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 9 | 7 | 3 | 19 |
| | Male | 10 | 3 | 5 | 18 |
| Total | | 19 | 10 | 8 | 37 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

The request that the teacher uses Spanish in some periods of the class shows the next: "always" is the option taken by 19 of the students; followed by "sometimes" which was chosen by 10 of them, and at last, the option "usually" was chosen by 8 students.

**Chart 17**

*I am forced to speak only in English in classes*

| | | I am forced to speak only in English in classes | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Never (1) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 8 | 11 | 0 | 19 |
| | Male | 7 | 8 | 3 | 18 |
| Total | | 15 | 19 | 3 | 37 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

Regarding the obligation to speak only English during classes, 19 of the students opted for the "sometimes" option, this being the largest number but not much different from the "never" option, which is preferred by 15 of them; The third response dimension "usually" has a minimum index since it was chosen by only 3 students.

**Chart 18**

*Your classmates complain about speaking Spanish in classes*

| | | Your classmates complain about speaking Spanish in classes | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Never (1) | Sometimes (2) | Usually (3) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 13 | 6 | 0 | 19 |
| | Male | 14 | 3 | 1 | 18 |
| Total | | 27 | 9 | 1 | 37 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

The concern about whether the classmates complain when the student uses Spanish in the English class, motivating him to practice the target language yields the following results: 27 chose "never"; that is, there is no such type of encouragement from classmates; only 9 of them opted for the "sometimes" option and only 1 considered that "usually" he feels that a classmate's attitude encourages him to speak English.

**Chart 19**

*Parents have complain about speaking Spanish in classes*

| | | Parents have complain about speaking Spanish in classes | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Never (1) | Sometimes (2) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 17 | 2 | 19 |
| | Male | 17 | 1 | 18 |
| Total | | 34 | 3 | 37 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

The component that helps to inquire through the perception of students about the rate of complaints from parents for using Spanish in English classes shows the following: the parameter "never" dominated with a number of 34 students who

opted for this option, while the second option "sometimes" represents a low rate with 3 responses.

**Chart 20**

*There is a school policy that promotes the use of English outside the classroom*

| | | There is a school policy that promotes the use of English outside the classroom | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Never (1) | Sometimes (2) | Total |
| Gender | Female | 11 | 8 | 19 |
| | Male | 14 | 4 | 18 |
| Total | | 25 | 12 | 37 |

Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

The component that seeks to inquire about whether they know of any rule that promotes the use of English outside of foreign language class hours by the authorities of the educational institution showed that 25 of the students had never heard of it, and a number reduced to just 12 students, they considered that sometimes the authorities implement regulations and programs that promote such activity.

**8.5. Result of the survey for teachers**

The following figure shows the average number of teachers who chose among the degrees of frequency always, usually, sometimes and never with respect to the nine statements introduced in the survey. These have already been previously interpreted and analyzed one by one in previous pages.

**Figure 3**

*Teacher survey comprehensive results*
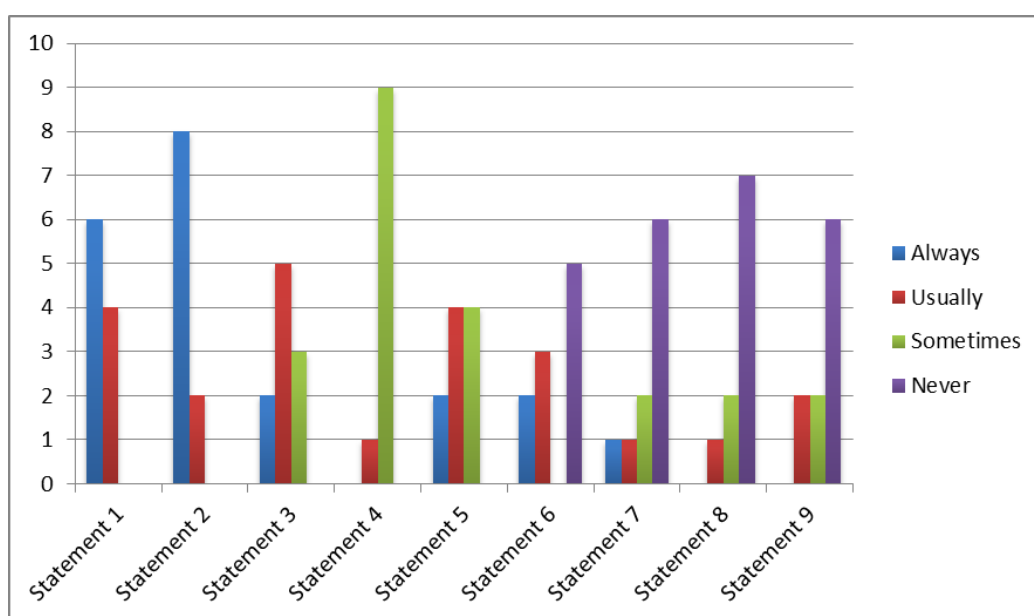


Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

**8.5.1. Teachers' Final Perceptions and Considerations**

The teacher and students try to communicate between them in a second language during the English class. According to Jabeen (2014):

> In the contemporary age of high professional requirements such as excellent communicative skills, the need for successful learning of communicative skills of English language suggests communicative ability to be the goal of

language teaching. In other words, to teach English language using communicative approach becomes essential. (p. 68)

The researcher mentioned the importance of communicative approach. In the same way, the data obtained from the survey support this concept. The communicative approach is seem like a good option because the most of surveyed chose always and usually. The frequency in this area showed that barely more than half opted for the "always" option within the frequency range (Chart 2). The information presented a high level of acceptance from surveyed teachers. Moreover, there are two specific activities where the teacher uses only L2 which are greeting and farewell (Figure 1). The activity employed short phrases and the students repeated that activity during all English classes. Thus, the communicative approach is always present in English class.

The teachers in the class of English established activities where the students develop their skills in the language through practice. The students are the center of the lessons. Most of the surveyed teachers chose the option "always", while two of them chose "usually" (Chart 3). The data obtained showed a high level of acceptance about the concept of student-centered. Murphy et at. (2021) found similar results about the topic to this statement. "These preferred teaching methods involve direct instruction from the professor while providing students opportunities for skill acquisition, promoting active learning, and allowing teacher and student interactions as well as interactions among other students" (p. 24). Thus, both researchers presented a high acceptance in respect to the theme mentioned.

Speaking is crucial to communication. Half of surveyed teachers agree with the idea that speaking is usually the most important skill in English, while 2 of them give complete priority to this skill. The rest of the participants affirmed that speaking is

sometimes useful in English class (Chart 4). As a result, the teachers seek to develop the use of L2 in different measures.

The majority of surveyed teachers except 1 "always" feel the necessity of using L1 to support the learning of English (Chart 5). According to Mayni and Paramasivam (2021):

> The functions of using Farsi by students or teachers in EFL classroom are: for explaining difficult parts, for managing the classroom, for explaining exam instructions, for explaining the language differences between L1 and L2, for checking comprehension, for seeking help from others, for joking with others for making students relaxed and for presenting the meaning of new words. (p. 43)

The purpose of using L2 in English classes is that the students understand some indications of the activity established by the teacher. On the other hand, the use of L1 is used to clarify doubts or complete the idea about the activity presented in English.

Successful communication is essential in the EFL classroom. Four surveyed teachers mentioned that the students sometimes require the use of L1 in English class, while the other four of them selected the option "usually," and the rest of the participants chose the option "always" in the range of frequency (Chart 6). So, the students need to use L1 when they want to understand something related to the class. Nevertheless, they are able to use short phrases in L2 to make questions (Figure 1).

The research showed the following data regarding the policy of using only the target language during the instruction of a second language. Half of the participants

surveyed mentioned they are not forced to speak only in English. On the other hand, three of the surveyed selected "usually," and two teachers chose "always" in the range of frequency (Chart 7). Another research study presented weaknesses and strengths of using only L2 in English classes. According to Mayni and Paramasivam (2021):

> They assert that the English-only policy will enhance the students' exposure to English, although they believe that if they use only English, it would not be easy for their students to understand. Their use of L1 depends on their students' needs most of the time. (p. 43)

The use of the English language outside of the classroom is a challenge for education because there are not policies that promote the use of English outside the classroom according to 6 surveyed teachers (Chart 10). As a result, the students cannot develop the skill of English outside classrooms.

## 8.6. Result of the survey for students

The next figure shows the average number of students who chose among the degrees of frequency always, usually, sometimes and never with respect to the nine statements introduced in the survey. These have already been previously interpreted and analyzed one by one in previous pages.

**Figure 4**

*Students' survey comprehensive results*
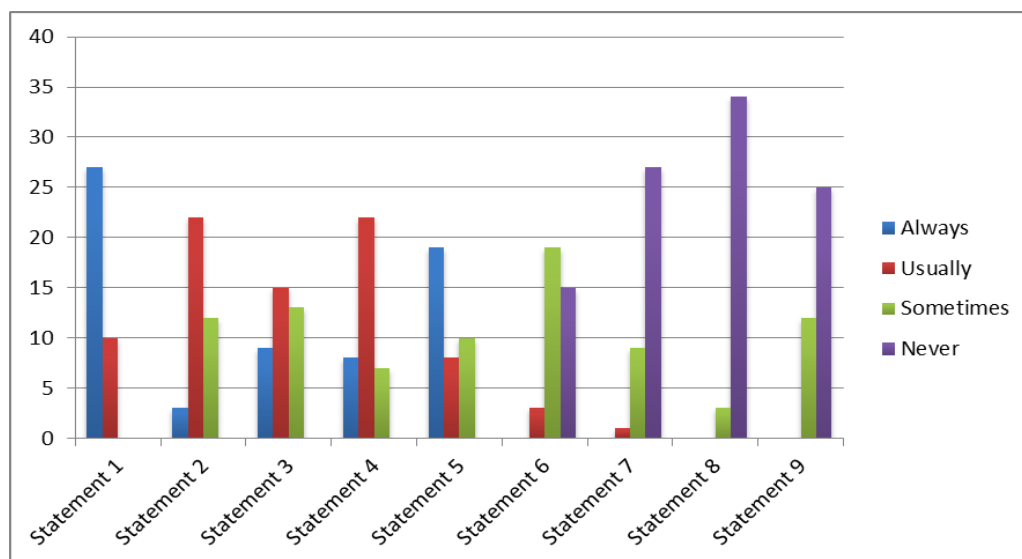


Done by: Estrella, J. & Gutiérrez, D., (2023)

### 8.6.1. Students' Final Perceptions and Considerations

The part where the use of L2 is totally exclusive is at the beginning of the class, "greetings", and at the end of it, "farewell" (figure 2), both scenes where oral expression is minimal since only short phrases and sentences are used. Therefore, the students receive and respond to the message transmitted by the teacher. A similar study was made by Yulianingrum (2013) shows that the parts where the students understood the teacher without problems were in the next cases.

> teacher greeted the students in English, the teacher asked the students to answer questions in English, the teacher asked for help in English to the students to clean the whiteboard, the teacher asked the students to use English if they want to go to the toilet. (p. 47)

That explains the 27 answers with the frequency range "always" (chart 12) chosen by students regarding that they learn to communicate during the English lesson. However, only 3 of them consider that they actually have an active participation throughout the class (chart 13). Based on the above, it is established that the rate of individuals who feel they have the ability to communicate in L2 is minimal in

relation to the rest of the class that needs to use L1 to understand the message that is intended to be disseminated.

Practice is essential for students to develop their ability to speak in L2. Therefore, it is essential to establish times for oral practice of the language in each class since, according to the majority of students (28), they consider having the opportunity to interact in L2 with a frequency of "usually" and "sometimes" (chart 14). For instance, the indicators of the "warm ups" and "wrap up" parameters (figure 2) support this data. Also, Yulianingrum (2013) mentions that "The activities should give big opportunities for the students to deliver their own ideas. The activities should also attract the students' attention and motivation in learning English" (p. 46). It reflects that the attempt to produce L2 makes students gradually improve their oral production. That is, at first they have difficulty understanding the activity but end up participating and deducing it based on the observation of dynamic movements. In short, mimicry, gestures and movements represent a great source of collaboration for students to adapt to interaction in L2.

On the other hand, most of the participants (22) recognize that the frequency level at which they require the teacher to speak in L1 is "usually" (chart 15). This occurs because a considerable number of participants are capable of understanding the message transmitted by the teacher with a certain degree of error, but it is difficult for them to produce the target language, a fact that occurs in the contact part, starting the intermediate part of the lesson and in the closing part of the lesson. Analyzation identified that there is a contradiction because 19 of the participants consider that the frequency with which they ask their teacher to use L1 during classes is "always" (chart 16). The explanation is that as the class progresses and new vocabulary is introduced, added to the fact that the pace that the teacher speaks is fast for the students' ability to assimilate it. These make them need to ask for an explanation in L1; a study done by Rahmawati (2015) corroborates this conception:

> Teachers use L1 only when they explain abstract or new words. All five teachers first attempted to explain the words and meanings of complex ideas in English, but resorted to L1 when they thought the students could not understand their English explanations. (p. 8)

The class stages in which this happens are explanation, giving instructions, monitoring, assessing, providing feedback and homework assessing (figure 2).

Kerr (2019) carried out a study about the use of L1 in English language teaching. He introduces the next criteria:

> a discussion leading to an agreed class policy on when L1 is allowed and when it is not. As a reflective task, it may also lead students to a greater awareness of themselves as learners and to a re-evaluation of their learning preferences and strategies. (p. 9)

However, it is not a means that guarantees favorable results in the production of L2 in students because, in this study, 19 of the participants feel obligated to use the English language in classes with a frequency degree of "sometimes", and 15 of them consider that they have never felt obligated to speak English (chart 17). On the other hand, the encouragement to use L2 by classmates and parents is nil. 27 of those surveyed announce that a classmate has never encouraged them to speak English (chart 18), followed by 34 who consider that the same thing happens with parents (chart 19). The attention paid to this issue by the school is no different since 25 of those surveyed state that they have never known of any institutional policy that promotes the use of English outside of the classroom (chart 20).

In this regard, the same study establishes that "teachers and schools may need to find out more about the attitudes of other stakeholders, such as the parents of younger learners" (Kerr, 2019, p. 9). In this sense, triangulated work is needed so that the oral production of L2 in the classroom is strengthened with the support of external stimulating agents.

With respect to students, the role of L1 in the English classroom is to provide permanent assistance to the adequate understanding of L2, and on occasions, it serves as a referential guide to deduce certain aspects of L2. A generalized criterion based on the data obtained in this investigation allows establishing an important degree of inference in the process of learning the English language.

**9. Research Impacts**

The research provides information on the management of the Spanish language in the teaching of the English language from the observation of two educational institutions. Also, it compares criteria of previous research and the present study about the native language to teach the target language. Finally, it is possible to understand the perspective of the teacher and students. Those data contribute to the identification of strengths and weaknesses in the teaching-learning process of a second language. The study promotes an idea towards the creation of spaces for the practice of the target language outside the classroom. Since it presents arguments that show the null existence of activities that stimulate students to develop the ability to speak in L2, this is according to the information obtained from the respondents in the research.

## 10. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 10.1. Conclusions

- Considering aspects that are involved in the production process of a language through the search for theoretical arguments helps to implant explanatory ideas and concepts of how an L2 is truly learned, from how the parts of the human being work to the aspects to consider in the production and interaction of the target language. They are essential issues in order to develop the investigation. In fact, the foundations found helped the researchers to make a detailed observation in each part of the lesson where L1 was used by teacher and students.

- The use of Spanish in the English class has become a controversial issue because some researchers suggest a certain degree of use of the mother tongue, while/yet others suggest using L1 and gradually reducing its use. According to the analysis of the information found in the present investigation, the weak use of L2 during the teaching of English is evident. Learners are able to use short phrases and simple sentences. However, the teacher presents a different topic in each lesson. English class requires new vocabulary and long sentences. On these occasions, teachers and students require the use of L1 to support the teaching of the English language. Also, most of the participants consider the use of L1 necessary to make the subject of the class understandable, and in this way, students can develop their communication skills in a second language. Summarizing, the level of knowledge in L2 is directly proportional to the production of the language. Therefore, it represents a fundamental factor in the development of productive skills.

- In order to understand the current educational context, the low level of English knowledge that students present due to the recent global pandemic should be considered. This has produced a delay in the learning rate of students. Consequently, there are serious difficulties in the production of L2, making that the interaction in the EFL classroom becomes a challenge that teachers and students face in each class. For this reason, all together must work towards strengthening and generating new knowledge because the L1 can be an important tool that contributes to achieve this goal.

## 10.2. Recommendations

- Focusing on the global understanding of the production and interaction process of an L2 is essential mainly for the teachers since this will allow them to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the students, so it is recommended that the teachers allocate more time for L2 practicing activities. They should be presented as a game, making students participate unconsciously, carried away by the sensation of the moment, and little by little adapting them to dialogue activities.

- The researchers recommend that the teacher carefully use the mother tongue. The instructor of the English language should use Spanish to clear doubts about the topics or activities established only after the explanation in English. They should not use the L1 to repeat each aspect presented in L2. Moreover, the learners should practice the English language continually. The students demonstrated mastery of English language after several repetitions and easy-to-learn short phrases during the observation class. It is possible to appreciate that in the activities of greeting and farewell, also in the increase of skill in L2 during the warm-up.

- It is recommended not to restrict the class to the sole use of L2 because it makes the student feel unfocused and unmotivated for not being able to understand the class. That is, while the teacher tries to promote the use of the target language, the learners lose interest due to lack of comprehension, showing self-consciousness, and refusing to participate in class; due to this, it is preferable to use L1 when it is denoted that the students need it.

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## 12. Appendices

### Annex 1:  Observation Checklist

Checklist for the Use of Spanish in an English as a Foreign Language Class
Class: _____ Teacher: _____Period of observation: _____ to _____

| Category | Teacher | | Learners | | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | |
| **Initial Activities** | | | | | |
| Contact | | | | | |
| Greetings | | | | | |
| Warm-Ups. | | | | | |
| **During the Lesson** | | | | | |
| Objectives Communication | | | | | |
| Explaining | | | | | |
| Giving instructions | | | | | |
| Monitoring | | | | | |
| Assessing | | | | | |
| Providing feedback | | | | | |
| **Closing Stage** | | | | | |
| Wrap-up | | | | | |
| Homework assigning | | | | | |
| Farewell | | | | | |

This data collection instrument was taken from Cadena et al. (2018).

**Annex 2: Survey for Teachers**

INSTRUCTIONS:

1- Read carefully every aspect presented in the following survey and mark with an X the best answer according to your personal opinion.

2. For responding every question use the following scale:

Always = (4) = A Usually = (3) = U Sometimes = (2) = S Never = (1) = N

3. Answer the survey honestly, since the results will be valuable for educational purposes of this research.

| ITEMS | ASPECTS | ANSWERS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | A (4) | U (3) | S (2) | N (1) |
| 1 | The communicative approach is well developed in my lessons | | | | |
| 2 | Lessons I teach are student-centered | | | | |
| 3 | Speaking is the most useful skill developed in my classes | | | | |
| 4 | I feel the necessity of using Spanish during the instruction provided to your learners | | | | |
| 5 | My learners require the use of Spanish during instruction | | | | |
| 6 | There are policies that force me to speak only in English to my learners | | | | |
| 7 | My learners complain about the use of Spanish during the instruction | | | | |
| 8 | Parents complain about the use of Spanish during instruction | | | | |
| 9 | **There is a school policy that promotes the use of English outside the classroom.** | | | | |

This data collection instrument was taken from Cadena et al. (2018).

**Annex 3: Survey for Learners**

INSTRUCTIONS:

1- Read carefully every aspect presented in the following survey and mark with an X the best answer according to your personal opinion.

2. For responding every question use the following scale:

Always = (4) = A Usually = (3) = U Sometimes = (2) = S Never = (1) = N

3. Answer the survey honestly, since the results will be valuable for educational purposes of this research.

| ITEMS | ASPECTS | ANSWERS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | A (4) | U (3) | S (2) | N (1) |
| 1 | I learn how to communicate in English during my English lessons | | | | |
| 2 | I participate actively during my English classes | | | | |
| 3 | I speak English in every lesson | | | | |
| 4 | I need my teacher to speak Spanish to me | | | | |
| 5 | I ask my teacher to use Spanish during classes | | | | |
| 6 | I am forced to speak only in English in classes | | | | |
| 7 | Your classmates complain about speaking Spanish in classes | | | | |
| 8 | Parents have complain about speaking Spanish in classes | | | | |
| 9 | There is a school policy that promotes the use of English outside the classroom | | | | |

This data collection instrument was taken from Cadena et al. (2018).

**Annex 4: Consent Letter**

**HOJA DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO**

Yo, Lic. ……………………………………….. consiento que los Sres. Danny Andrés Gutiérrez Guanoluisa y Jairo Joel Estrella Criollo, estudiantes de Octavo semestre de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, utilicen la información y comentarios recolectados mediante la aplicación de una hoja de observación y una encuesta sobre el uso de la lengua materna en el aula clase de Inglés, dicha información lo emito de manera voluntaria, para fines académicos y científicos, incluyendo publicación y divulgación, con la garantía de confidencialidad y resguardo de los datos que puedan identificarme de manera personal.

Pujilí, _____ de enero 2023.

_____

Firma

C.I.: