

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**



GRADUATION PROJECT

“THE INCIDENCE OF SPANISH ON ENGLISH ORAL PRODUCTION: CASE OF THE READINGS AND CONVERSATION I STUDENTS FROM THE ENGLISH TEACHING MAJOR AT THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR, 2015”

**TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF
LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS: ESPECIALIDAD EN FRANCES
E INGLES**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to God; who has given me the strength, the patience and the intelligence to finish my career. As well, to the Apostle of Jesus Christ, Naasón Joaquín García, my spiritual guide that has encouraged me to continue my superior studies and teaches me that a good Christian is also a good citizen. Besides, I want to recognize the support and love of my parents and siblings; which was very important in my academic path. In addition, I want to thank my advisor, Mte. Alexander Bruno, because he believed in our potential to carry out this research project, his suggestions were essential to conclude this investigation. At last but not least, Thanks a lot to Carlos, Haydee, Jacqueline, my team work and all my friends, classmates and teachers that supported me and tolerated me when I felt disappointed throughout my career.

Ruth Grissel Flores Escobar

There were many people directly and indirectly involved during the course of this project and I would like to thank especially the following

- **To God almighty** who gave me strength to continue working on this project and to have patience in order to overcome the obstacles and limitations faced.

- **To my parents**, Hilda Arely Sanchez and Jose Luis Hernandez who have provided me all the love and guidance I needed to accomplish my goals. I only wish to make them proud because I love them with all my heart.

- **To my brother**, Oscar Giovanni Rivas Sanchez, who has protected me all my life. I thank him for the all the wise advices and loving words he provided me to continue my studies. I admire you and I love you.

- **To the rest of my family**. I would like to thanks my relatives who have supported me through the process. I thank everybody for being so carrying and such a wonderful family. From my grandparents to my dear cousin.

- **To my beloved boyfriend** and best friend who has helped me when I needed positive feelings and support. Thank you for every time you helped me with this project. Thank you for always been there for me. I love you

- **To my teammates**. Thank you girls for being such an amazing group to work with. I will never forget the fun and stressful days we had together.

- In addition, I would like to thank especially to my advisor; **Mte. Wilber Alexander Bruno** who guided us through the process and provided us motivation, support and knowledge to accomplish our goal

- And Finally, thanks to my friends and all the teachers who have share their knowledge during these years.

Jennifer Guadalupe Rivas Sanchez

Saying I am grateful it is just the beginning of my heart's feelings. God has been so good in all the stages of my life and my career has been one of those. So I want to thank my God for his love, guidance, wisdom, and strength in my life and during this time in order to reach one of my dreams.

Also I have been blessed to belong to the greatest family ever. Thank you Daddy and Mommy, you are the best parents I could ask for, thank you for your love, support, and patience through this important part of my life. Lovely parents, I just have to tell you: Challenge accomplish!

Dear sister, since I was a little girl you always have been there to help me, and now I just want to tell you that your patience to teach me has become in success.

My love, my friend, my fiancé, my future husband, I want to say I love you, thank you to be there, for your support and because you always knew what to say at the right moment. This is our success!

I never imagine to have the opportunity to know and work with two of the greatest friends I asked God to meet. Thank you Jenny and Grissel to be the best teamwork but also to be my friends, because we learnt through this time to overcome and laugh, play and sometimes fight but these things made us grew up. Love you girls.

And last but not least, I want to express my grateful to our advisor Lic. Alexander Bruno, because you honored your title as a teacher. Thank you for being patient with us and giving us the guidance and support through this time. God bless you.

Finally, I just have to say thank you to all my friends and all the people that in way, had an impact in this dream, which now is coming true.

Yancy Maricela Zepeda Claros

INTRODUCTION

The process of learning English as a foreign language is a complex educational system in which all individuals involved have to perform actions to make it successful. Teachers are a great part of this process, their job in the classroom is very important to provide guidance, but students on their part must be active learners; they have to take responsibility for their own learning because they are the main character of this process.

This study was carried out in order to find out the incidence of Spanish as native language in the process of learning English as a foreign language, inside the classroom. On the one hand, the incidence might be positive, that means that Spanish becomes a helping tool for English learners. On the other hand, the incidence may be negative since the native language can affect the learning process of the foreign language. The research contains the following sections:

The delimitation, which presents the general and specific objectives. They show what the aim of the research is and what is expected to accomplish at the end of the investigation process. The research questions, one general and others specific. Through the development of the project it is intended to give logical satisfactory answers to all of these questions.

Then, the justification or rationale is presented. In this part, the researchers explain the importance of this investigation project, the reason why it is necessary to investigate the use of Spanish in an English Foreign Language classroom and the effects on students' oral production, so as to provide some important points that can be useful to future research.

Next, there is the theoretical framework. The body of the document shows the concepts that have been taken into account. There is also the mention of some educational theories

according to some known authors as to relate them to the topic presented. Furthermore, this framework includes personal experiences to support the theory presented.

After, the researchers present the methodology in which the method used for this research; the participants, the techniques and instruments used to recollect the data, as well as the interpretation of such information are described.

The next chapter contains the most important part where the researchers present the results and the most outstanding findings to test the hypotheses. Also, the conclusions of the investigation.

The following chapter makes reference of the recommendations that researchers suggest to overcome the problematic situation and the limitations they had to face during the research process. Some appendices are shown, among them the questionnaire and the check list to give a clear example on how the researchers collect data through questions and observation. Finally, the bibliography in which all the websites, books, theses, articles are cited so other researchers have access to them and check why they were taken into account.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to identify the factors that lead students to speak Spanish in an English class and how its frequent use affects the learning process of English as a foreign language as observed in different students at the Foreign Languages Department in the University of El Salvador, 2015. The researchers aimed to observe the negative or positive influence of the constant use of Spanish on English oral production in order to provide accurate recommendations.

The principle stage of the investigation was the three week observation process directed to the four groups of the Readings and Conversation I subject from the Teaching English Major in the University of El Salvador. The researchers also administered one questionnaire to obtain the participants' own perspectives. Both instruments collected the essential information to accomplish the objectives.

Findings revealed some advantages and disadvantages of speaking Spanish in an English class. On the one hand, observation showed that when English is spoken almost all the time during a class session, students enhance their oral ability because they practice it more and become more capable of thinking in English and not in Spanish before they speak. On the other hand, when students speak Spanish or think in Spanish before producing English speech, their oral ability is harmed. The researchers identified failures in students' competence to express their ideas fluently as well as pronunciation problems due to the influence of inexistent sounds in their native language.

The findings permitted to create recommendations for the participants, teachers and authorities in order to reduce the negative incidence of Spanish on students learning process.

The main goal was to overcome such negative transfer and to use English as much as possible to improve the oral production in the areas of fluency, pronunciation and vocabulary use.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A. Historical Framework

Throughout history, researchers have tried to explain how the native language affects the process of learning a foreign language. The term interference¹ makes reference to the linguistic phenomenon in which learners automatically transfer elements from their native language to the one they are learning. Interference produces three results: a) It helps students in their oral production by using the native language's structures in the foreign language; b) Interference also causes a negative effect by producing errors at the moment of speaking; c) Last, it produces no positive or negative effect. Taking the previous information into account, many studies have been carried out in order to comprehend this issue.

International studies

Bada Erdogan (2001) conducted a study with 18 Japanese students whose ages ranged from 18 to 29 years old and who were learning English as a foreign language. He focused on how the phonemic structures of their native language affected the way they produced English sounds. The results obtained from this study suggested that in some cases the native language helped students to construct correct phrases in English. But, in other cases, it hindered the process. For instance, due to the non-existence of some English vowels in Japanese, the subjects of the study tended to shorten English long vowels as they do not exist in their native-language phonological system.

Bhela, Baljit (1999) study involved four participants - a Spanish-speaking 21-year-old female (Bianca), a Vietnamese-speaking 39-year-old female (Cath), a Cambodian-speaking 50-year-old

¹ Dulay et al. (1982). Define interference as the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language.

female (Sabi) and an Italian-speaking 65-year-old male (Mato). The author focused on papers writing by the four students to see how their native language interfered. He presented tables in which different errors from the native language and errors from the foreign language were shown (comparative study). There appeared interference in the use of apostrophes, prepositions, capital letters, present and past continuous tenses, subject pronouns, active and passive voice, vocabulary and pronunciation.

Claudia Marcela Rubio Manrique (2012), a Colombian researcher carried out a small scale case study in order to understand the interference of the native language in the foreign language oral production. The sample of the study was composed by four students in the basic level in a Colombian university. The researcher observed five classes in order to take notes about the students' characteristics in oral production, the activities used to make them participate and the role of their native language on their English speech. The findings showed that Spanish interfered when students tried to translate complete phrases word by word. There was also a lexical interference as students tended to use Spanish words to fill in existing gaps in their English production: mix of languages.

National studies

Claudia Martinez and Monica Ventura (2013) presented a study to determine the level of Spanish interference on the production of English prepositions. The participants of the study were English Composition students; so the researchers analyzed compositions and they found out that the level of interference was more negative than positive because students used prepositions as they would do it in Spanish resulting in wrong English production.

Lopez, Mancía & Umaña (2013) conducted a study to discover how Spanish affects the pronunciation of English voiced, voiceless, fricative and affricate sounds in the setting of learning a foreign language. They administered an oral test which revealed that the most common mispronounced sounds were the ones present at the ending of words like collection, cloth and supervision. The most common problem in English mispronunciation is that several sounds do not exist in Spanish.

The studies presented have tried to gather and share information to understand the linguistic phenomenon of the native language interference, which causes either positive, negative or no influence at all. In this same path, the researchers of this project aimed to enrich this topic by producing findings in a classroom setting.

B. Description of the problem

This project shows the incidence of Spanish use on the English learning process, case of the Readings and Conversation I students. As long as they study, students realize the necessity to speak fluently; nevertheless, lack of vocabulary, confidence, English background knowledge, personality and some other factors are part of the challenges students from Readings and Conversation I courses have to overcome. All the situations on the previous notes are factors that push students onto continuously using their native language as an easy way out to communicate ideas during the English class even when it is not the most advisable thing to do.

As undergraduate students, the researchers are conscious of the importance of identifying how Spanish affects the way they learn English in the classroom so as to moderate its use. This research is based on the need to make students and teachers aware of the influence of their native language on the learning process, especially when they use Spanish too often during class time.

The importance of this work is to find out how Spanish interferes when students express themselves in English in order to understand this phenomenon in the classrooms of the University of El Salvador. Students will know which areas are most affected and if the frequent use of Spanish generates more errors in areas such as pronunciation, fluency and vocabulary. Afterwards, teachers will be able to implement different teaching strategies and students different learning strategies to minimize Spanish in the classroom depending on how it affects their English oral production. The researchers have concentrated on the speaking skill because it is one of the most important skills to master in English.

This paper aims to provide an insight of the native language interference in order to provide recommendations for students and teachers. Those recommendations will permit the learning

process to be improved in the classrooms. It is necessary to avoid negative interference so students are able to practice the foreign language as much as possible and permit to enhance students' speaking skill.

C. Objectives

General Objective

- To identify the main factors that lead students to use Spanish instead of English in an EFL classroom in order to minimize such phenomenon.

Specific Objectives

- To find out if the frequent use of Spanish has an incidence on students' English oral production so as to give recommendation for students and teachers
- To determine how the use of Spanish in an EFL classroom affects students' English oral performance at the University of El Salvador with the purpose of avoiding negative influence from the native language.

D. Research questions

GENERAL QUESTION

- What are the main factors that lead students to use Spanish instead of English in an EFL² classroom?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- Does the frequent use of Spanish have an incidence on students' English oral production?

- How does the use of Spanish in an EFL classroom affect students' English oral performance?

² EFL: English as a Foreign Language

E. Justification

Did you know that according to Education First, a Swedish private education company, El Salvador is the worst country to speak English in Latin America?³ In 2015 this company carried out a study in 70 countries around the world and El Salvador is ranked 61 according to this study. The present research was realized with students from the foreign language department at the University of El Salvador; specifically, students of Readings and Conversation I courses from the English Teaching Major, who face many problems at the moment of learning English as a foreign language. One of these problems is the struggle they have with the incidence of Spanish at the moment to speak English both in the classroom and outside of it.

The purpose of this investigation was to find out the main reasons why students have this difficulty during the career. Also, to reveal how the use of the native language is affecting the accuracy of spoken English on students from the Readings and Conversation I courses from the English Teaching Major, and associate the frequency that takes place in the EFL classroom with the problem explained it above.

This research is relevant since it seeks to make important findings, so all the people who will have access to this investigation can have a clearer idea about this problematic situation. Besides, it will be useful for students and teachers to let them know some recommendations that both of them can apply in their roles as students or teachers in order to help each other. Consequently, having results teachers and students can take more appropriate actions to have more effective results with the students of in future years.

³ Education First. (2015). El ranking mundial más grande según su dominio del inglés. Retrieve from <http://www.ef.com/wwes/epi/>.

F. Delimitation of the problem

This research involved a sample of Readings and Conversation I students from the English Teaching Major of the Foreign Languages Department, at the University of El Salvador. The study was done in the time period from March to December 2015. Besides, the investigators observed students in classes for three weeks and at the end they administered a questionnaire to students from four courses. In addition, the purpose of this undergraduate project was to find out the reasons why and the frequency with which students speak Spanish in the English classroom and as a result what is the effect of this action in order to make some useful recommendations to the participants involved.

G. Limitations

During the graduation project, the investigators faced the following difficulties:

- During the data gathering process, the first time, it was not possible for the researchers to observe the classes and administer the questionnaire because some professors had very important activities. Therefore, it was necessary to reschedule this process and go back days later. This caused a delay in the investigation.
- Due to authorities' elections in the University, classes were canceled at certain periods and for that reason the period of data gathering became longer.
- The process to approve the research topic by the board of directors of the Department of Education took more time than expected.
- At the beginning, some professors were not willing to give the permission to observe their classes and this situation delayed the procedure as well.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Native language is defined as the language which a group of people acquire in an area, through the time it becomes their natural and main resource for communicating ideas and thoughts (Awonivi, 1978)⁴ Based on the previous definition, the mother tongue is the first language that a person learns and due to that fact, this person is considered a native speaker.

Opposite, a foreign language is any language that is not native to a particular region or person but to an individual who decides to learn it with all its features.

Having these two concepts clear; it is important to mention that this research has considered some factors that may influence students to speak their native language instead of the foreign language in certain situations during the class.

Teacher's methodology

Successfully learning a foreign language requires not only from students' willingness but also from an appropriate methodology. Two of the most popular approaches to use in order to teach a foreign language⁵ are the Monolingual Approach and the Bilingual Approach. The first immerses learners in a unique language use so as to acquire it in a more favorable way. The latter permits the use of two languages simultaneously in one setting to facilitate the learning of the foreign one. Each of these methods is applied with the aim of helping both the teacher and the students in the foreign teaching -learning process.

On one hand, the Monolingual Approach states that the native language⁶ use restrains the learning of the foreign language. Krashen (1991) through his Theory of Second Language

⁴ Awonivi, T.A. (1978). *Yoruba Language and Education*. London. Oxford University Press.

⁵ In this paper, English will be considered as the foreign language

⁶ In this paper, Spanish will be considered as the native language

Acquisition believed that a foreign language is learned the same way we acquire our native language. In addition, a foreign language like English should be taught with a permanent exposure to it. It means that instructions, tasks, explanations, warm-ups, role plays, meaning discussions and all activities inside a classroom should take form of “English only.” In fact, the use of the native language is not allowed in this type of approach because according to the followers of this idea, students can reach an advanced level of English if they are directly connected to the foreign language.

That is why teachers should introduce lots of comprehensible input (movies, conversation clubs, magazines articles, native speakers chatting, etc.) in the foreign language, even above students’ current level, in order for them to develop their learning process. This method aims to optimize foreign language learning and specially students’ speaking skills with no reference to their native tongue.

This idea of keeping the native language inactive while learning the new one (Brooks, 1964, p142) can be supported by methodologies like the Direct Method⁷. This method suggests that a foreign language should be learnt through communicative activities exclusively in that language. Additionally, it is based on the assumption that students must learn the foreign language in the most natural possible way just like children acquire their first language. This strategy, as part of Monolingualism holds that avoiding the native language is the best way to develop foreign language skills, specially speaking.

⁷ This method is based on the work of F. Frankle (1884) and Gouin (1880). The primary goals are for students to think and speak the target language; thus, no use of the native language is allowed. Teachers employ objects, visuals, and realia to make the input comprehensible.

The perspective of using only the foreign language in the classroom offers certain advantages: first, it pushes students to solve problems and misunderstandings through the language being learnt. Second, it avoids comparisons between both languages because that may cause interference such as false friends or cognates⁸ like the Word “actually” which students assume to have the same meaning as the Spanish Word “actualmente” because both of them present orthographic similarities. Third, oral production is enhanced as students try to communicate in the foreign language at all times. For instance, a worldwide known case is the Total French Immersion⁹ Program in Canada, where native English speakers start school entirely in French, they study and take classes in the foreign language only. By the end of elementary school, the majority of learners become fluent in French. This proves the success of the monolingual methodology whose advocates strongly think it has great benefits in the language learning field.

On the other hand, the Bilingual Approach affirms that the native language favors the foreign language acquisition. It states that the native tongue rather than being a barrier is an essential tool to achieve fluency in a foreign language (C.J Dodson, 1967). This method sometimes offers the opportunity to benefit from the similarities between the native and the target language to make the learning process a little less complicated for both students and teachers. In earlier years, teachers implemented the Grammar Translation Method¹⁰ which took advantage of the native language to better comprehend/interpret the foreign language topics by

⁸ A pair of words in two languages that look or sound similar but change in meaning.

⁹ Example of Submersion model in which there is no provision for the native tongue.

¹⁰ It took into account the grammatical aspects of a language and the use of translation as a means of ascertaining comprehension. Classes were taught primarily in the native language.

translating the majority of terms. This perspective of Monolingualism sees the native language as a helping tool in the foreign language teaching-learning field.

The strategy of using the native language in teaching a foreign one must be applied under some specifications. Firstly, teachers are advised to use students' native language at basic levels¹¹. That is because at earlier stages, learners are just beginning to get familiar with the new language. Secondly, the native language can be used at specific moments during the class. It can help to explain important concepts, to get students attention when they are distracted, to clarify confusing vocabulary and to maintain classroom management. Finally, teachers must be aware that the native language overuse may also hinder language learning. It means foreign classes ought to be taught most of the time in the language being learnt.

Additionally, the Bilingual Approach presents some benefits for the foreign language classroom. First, the teacher can use the native language to check meaning of words/ phrases/ sentences in real contexts to avoid any misunderstandings on students. Second, using the native language helps to explain grammar points. As grammar structure is vital in foreign language learning, it must be completely clarified. That is why some teachers relate both languages' grammar so learners can compare and understand better. In conclusion, using the native tongue may develop a good relationship between teachers and students by giving the latter confidence. Instead of looking at it as a distractor, bilingualism sees the native language as a mechanism to enhance foreign language learning process, especially on the speaking skill.

Experience has demonstrated that people can become bilingual without suffering a negative transfer from their mother tongue (Beardsmore, 1993). Stanford (1993) carried out a

¹¹ A1 beginners and A2 elementary students according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

study where they grouped students with different skill levels so that they could help each other in either English or their native language. The main goal was to encourage students to interact in their native tongue and this made them happier and more comfortable at school. Additionally, students and even teachers expressed not to feel enthusiastic about carrying out grammar explanation in the target language (Macaro, 1997). This shows that the use of the native language doesn't really hinder foreign language acquisition.

Teachers, as facilitators, must wisely use the different methods presented to teach a foreign language, as it is not an easy task. Language teaching methodology has to accomplish multiple goals within educational contexts. It is not clear if the Monolingual or the Bilingual Approach can give a suitable answer to those goals by themselves or if they should be considered codependent methodologies. However, more studies need to be carried out regarding this issue.

Student's background knowledge

It is important to determine the effectiveness of students' background knowledge on their speaking skill. Martin G. Levine and George J. Haus carried out a study where the results indicated that background knowledge is a significant factor that affects foreign language comprehension. Two types of background will be considered in this paper: background knowledge of the foreign language and background knowledge of the native language; as both of them have a relationship in the foreign language learning process.

Background knowledge of the foreign language (English in this case) implies all of the elements students already know¹². Elements such as basic vocabulary (nouns, adjectives,

¹² What learners previously studied in their regular courses (primary or secondary school) or in independent English programs

prepositions, etc.); present, past and future verb tenses and the standard structure of sentences. It means learners can better recall past learning and construct “bridges” among prior and new knowledge (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Although students with previous English knowledge relate both languages structures, they tend to use the foreign language more than the native one. That doesn’t generally happen with students with little or no target language previous instruction. Consequently, students with prior foreign language knowledge develop their communicative oral skills because they already know or are familiar with certain topics. In essence, English background knowledge minimizes the use of Spanish by some students.

Background knowledge of the native language takes into account two common linguistic phenomena: language transfer (derived from the Interlanguage Theory)¹³, and avoidance of foreign language structures. In the first place, language transfer¹⁴ especially negative, follows the assumption that the difficulties in foreign-language learning are mainly due to the interference coming from the learners' native language. This happens when the structures of both languages are different and learners tend to transfer elements from their native language to the foreign language they are learning, which results in erratic production. Mah, B. Y. (2009)¹⁵ carried out a study with 12 Chinese students learning English in order to analyze how their native language (Chinese) affected their English production. The results showed that the most frequent error was the inappropriate use of the English verb be (是) in Chinese) because their uses are different in both languages. In the second place, omission or avoidance occurs when students omit certain elements of the foreign language as they would do it in their native language. Thus

¹³ A separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner’s attempted production of a foreign language (Selinker, 1972: 214). It differs from the native and the target language.

¹⁴ Odlin (1989): “Transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired”

¹⁵ Mah, B. Y. (2009). *The manifestation of native language transfer in ESL learning*.

an English learner whose native language is Spanish would produce the phrase: “study English because like” omitting the subject “I” as in Spanish is not necessary to use it all the time. As shown above, background knowledge of the native language plays an important role in foreign language learning as it is one of the major causes of error production.

Students Background knowledge of the foreign and the native language have a direct relation to the way learners produce speech in the language they are learning because both factors can cause positive and negative results.

Confidence

It is believed that there are significant effects of anxiety and self-confidence¹⁶ on students’ oral performance of a foreign language. MacIntyre, Dornyci, Clement and Noels (1998) proposed that self-confidence greatly contributes to the student’s willingness to communicate in a foreign language. In the academic setting underlying this project, confidence as a factor for using the native language, can be briefly explained by the Affective Filter Hypothesis¹⁷. Feelings like anxiety and self-confidence can benefit or harm learners’ capacity to express in the language they are learning.

The famous linguist, Stephen Krashen, suggests that there is some kind of filter which is basically a group of negative feelings that block students from successful learning. The affective filter can be based on two main feelings: stress level and anxiety. First, learners with little or no foreign language background knowledge may feel uncomfortable sharing ideas and participating

¹⁶ Anxiety: "the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a foreign language with which the individual is not fully proficient" Gardner & MacIntyre (1993) / self-confidence: Confidence in oneself or one's own abilities.

¹⁷ It refers to the influence of affective factors like motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety on foreign language learning. The affective filter blocks comprehensible input. (Krashen, 1982)

in class; this produce them a high level of stress because they are worried to make mistakes or to be criticized by classmates. In consequence, each time learners participate, their stress level increases and they may need to use their native language to lower it. Second, the anxiety factor can also cause the native language to be used in a foreign language class. This factor focuses on the anxiety felt by students at the moment of communicating with others in the foreign language and when performing tasks/examinations because they may not feel confident enough to use only English as their mean of communication.

According to the previous information, negative feelings among learners of a foreign language may be lessened by using their native tongue when they feel stressed or anxious.

One experiment carried out with 132 Korean college students (Park-lee, 2004) showed that when students presented higher levels of anxiety about speaking English (as foreign language) they obtained lower scores on their oral performance. Likewise, learners with higher confidence showed higher speaking successfulness. This indirect relationship evidences how the native language helps learners to lower their affective filter by reducing anxiety/stress levels.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary plays an essential role in language use. It has a great impact on students when they want to convey and share their opinion orally. Many studies have shown that vocabulary and background knowledge can help students speak and comprehend better. The more vocabulary students know, the better they can speak English without the necessity to use their native language in order to be understood.

Joseph P. O'Rourke¹⁸ says, "*Vocabulary mastery is one of the factors to master English as a Foreign Language.*"

Dealing with O'Rourke's opinion, vocabulary mastery is one skill that should be owned by students who intend to comprehend English. In other words, vocabulary mastery is one factor that leads to student's mastering English successfully in all English skills and sub skills such as reading, writing, speaking, listening, fluency, etc.

While Norbert Schmit and Michael Mc. Charney¹⁹ say: "*Mastering vocabulary is not easy, yet other aspects of the language should be considered such as sound, and structure. Vocabulary is one of the most important elements in a language. To speak the language well needs to master it. No matter how well you learn grammar, how successfully the sound of a foreign language just cannot happen in any meaningful way.*"

Based on Schmitt's opinion above, it is quite complicated to master vocabulary since it is the main element of language skill. If students want to speak English, they have to know vocabulary first. If they are required to write, they also have to learn some vocabulary and if they want to comprehend what people speak through listening, they have to study some vocabulary as well. So, vocabulary is a primary resource to master English, although building vocabulary is quite hard to do.

¹⁸ O' Rourke, P. Joseph.(1974) *Toward a Science of Vocabulary Development*. Netherlands. Mouton, pp. 26

¹⁹ Schmit, N. and Charney M. (1997). *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition and Pedagogy*. London. Cambridge University Press, pp. 140

Practice and study habits

Practice and study habits may help students to improve thinking in the foreign language. There are several ways in which learners can practice the foreign language like using online sites to acquire vocabulary and talk to native speakers, watching English movies and TV shows, listening to English music, among others. The key is to use these activities inside and outside the classroom in order to enhance learning. As the saying claims "*Practice makes perfect.*"

According to a study conducted by a psychologist of the University of Chicago based on how language affects comprehension; he found out that students become more analytic and systematic on their decisions since they are thinking in the foreign language they are learning. This is the idea from the author Boaz Keysar, "*a foreign language provides psychological distance*". So by thinking in a foreign language, students will not only improve their skills in that language, but they will also make smarter decisions. This causes discomfort especially during the early stages of learning. For beginners, thinking in the language they are trying to learn is one of the easiest ways to review the vocabulary and grammatical patterns they have recently acquired. Then, by actually forcing their brains to think in a language that is not used to think in, they will also help activate the new information by giving themselves a real-life use for it. This will speed up the **passive to active vocabulary transition**.

Classmates' mockery

Over the centuries, language has evolved; therefore, vocabulary has been inferred in English from another kind of languages like: Greek, Latin, French, German and so on. One of the theorists that is interested to find out how to promote student's participation in the English

class, is Erika Osvath²⁰, *an experienced teacher who presented: 'Solutions Speaking Challenges' 'It's so hard getting the weaker students to join in'.*

This theory is based on the idea that in the English classrooms there are some 'weaker students' who use to say the less they can, come up with fewer ideas, make more mistakes and they are more insecure at the moment of expressing themselves in English. This phenomenon is known as the *Pygmalion effect*, a psychological principle asserting that expectations decisively influence performance.

In order to avoid classmate's mockery over these 'weaker students', Osvath presents some useful tips to apply in the English classroom:

- Teachers must create a **warmer atmosphere** for all students. Research has shown that teachers tend to unconsciously build a more relaxed climate for students that have more favorable expectations by teachers. Regardless of English speaking ability, teacher must have a nice attitude with all students by using accepting words, true smiles, and demonstrating understanding and openness towards them.
- Teachers should expect even more from those 'weaker students'. When setting up a speaking activity, teachers have to make clear what they expect from all students and those activities, challenges should be established and that way students will make an effort for participating and express their ideas in English. Then, as teachers are monitoring student's assignment during the preparation time and the speaking activity, they have to make clear what they expect them to do. Of course, it is important not to be pushy or

²⁰ Osvath, Erika. (2014). *'Speaking in class'*. Oxford University.

unrealistic, but to make expectations clear in a gentle and supportive manner which will make students feel comfortable when participating.

The influence of the native language on the learning process of the foreign language

In foreign language acquisition, the native language of the student plays a significant role because it influences the learning process of the foreign language. So, this influence can provide three different types of transfer: positive, negative or zero transfer; it means interference.

Kellerman & Sharwood-Smith (1986), use the term “crosslinguistic influence” to refer to this phenomenon.

First, students tend to take their native language as reference at the moment of learning a foreign language and try to employ the similarities between both languages. These similarities are seen like a positive transfer because the prior knowledge about the native language helps to understand the new language, for example, in Spanish is very common to use of articles before a name such as “un dulce”, “el carro”. Equally, in English, articles are used before names like “a candy”, “the car”. In addition, there are English expressions that cannot be translated to Spanish because the sense changes. For that reason, it is necessary to compare some Spanish expressions that transmit the same feeling. Consequently, the native language can be a helpful tool to understand better the new language.

Second, it is logical to think that the less learners know of the foreign language the more they will be interfered by their native language. Celaya²¹ affirms that native language causes a negative transfer to foreign language acquisition if the environment to learn the foreign language

²¹ Celaya, M. (1990). *The role of the L1 in the acquisition and use of the L2: New perspectives*. Barcelona: University of Barcelona.

is limited to the classroom and the learner is under pressure to perform; when he/she is not prepared to do it. For instance, adjectives in Spanish are placed after the name “el carro rojo”. In contrast, in English the adjectives are before the name “the red car”. Another case is the cognates or false friends: they are two words of the same origin which have changed in meaning, but are, at present, orthographically recognizable. It means that these words can confuse and have a negative incidence on students’ comprehension. For example, the word “library” refers to “biblioteca”, but is orthographically similar with “librería” in Spanish. To sum up, students make use of the knowledge that they recognize or feel familiar and this could affect in a negative way their oral English learning.

As third type, the zero transfer means that the previous language knowledge has neither a positive nor a negative incidence when learning a foreign language. Furthermore, students have the capacity to separate the two languages and do not mix them. In brief, zero transfer is a neutral type and there is not a direct influence between both languages.

In conclusion, the acquisition of foreign languages is a process that includes a cross linguistic influence, in some cases it is positive or negative, but in others the interference is zero. It depends of the method students practice to acquire the foreign language and the learning’s environment around him/her that encourage them. Also, it is important to mention that native language can have a positive impact in learners; however, it must be used with prudence and in specific moments.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Type of study

➤ Correlational study

A correlational study determines whether or not two variables are correlated. This means to study if an increase or decrease in one variable corresponds to an increase or decrease in the other. It determines the relationship that exists between two or more variables, and if that is the case, in what degree the relationship occurs. There are three types of identified correlations:

Positive correlation: Positive correlation between two variables is when an increase in one variable leads to an increase in the other one and a decrease in one leads to a decrease in the other one as well. For example, the time a student spends studying a lesson, the good grades he will get in a quiz.

Negative correlation: Negative correlation is when an increase in one variable leads to a decrease in another and vice versa. For example, the increase in a price for some products (beans, rice), will definitely lead in the decrease of selling because people are not going to buy them because the price has increased.

No correlation: Two variables are uncorrelated when a change in one doesn't lead to a change in the other and vice versa. For example, among millionaires, happiness is found to be uncorrelated to money. This means an increase in money doesn't lead to happiness.

➤ **Correlational Designs:**

In a correlational design, variables are measured (without manipulating them) and then the data is analyzed to see whether the variables are related. It is much easier to establish cause and effect relationships when one of the variables is manipulated (i.e. the independent variable) but there are times when it cannot be possible.

➤ **Contexts for performing a correlational study:**

Some independent variables (particularly biographical variables) cannot be manipulated: gender, age, personality types, ethnic background, height, etc. Note that gender has been used as an independent variable in a static group design--a type of independent groups design in which the T test is used for independent means to analyze the data--but in many ways that is essentially a correlational design because the independent variable is measured, not manipulated. In fact, it will make no difference whether you perform the t test for independent means (treating the design as a static group design) or perform the t test for r (treating the design as correlational), in either case you get the same value for 't'.

Some independent variables would be unethical to manipulate: for example: examining the effects of smoking or pollution levels on cancer rates; examining the effects of exposure to pornography on sexual deviancy; examining the effects of lowering funding levels for school systems on student performance; or examining the effects of brain damage in various areas of the brain on speech production. In all cases you would not be allowed to go in as an experimenter and manipulate the independent variable. It is necessary to examine various levels of the independent variable as they already exist in the population.

Surveys: The nature of surveys is to measure variables, rather than to manipulate them. Unless the survey has a manipulation build into it (e.g. manipulating the way a question is worded to see if it influences how it is answered) the survey is essentially a correlational design with many variables (one for each question). The analysis will consist of describing the data generated by each question and of the relationships between those variables.

➤ **Association with our research project**

Our Graduation Project is “The incidence of Spanish on English oral production: Case of the Readings and Conversation I students from the English Teaching Major at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador, 2015”.

We chose the correlational study because we want to know if the use of Spanish in the classroom affects or influences the students’ English oral production. This study bases its research on a correlational investigation therefore the use of variables and the interaction with each other is going to describe and explain if one variable changes the other as well

At the end of the research, we are going to determine if the increase of the first variable leads to a decrease in the other one or vice versa.

IV. HYPOTHESIS

- Lack of vocabulary, teacher’s methodology and students’ shyness are the main reasons why they speak Spanish instead of English in the classroom.

VARIABLES	<p>Univariable</p> <p>Lack of vocabulary, teacher’s methodology and students’ shyness are the main reasons why they speak Spanish instead of English in the classroom.</p>
CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES	<p>Lack of vocabulary: Absence of words to express an idea.</p> <p>Teacher’s methodology: a group of techniques to teach something in an easy and understandable way.</p> <p>Students’ shyness: It is the act of feeling afraid of speaking English in the classroom.</p> <p>Spanish use: to speak Spanish in an EFL classroom.</p>
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES	<p>Checklist by observation.</p>

- The more frequent use of Spanish in an EFL classroom, the less practice of English as a foreign language.

<p>VARIABLES</p>	<p>Independent variable</p> <p>Frequent use of Spanish in an English class.</p>	<p>Dependent variable</p> <p>Students do not speak English.</p>
<p>CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES</p>	<p>Frequent use of Spanish in an English class:</p> <p>It is to speak Spanish in a frequent and repetitive way while being in an English class.</p>	<p>Students do not speak English:</p> <p>Since they don't practice the foreign language, they are unable to produce and have a fluent speech.</p>
<p>OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES</p>	<p>Checklist</p> <p>Questionnaire</p>	

- Using Spanish affects negatively students' English fluency and pronunciation.

<p>VARIABLES</p>	<p>Univariable</p> <p>The use of Spanish affects student's English oral skills.</p>
<p>CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES</p>	<p>The use of Spanish: It is to speak Spanish instead of English in the classroom.</p> <p>English oral skills: It is a group of skills related to produce orally ideas and opinions and also to speak English in an EFL classroom in a fluent and logical way.</p> <p>Fluency: to speak a language easily and correctly.</p> <p>Pronunciation: the way a word or phrase is pronounced in a particular language</p>
<p>OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES</p>	<p>Checklist</p> <p>Questionnaire.</p>

V. RESEARCH DESIGN

The non-experimental research means that a researcher cannot control, manipulate or alter the predictor variable or subjects. But instead, he/she relies on interpretation, observation or interactions to come to a conclusion. The non-experimental researcher must rely on correlations, surveys or case studies.

This research project, “The incidence of Spanish on English oral production: Case of the Readings and Conversation I students from the English Teaching Major at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador, 2015” is based on non- experimental research design because this experimental research relies on two variables.

The non-experimental design fits with our study due to the reason that it was needed to have an observable procedure and at the same time, an interpretation. It was not possible to manipulate the variables “Spanish use” and “English oral production” found in this research. Also, here, correlation between variables is vital as well as in this graduation project.

VI. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

A. Population

- Delimit the population is going to be studied pretended to generalize the outcomes.
- *"A population is the set of all cases that match a set of specifications"* (Selltiz,1974)²²
- It is better to establish the characteristics of the population in order to delimit what will be the sampling parameters.
- A research project will not be better because it has a bigger population; the quality of the research Project depends on delimiting clearly the population, based on the objectives of the study.
- The researchers' criteria depend of their objectives of the Project; the most important it is to establish them clearly.

The population of this study was composed by the 4 courses of the Readings and Conversation in English I subject from the English Teaching Major of the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador, year 2015. The number of students for these courses is:

²² Selltiz, 1974. Metodología de la investigación, Capítulo VIII, pag. 204

Department:

- ✓ Foreign Language Department
 - **English Teaching major**
 - Readings and conversation I (group 02): 30 students
 - Readings and conversation I (group 03): 35 students
 - Readings and conversation I (group 04): 35 students
 - Readings and conversation I (group 05): 20 students

 - **TOTAL: 120 students.**

B. Sample

The method to collect the information about the topic were: a checklist and a questionnaire. These instruments were useful in order to know how the native language interferes with the learning process of the foreign language.

Formula:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 P Q N}{(N - 1) E^2 + Z^2 P Q}$$

Z= Confidence level: 95%

P= Probability to happen: 50%

Q= Probability not to happen: 50%

E= Margin of error: 5%

N= Universe: 120

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5) (120)}{(120 - 1) (0.05)^2 + (1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5)}$$

$$n = \frac{(3.84) (0.25) (120)}{(119) (0.0025) + (3.84) (0.25)}$$

$$n = \frac{115.2}{0.2975 + 0.96}$$

$$n = \frac{115.2}{1.2575}$$

n = 92

Stratified Sample

Strata	Nh	Nh/N	Nh/N (n)
Group 02	30	0.25	23
Group 03	35	0.29	27
Group 04	35	0.29	27
Group 05	20	0.17	15
Total	120	1.00	92

VII. DATA GATHERING

A. Research instruments

The research instruments used to collect the data were a questionnaire and a check list.

The first one was divided as shown below:

➤ **Part I: Social data**

The students were classified in the ones who work and the ones who do not do it.

➤ **Part II: Spanish use**

It was pretended to collect the factors that influence students to speak Spanish during the English class.

This one was divided as well as:

a) Background

Students who have learned English before enrolling in the University of El Salvador and that is the reason why they have more participation in the English class.

b) Confidence

Students do not speak English because their lack of confidence, they consider themselves as shy people.

c) Lack of vocabulary

Students do not have enough English vocabulary knowledge to express their ideas.

d) Study habits / Lack of practice

Students simply do not want to study so that is why they do not practice outside the classroom.

➤ **Part III: English oral production**

To measure what are the factors that do not allow students to develop their oral production proficiency inside and outside the classroom.

a) Teacher's methodology

How it encourages students to improve their oral production, participate in classes, etc.

b) Performance and classmates' mockery

Students are afraid to speak in front of the class because their classmates can make fun of them.

The second instrument to collect the data was the check list. It one aimed to provide qualitative results by observation; it means that all the items were related to the real situations students may face during the English class. So by the check list was pretended to determine the level of incidence of the native language on students from Readings and Conversation I courses but also how that incidence may affect student's oral performance.

B. Data gathering plan

In order to collect the needed data, the researchers decided to go to the courses under study. They used a formula in order to know how many surveys had to be taken for collecting the results presented in this project. At the end, the instruments were filled out by students of the four groups from the Readings and Conversation I courses.

VIII: DATA ANALYSIS

A. Data base

In this graduation project, the researchers used EXCEL program to analyze the data.

B. Statistical procedures

Microsoft Excel allowed to organize, format and calculate information with formulas with a spread sheet system broken up by rows and columns. Also, it was a useful and easy tool to graph the data.

After the data gathering process, the information obtained was input to the program to create the graphs by percentages in order to analyze them. At the end of the statistical procedures, the graphs were analyzed as univariate and bivariate according to the variables of the hypotheses.

C. Data analysis

- **Check list analysis**
- **Univariate analysis**
- **Bivariate analysis**

➤ Check list analysis

Always	Frequently	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Seldom	Rarely	Never
100%	90%	80%	70%	50%	40%	20%	10%	0%

Poor classroom's management allows the use of Spanish.

- Most teachers had a good classroom's management during the first part of the class. It means that, they explained and spoke just in English; however some teachers spoke Spanish during the second part of the class so that allowed students to speak Spanish as well.
- **e.g.** At the begining of the second part of the class some teachers spoke Spanish about personal experiences, politics, jokes and topics that were not part of the class and that took around 20-30 minutes. This situation caused that students felt more comfortable to speak Spanish instead of practicing their English.

Students question in Spanish instead of English when they do not understand a word or phrase.

- Students ocaasionally tended to question teachers in Spanish when they had a doubt.
- **e.g.** From groups of Readings and Conversation I, it was observed that some students preferred to question in Spanish when they did not know the meaning of some English words instead of using the English structures like " what does it mean?"

Students question their classmates in Spanish when they have a doubt about the class.

- Among students, they frequently questioned each other in Spanish due to the confidence they had each other made them share topics just in Spanish eventhough these were not related to the English course.
- **e.g.** Students most of the time spoke Spanish among themselves when they did not understand the teacher's instruction, they solved exercises from the text book or they chose to speak Spanish about different topics.

Students' personality influences their English oral participation inside the classroom.

- Student's personality affected their English oral participation because those people who were confident, they were not afraid of making mistakes.
- **e.g.** Some students with outgoing personality were the ones who participated the most in the class despite of classmates' mockery.

The more overcrowded classroom, the more Spanish is spoken.

- Part of the hardest difficulties teachers and students had faced, at the Foreign Language Department, in order to improve the quality of English. So overcrowded groups had frequently affected students oral proficiency.
- **e.g.** In the cases of Readings and Conversation I, overcrowded classrooms were not a problem because each group was composed from 20 to 35 students.

Students' English oral participation is predominant during class.

- In general terms, learners hardly ever participated in English during the entire class as it depended on the classroom's management and students willingness to practice and do as much as possible to improve their oral skills.
- **e.g.** From the four groups observed, only in one of them it was noticed that both the teacher and students spoke English during the majority of the time. The use of Spanish in that group was minimum as students spoke Spanish in specific cases: when they had a doubt and asked their classmates for clarification and when they needed to borrow something (pen, eraser...) from their peers. Meanwhile, the other three groups presented a mix of English and Spanish when students tried to express their opinions.

Students' English oral participation is interfered by the native language.

- Students had some difficulties when expressing their opinion, when asking for a doubt, when giving oral presentations and discussing diverse topics. Their pronunciation was usually affected by the native language. Mainly to the unexisting sounds in Spanish which they need to produce in English.
e.g. Students tended to pronounce some English sounds as they would do it in Spanish; like words beginning with [s] so they added the phoneme [ε] before it (/εspem/ /ε'studnt/). Or the mispronunciation of the 'stress' of English words.
- One common difficult sound for non native speakers is the "ed" ending on regular past tense verbs. It was observed that students rarely pronounce these verbs in a correct way because such sound is not present in Spanish.
- Vocabulary use was also influenced due to literal translation from one language to the other. A student said the phrase "pass more time with my friends" which was clearly influenced by Spanish, where the verb "pasar" would be used. In English though, the correct verb would be "spend time" / "hang out" with friends.

When students do not understand a word or phrase, the teacher translate them to Spanish

- Teachers occasionally translated English words into Spanish when students did not know their meaning. They did this in order to save class time and to better clarify students' doubts.
- **e.g.** When students were completing exercises from the text book, they sometimes asked for unknown words/phrases. The teacher in one of the groups translated the terms for: butcher=carnicero (he also used gestures for fully comprehension. Sailboat= bote de vela, and guaba: guayaba.

When doing team or pair work, students speak English.

- Students hardly ever spoke English when working in pairs or teams. This was observed in the four groups which constituted the population. Students tended to speak Spanish because they felt confident with their peers, they needed to understand the instructions completely, they did not know how to say something in English and they knew the teacher could not monitor everybody at the same time due to the group size.
- While doing pair or group work; it was also common to see students using Spanish to talk about their personal lives. This proved what researchers found out in an experimental program from National Geographical where it was experimented that people tend to use their native language to speak about more personal topics because they feel directly attached to it.

When doing team or pair work, students speak Spanish.

- This is something that students sometimes did since they seemed more comfortable speaking Spanish.
- **e.g.** When students worked together, most of the time they formed group with friends, they spoke only Spanish because they felt confidence enough to do it.

The teacher corrects mistakes in English.

- Teachers usually corrected students in English to improve mispronunciation, nevertheless this almost never happened.
- **e.g.** Students had English mispronunciation of past time verbs.

The type of teacher's activities encourages students to speak English.

- Teachers oral activities usually encouraged students to speak English.
- **e.g.** Teachers assigned oral presentations and promoted personal opinions which were more effective for students to improve their oral skills.
- **e.g.** Team work was not too helpful since teachers did not fully monitor whether students spoke English or Spanish.

When talking about emotional topics, students switch from English to Spanish.

- Students usually tended to use Spanish at the moment of talking about personal experiences because these were attached to important people in their lives, moral values, feelings, etc.
- **e.g.** During one of the courses students were discussing in English some weddings' elements and costumes, but at the moment students talked about personal experiences, they switched from English to Spanish.

Students sitting at the back of the classroom use more Spanish than English

- Students who looked for the back seats in the classrooms were the ones who frequently spoke Spanish.
- **e.g.** During the observation, the students sitting at the back spoke more frequently Spanish than the other students because they were not paying attention, the topics that they were talking about were not related to the class and teacher did not monitor them.

➤ **Univariate analysis**

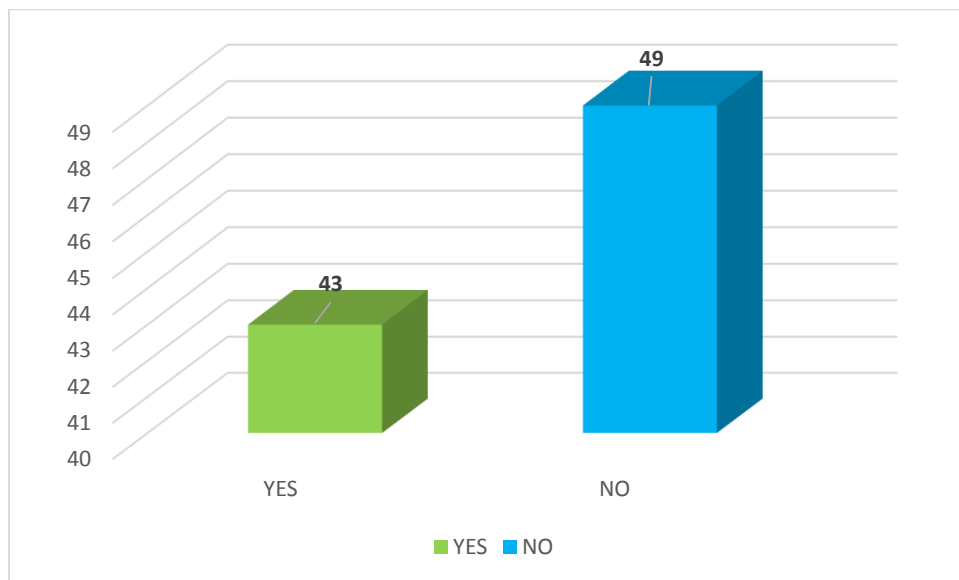
PART II. SPANISH USE

A. BACKGROUND

1. Did you study English before enrolling in the University?

a) Yes

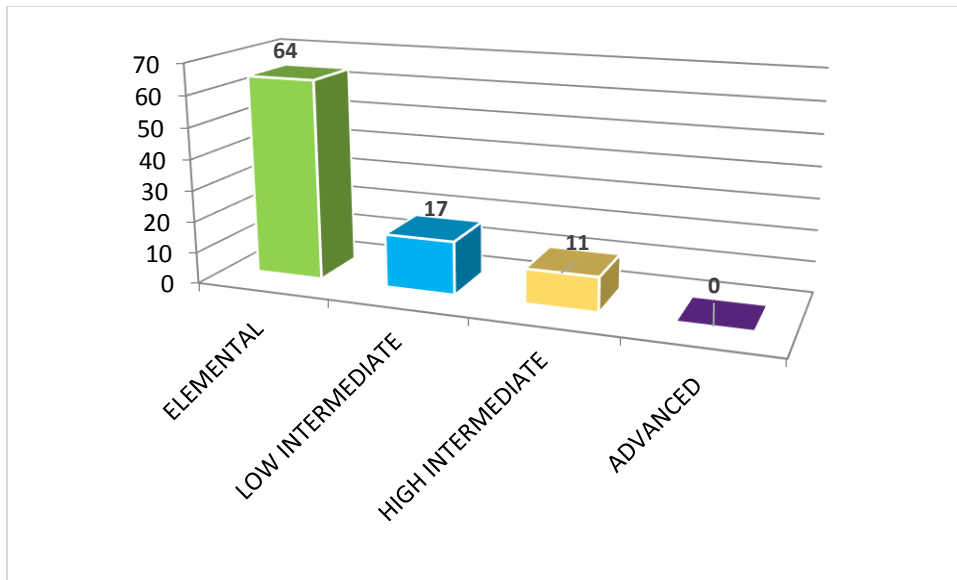
b) No



It is interesting to know how this graph shows that a considerable part of students have a wide range of English knowledge since the beginning of the career so that Readings and Conversation I students should feel confident to freely speak the foreign language during the English class. However, there are some other students who do not have an English background at all and those are the ones who should practice English even more.

2. What was the level of English you learned before starting the major?

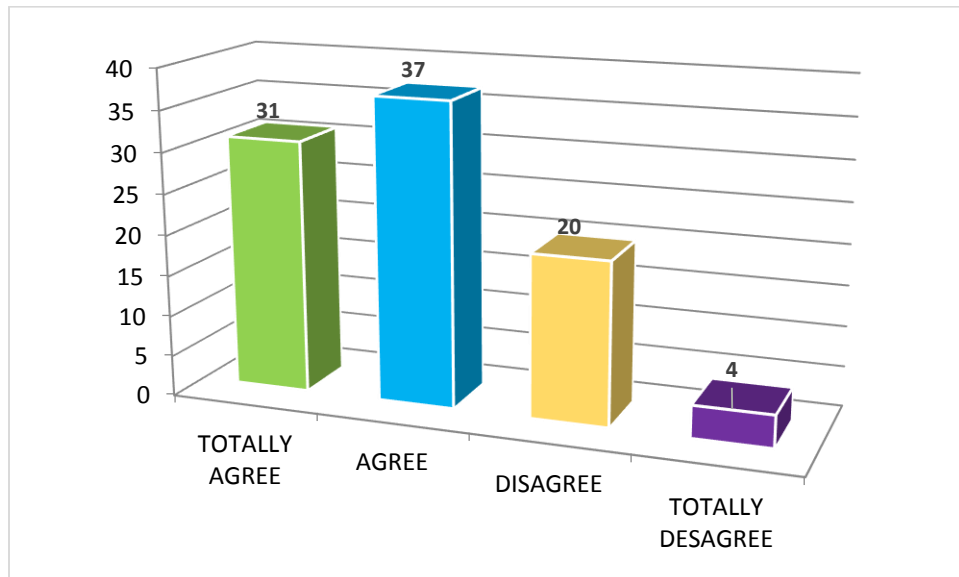
- a) Elemental
- b) Low intermediate
- c) High intermediate
- d) Advanced



Even though a large number of students have enrolled into the University of El Salvador, with an English background, it seems that this knowledge was only elemental. This results show the majority of the students are challenged to improve their English skills. In that way they should have less interference of the mother tongue during the English class.

3. Do you consider that your previous English knowledge helps you to speak English instead of Spanish, since the beginning of the major?

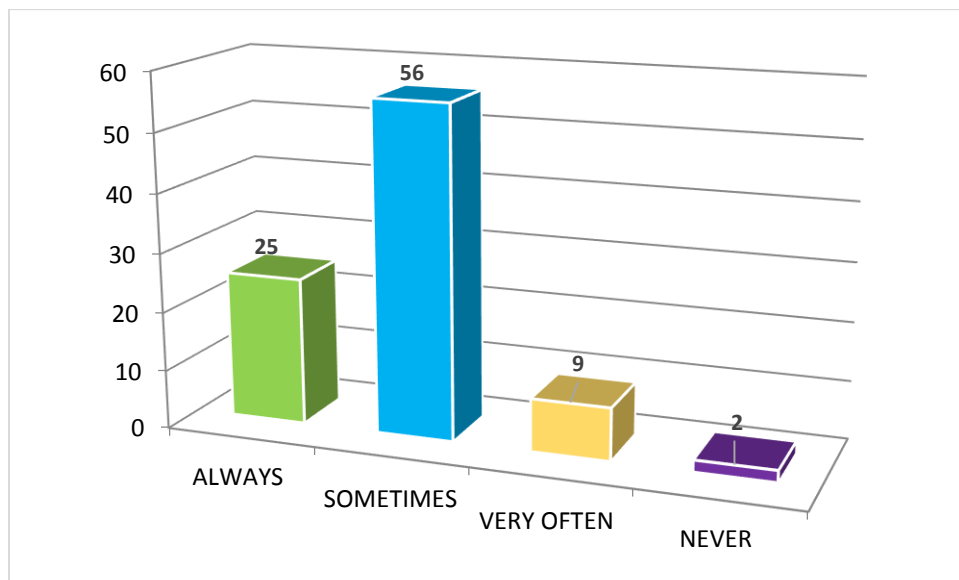
- a) Totally agree
- b) Agree
- c) Disagree
- d) Totally disagree



Students agreed that English background is very helpful since the beginning of the major so that the native tongue may not have a great impact on their learning process of the foreign language, specifically at the moment to speak.

4. Do you think your English background forces your classmates to speak English when doing pair work?

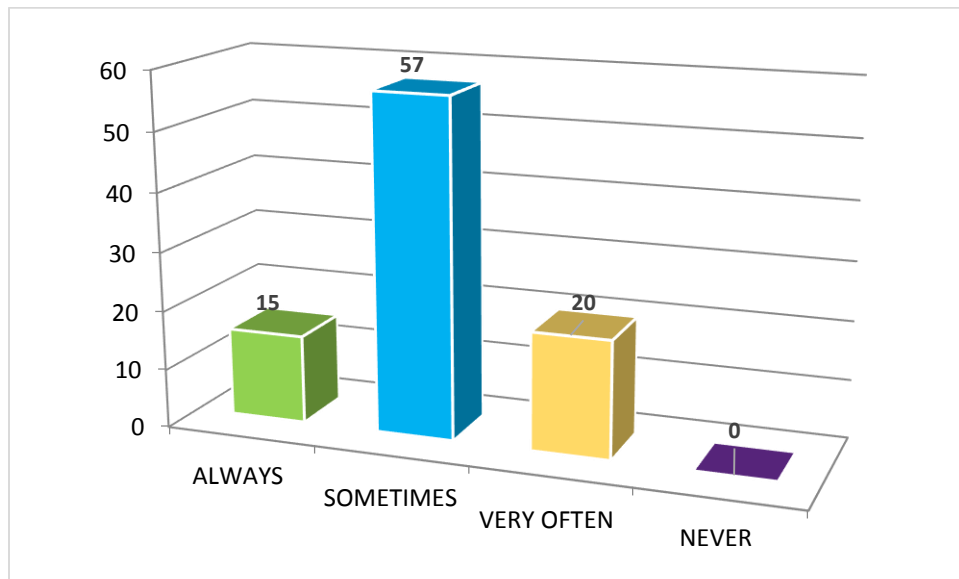
- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never



56 of the students agreed that those who have an English background knowledge can be a great influence of their classmates to speak just in the foreign language. This shows that those students can encourage their friends to improve their English skills when doing any kind of practice activity in the classroom at the moment to do teamwork.

5. Despite background, does your native language interfere when speaking English in the classroom?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very Often
- d) Never

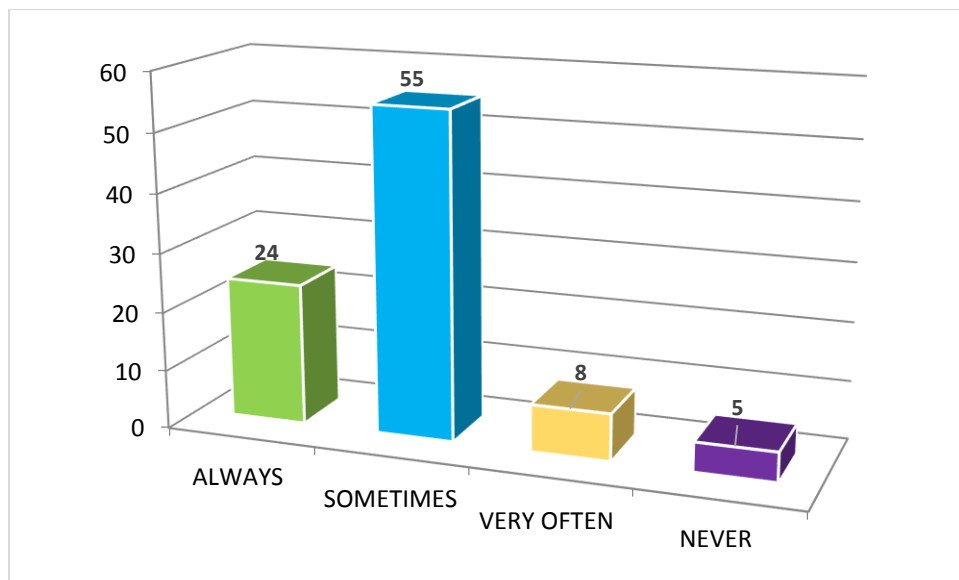


The highest results in this question shows even students who have a great English background and those who do not have one, confirm that the mother tongue has an outstanding influence in their oral skills, so it makes more difficult to students to improve their speaking in the foreign language.

B. CONFIDENCE

6. How often do you feel confident enough to speak English in front of the class?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never

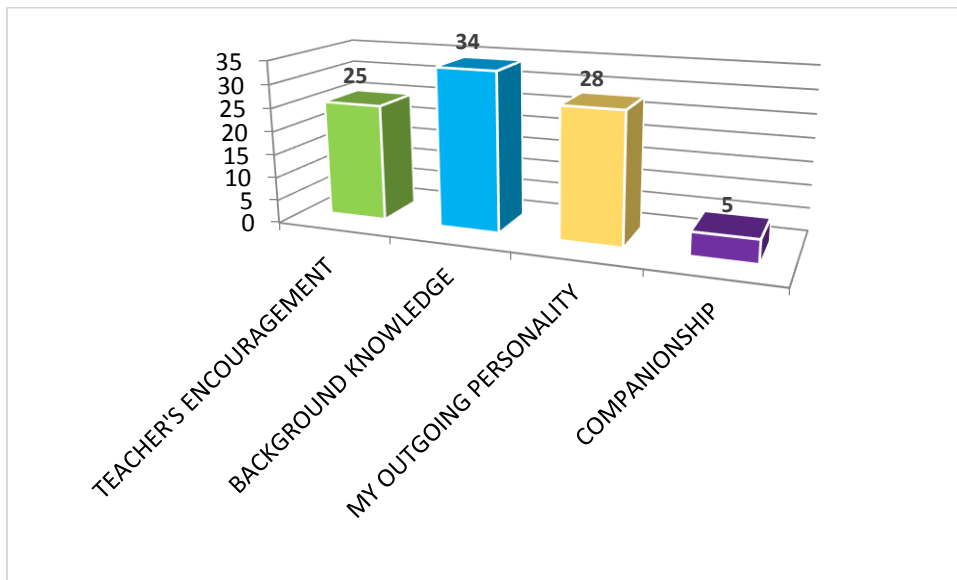


As much as confident a student can be at the moment to speak English, the improvement on the foreign language will be higher than those who do not want to talk, this is according to the following quotation: *“Many people do not progress if they do not open their mouths. If they are not willing to put their identities at risk, progress will be slower”* **Michael Geisler**²³.

²³ Michael Geisler, Vice president for language schools at Middlebury College.

7. What are the main reasons that make you feel confident to participate in class?

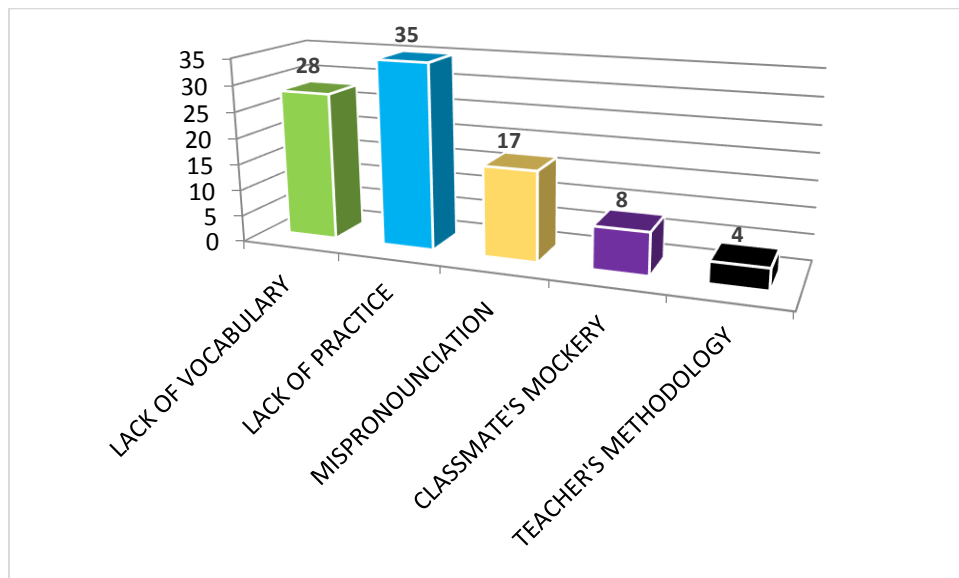
- a) Teacher's encouragement
- b) Background knowledge
- c) My outgoing personality
- d) Companionship



Background knowledge, teacher's encouragement and outgoing personality are three of the main factors that make students improve their oral production by participating during the English class. This must be taken in consideration in order to help students to progress in the process of learning of the foreign language.

8. What do you think are the most common factors that make students feel shy when speaking English?

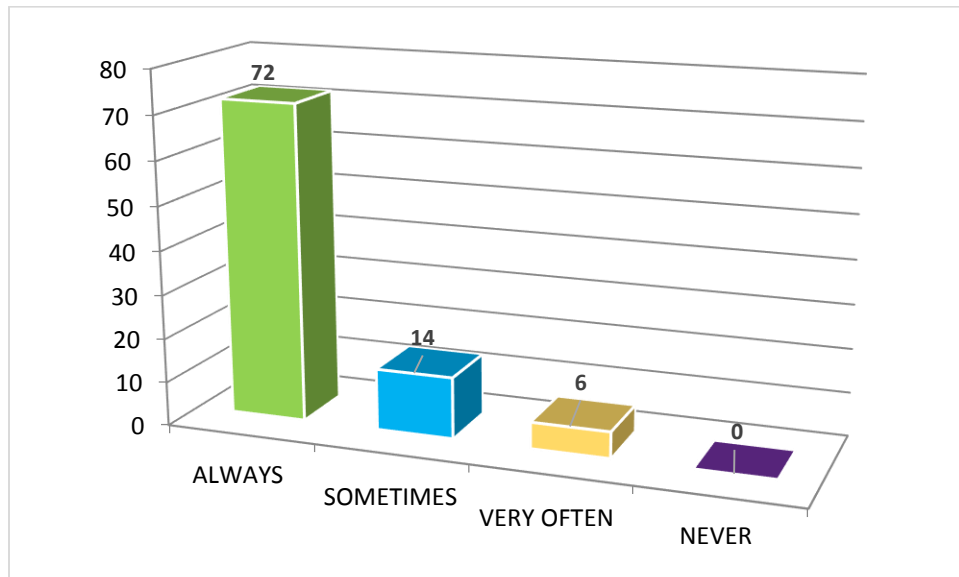
- a) Lack of vocabulary
- b) Lack of practice
- c) Mispronunciation
- d) Classmate's mockery
- e) Teacher's methodology



35 of the students agreed that their lack of practice is affecting their confidence at the moment to participate during the English class. As a consequence on that student prefer to use Spanish since they feel shy to make mistakes in the foreign language.

9. Do you feel motivated to continue participating in class, when teacher recognizes your good job?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very Often
- d) Never

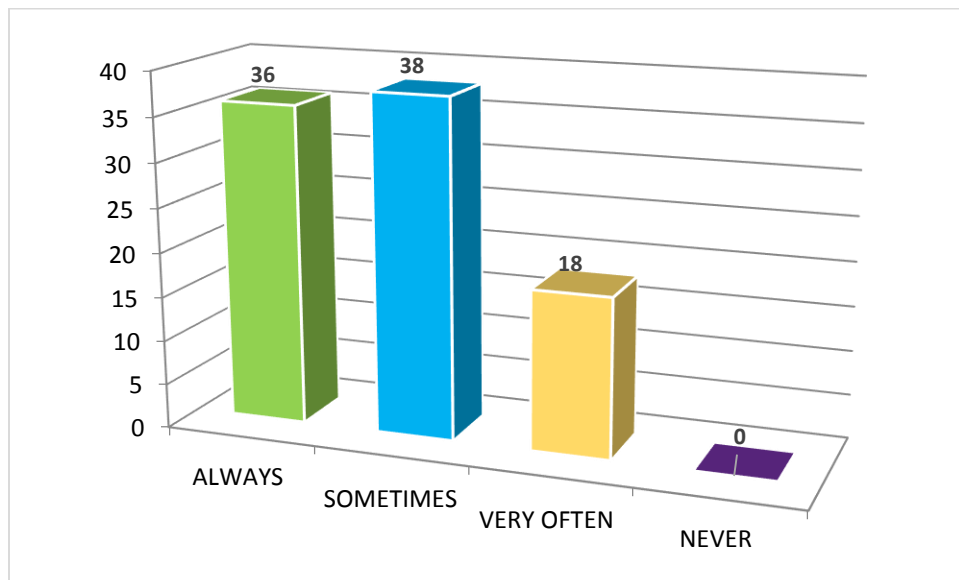


Everybody loves to be recognized by the effort made and it is not the exception in the English classrooms. When teachers encourage their students by saying “*Good job, well done or you got ten*” these are phrases that motivate students to continue improving in the foreign language. So that the majority of students (72) are agreed with this statement.

C. LACK OF VOCABULARY

10. How often do you think that the lack of English vocabulary is the main reason why students speak Spanish in class?

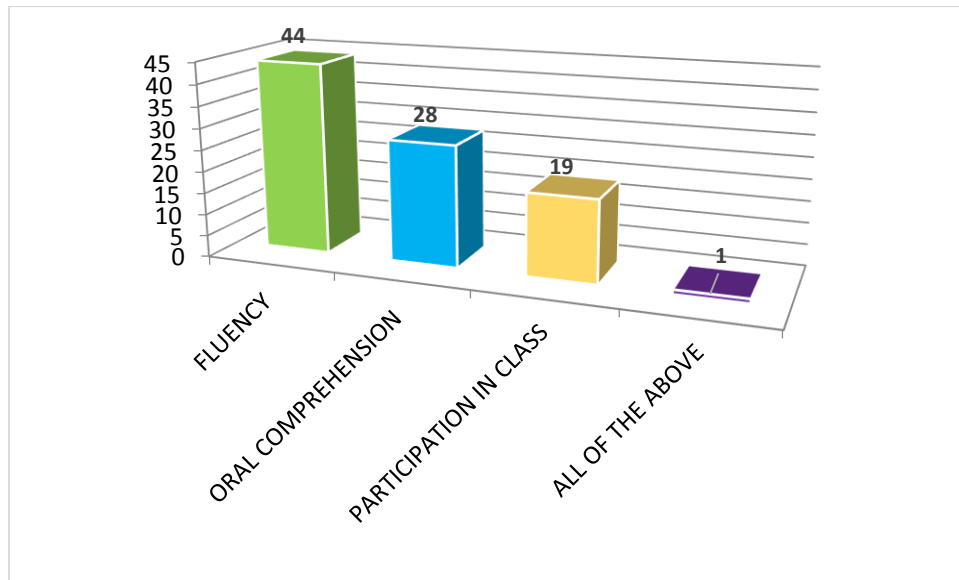
- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very Often
- d) Never



The majority of students (38 and 36), agreed that the lack of vocabulary is the main reason why they do not speak English. Therefore students use their native language at the English class for asking questions, doing inside classrooms activities, working on the text book, etc.

11. Which of the following aspects are affected because of your lack of vocabulary in English?

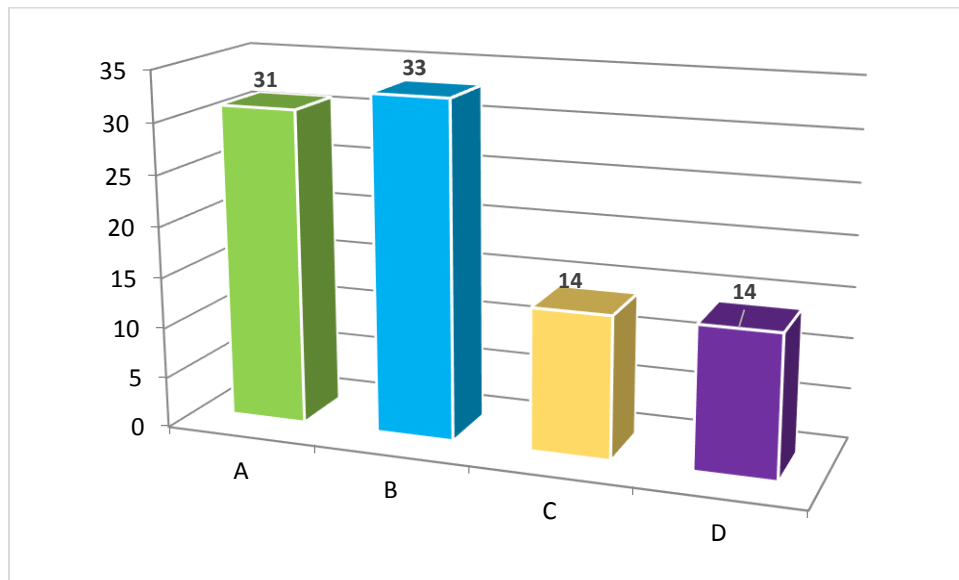
- a) Fluency
- b) Oral comprehension
- c) Participation in class
- d) All of the above



Fluency (44) and oral comprehension (28) are the most affected aspects because of the lack of English vocabulary. Even though students try to speak, they do not do it fluently since they do not have many things to say because they do not know how to say it and it is at that time when they prefer to use their mother tongue instead.

12. Do you think that students who have a lot of English vocabulary do not use Spanish in any way?

- a) Yes, I do.
- b) No, I do not. They sometimes need Spanish to understand better.
- c) No, because they still think in Spanish instead of English
- d) No, because Spanish will always influence our English learning.

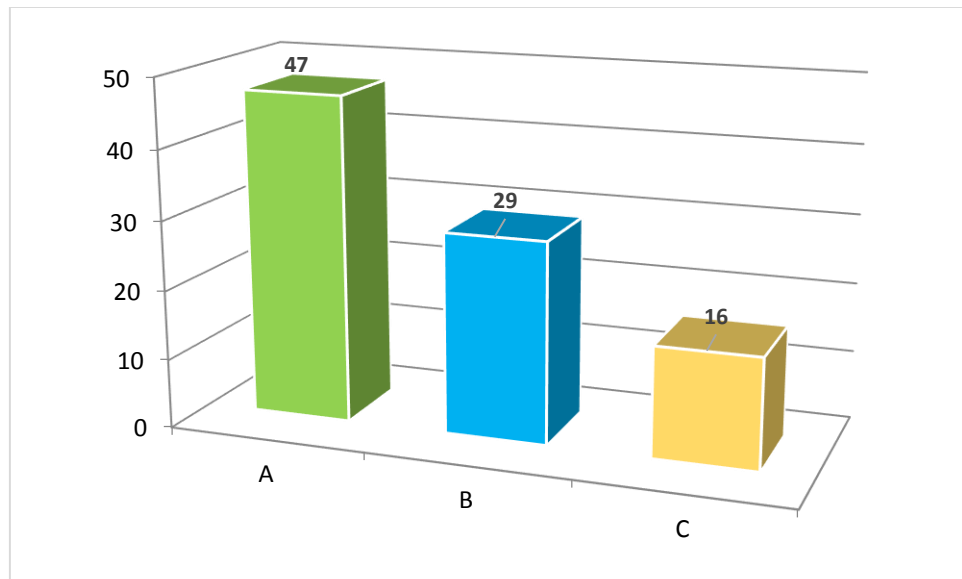


The student's point of view shows that despite the plenty of vocabulary they know, they will always need to use Spanish during the English class. There are some experts like Charlene Polio and Patricia Duff (1994)²⁴ that support the idea to use the native language in situations such as: Explain grammar, vocabulary, building rapport between students and teachers.

²⁴ Polio, C., & Duff, P. (1994). *Teachers' Language Use in University Foreign Language Classrooms: A Qualitative Analysis of English and Target Language Alternation*. *The Modern Language Journal*, pp.78, 313-326.

13. Which of the following situations do you feel more familiar within class?

- a) I switch from English to Spanish every time I participate in class
- b) I hesitate because I translate every word in my mind when I do not know the meaning in English.
- c) I use more Spanish than English in class because I do not have enough vocabulary

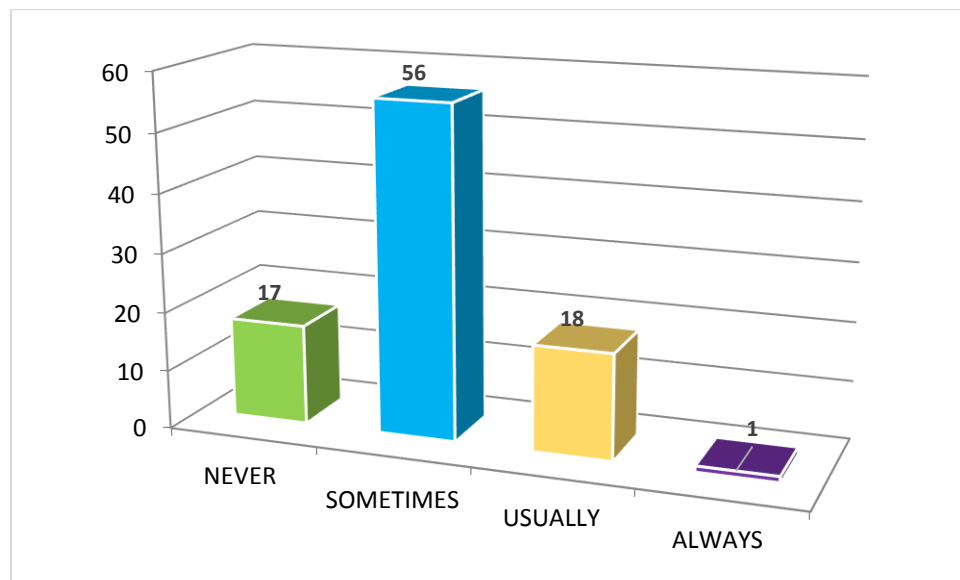


With 47 of the students, it can be defined that they used both languages, English and Spanish during the class. It seems not to be a bad thing at all however when students tend to use more Spanish than English is the moment to recognize, that action will have a negative impact in the learning process of the foreign language. Harmer²⁵ (1991) says: *“When the students are asked to have a discussion about a topic that they are incapable of, if they want to say anything about the topic, they will use their own language.*

²⁵ Harmer. (1991). *Factors affecting students' speaking performance*. Retrieve from <http://www.multidisciplinaryjournals.com/FACTORS-AFFECTING-STUDENTS-SPEAKING.pdf/>, pp. 10.

14. How often does your lack of vocabulary affect your English speaking skill?

- a) Never. (I pronounce correctly the words I know).
- b) Sometimes. (I think in Spanish before speaking).
- c) Usually. (I usually mix Spanish and English when I speak).
- d) Always. (I speak too much Spanish and I hesitate whenever I speak English)



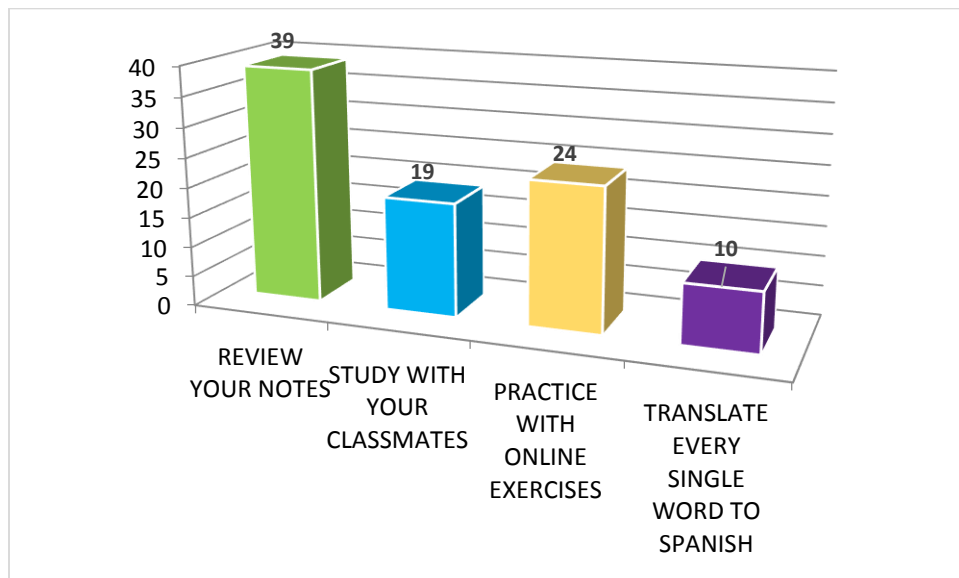
It has been confirmed by students (56) that the lack of vocabulary is sometimes affecting their oral production during the English class. Nunan²⁶ (1999) remarks that linguistic competence, a good range of vocabulary and syntax are important for students to communicate their ideas in the foreign language however this is not enough. According to him *“The speaker needs communicative competence which includes not only linguistic competence but also a range of other sociolinguistic and conversational skills which help him/ her know how to say what to whom and when”*

²⁶ Nunan. (1999), Factors affecting students' speaking performance. Retrieve from <http://www.multidisciplinaryjournals.com/FACTORS-AFFECTING-STUDENTS-SPEAKING.pdf/>,pp. 8 – 9

D. STUDY HABITS

15. What is the most common habit you have to study English?

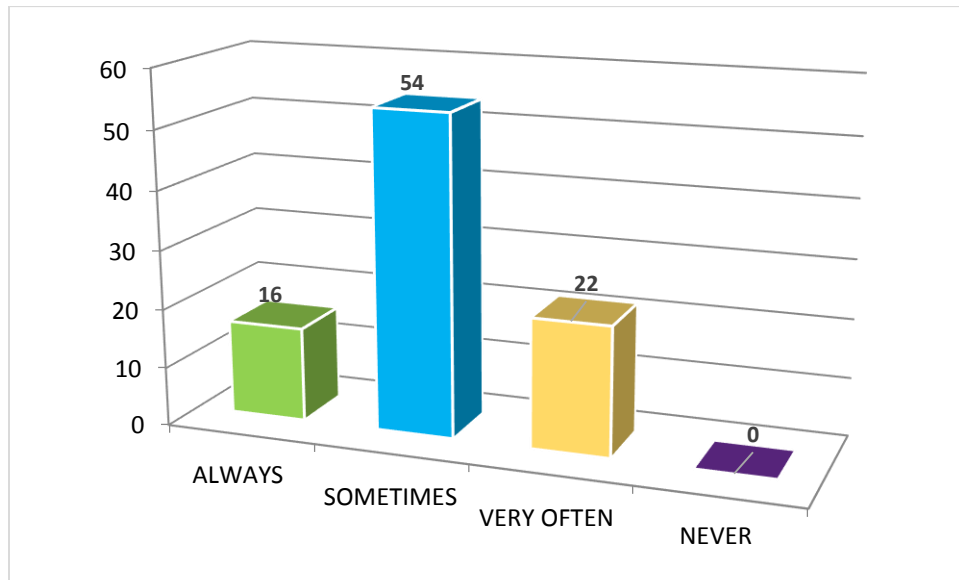
- a) Review your notes.
- b) Study with your classmates.
- c) Practice with online exercises
- d) Translate every single word to Spanish.



The graph above reveals that the most common habit students have to study English is review their notes (39), following by practice with online exercises (24), and study with their classmates (19). But, there is a percentage of them that still have the practice to translate every single word to Spanish.

16. How often do you study English?

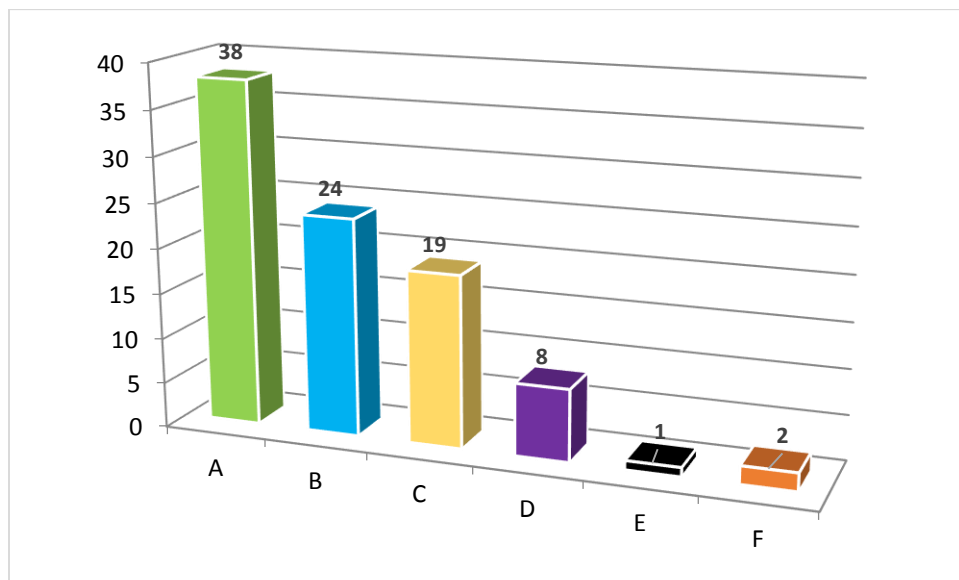
- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never



The majority of students (54) answered that they sometimes study English. Also 16 of students affirmed that they always study English. The rest of the students recognized that they study very often.

17. What do you think is the best way to get a good English oral proficiency?

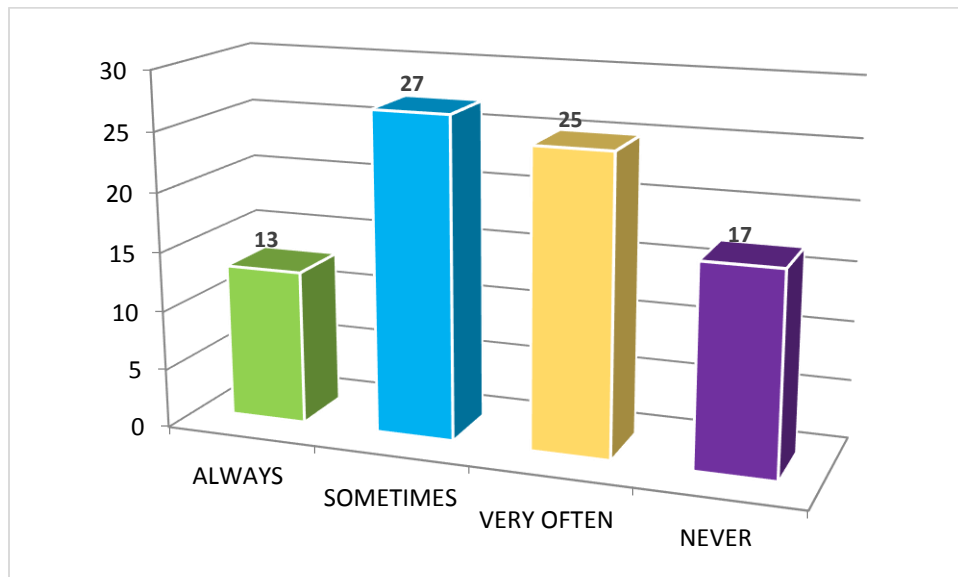
- a) By practicing with a native speaker.
- b) By listening to English music, news, audios so you can get the English accent.
- c) By practicing with your classmates in social groups such as conversation clubs
- d) By participating in class discussions or debates.
- e) By using blogs or websites on Internet.
- f) By practicing in front of the mirror



When the students were asked to choose the best way to get a good English oral proficiency, 38 of them agreed that the best option is by practicing with a native speaker. 24 of students chose listening to English music, news, audios so they can get the English accent. 19 of them said that practicing with their classmates in social groups such as conversation clubs is the best way to get a good English speaking skill. 8 of them thought the best idea is participating in class discussions or debates. 2 persons considered that practicing in front of the mirror. And only 1 of them answered by using blogs or websites on Internet.

18. Do you consider that using Spanish in an English course helps you to understand your class much better?

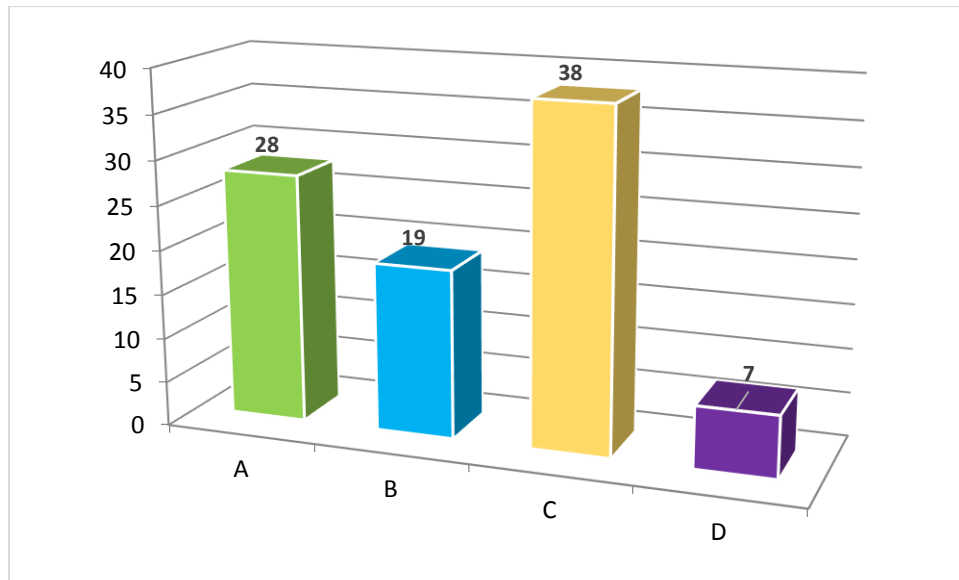
- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never



27 of the students considered that sometimes using Spanish in an English course helps them to understand their class much better. 25 people agreed that very often use Spanish helps them to understand the class. 17 of the students thought that using Spanish in the English course never helps them to understand much better. And 13 of them said that using the native language always helps them to understand the English class better.

19. When do you speak Spanish in the classroom?

- a) When I do teamwork
- b) When the teacher is busy doing something else
- c) When I do not understand something.
- d) Every time I feel like it

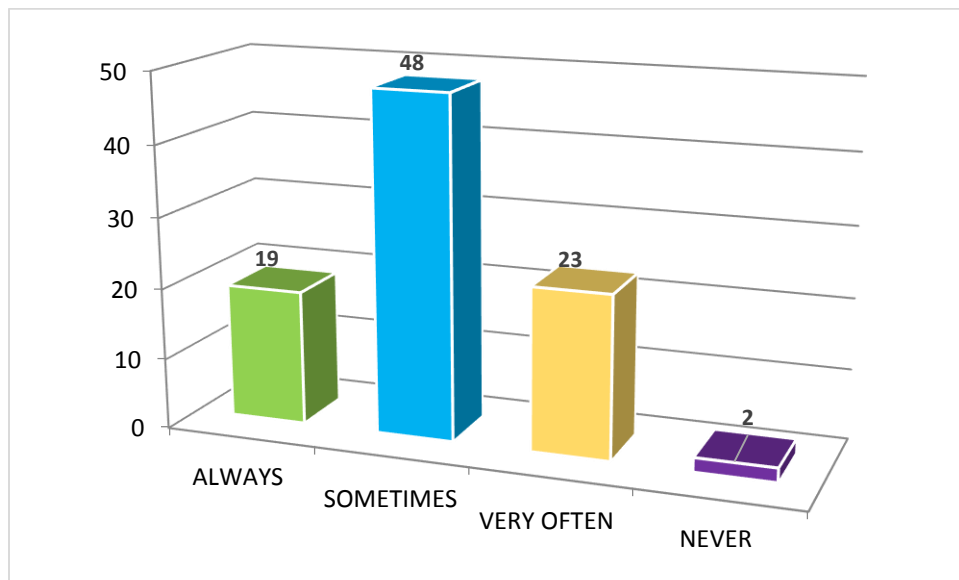


Most of the students (38) replied that they speak Spanish in the classroom when they do not understand something. 28 of them agreed that when they do teamwork. 19 of the learners answered that when teacher is busy doing something else they speak Spanish. The others 7 of them every time they feel like it. Learners that share the same native language have a tendency to use it in the classroom so is easier for them to speak any topic because they have a large vocabulary.

E. LACK OF PRACTICE

20. How often do you practice English outside to the EFL classroom?

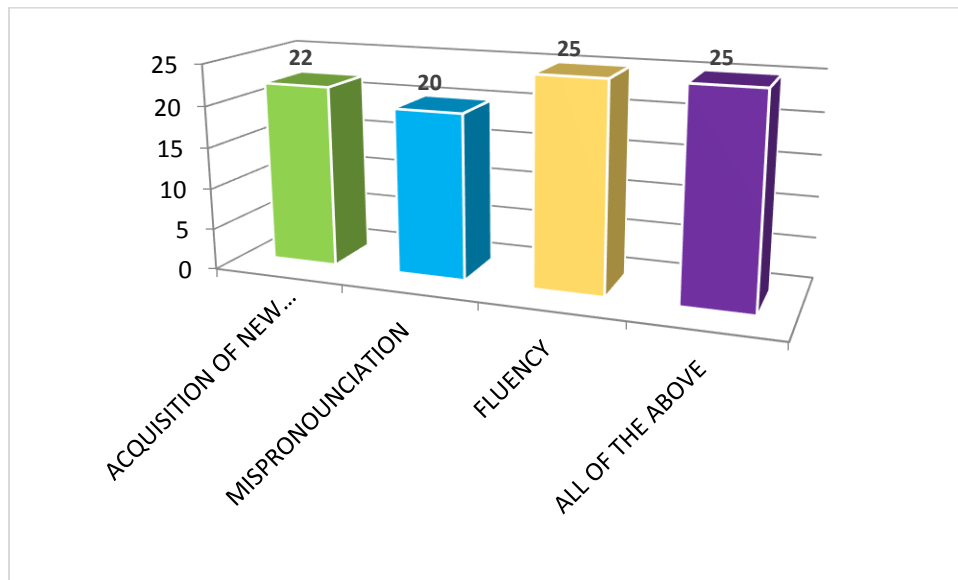
- a. Always
- b. Sometimes
- c. Very often
- d. Never



The majority of the students (48) sometimes practice English outside to the EFL classroom. 23 of them very often practice English outside the classroom. 19 of the learners agreed that they always practice. And only 2 of them affirmed that they never practice outside to the EFL classroom.

21. Which of the following areas are the most affected because of the lack of practice of the foreign language?

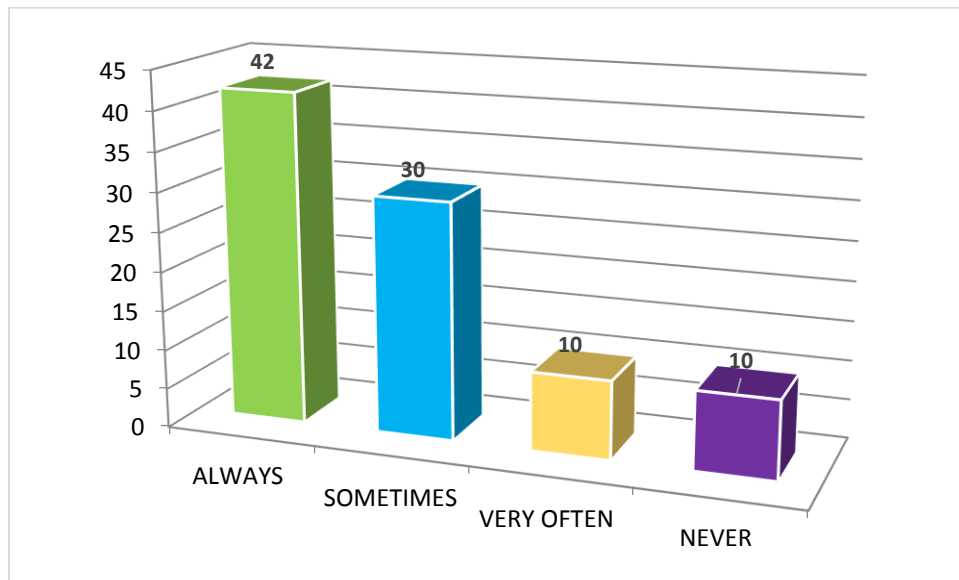
- a) Acquisition of new vocabulary
- b) Mispronunciation
- c) Fluency
- d) All of the above



These results show that 25 of the students believe that the sub skill of fluency is the most affected when they do not practice English as much as they should. 25 people think that their acquisition of new words/phrases is the most influenced. And 22 students said that the linguistic phenomenon of mispronunciation is the least affected by the lack of practice. The surprising outcome is that 25 of the students consider that the three areas mentioned above are equally affected by the insufficient English practice. When students decide to use Spanish instead of English, they are missing out on a great opportunity to practice English as it is the only way to improve their oral skills.

22. When you participate in the class, is it more in English rather than Spanish?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very Often
- d) Never



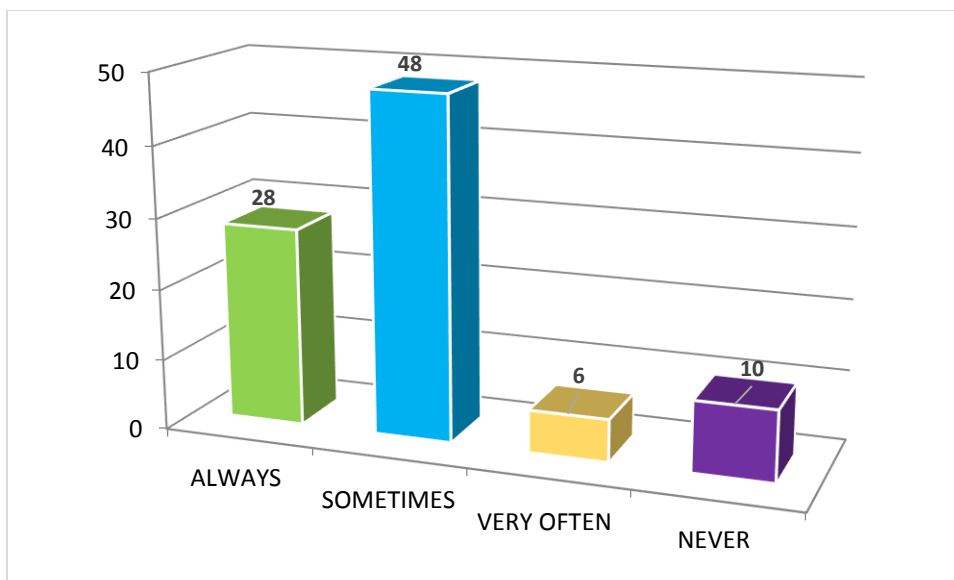
The statistics revealed that 42 students of the sample expressed that they always speak more English than Spanish during the class. 32 of them said that they sometimes use the foreign language more than the native one and 10 said that they do it very often. Finally, an identical amount (10) answered that they never speak English more than Spanish. These results evidences than half of the students are not taking fully advantage of their classes by speaking only English, as it is generally the only place where they can practice with other people in a Spanish speaking country like ours.

PART III. ENGLISH ORAL PRODUCTION

A) TEACHER'S METHODOLOGY

23. Do you think your teacher's methodology has a great influence in the fact that you prefer to speak Spanish rather than English?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never



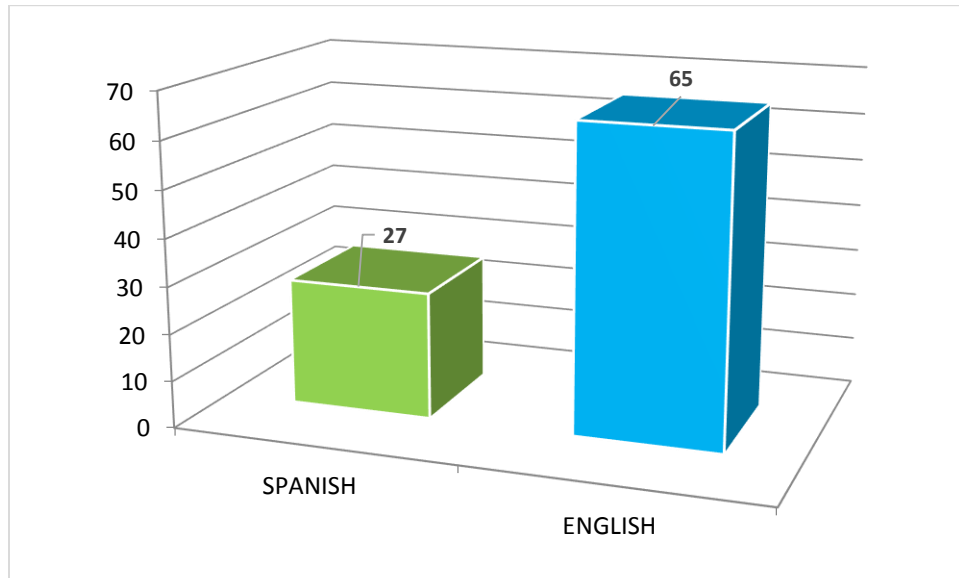
The majority of the students (48) said that their teacher's methodology sometimes has a direct relation with the fact that they prefer to speak Spanish in the classroom. 28 of them said that there is always a connection between the methodology and the Spanish talking. 10 students expressed there is never a relationship and 6 of them said this happens very often. So, most of the students think that they use Spanish during the class because they are allowed to do it. When that happens, they lose valuable time to practice English. Tang (2002)²⁷ stated that a foreign language is best learned through massive exposure to it and a very limited time using the native language.

²⁷ Tang, Jinlan. (2002). *Using the L1 in the English Classroom*. English teaching forum, pp.36-43.

24. Does your teacher's methodology motivate you to speak Spanish or English?

a) Spanish

b) English

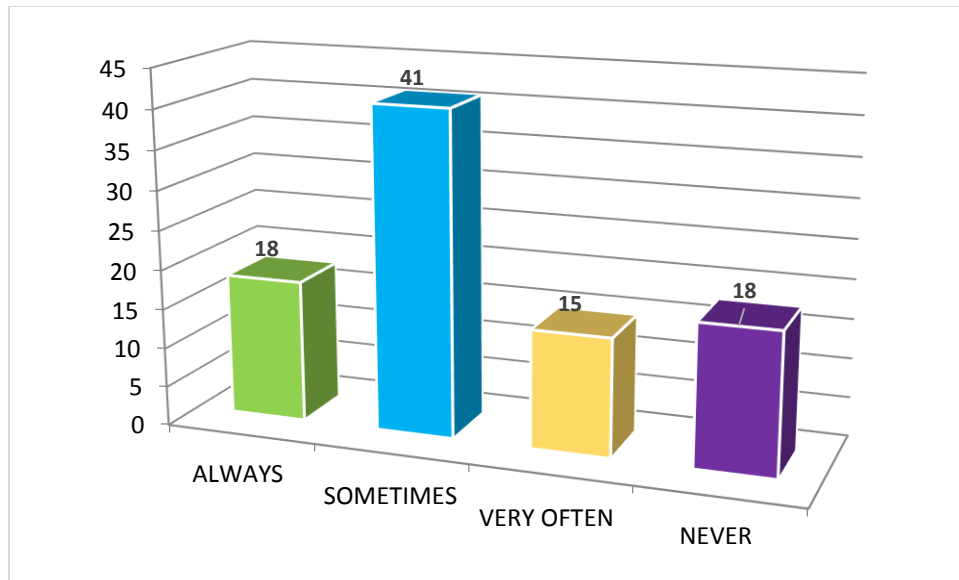


The students were asked if the methodology motivates them to use the foreign or the native language. 65 of the students said that it persuades them to speak English and the rest (27) to speak Spanish during class time. This last result is surprising as the main goal is to enhance English skills as it is the language being learnt. It may be because some teachers use Spanish in order to connect with their students and make them feel comfortable; that causes learners to feel like they can speak Spanish too. An ideal English class should have little or no native language talking according to the linguist Stephen Krashen (1979)²⁸

²⁸ Krashen, S. (1979), *Theory of Second Language Acquisition*. California.

25. Does the teacher monitor whether students speak English or Spanish?

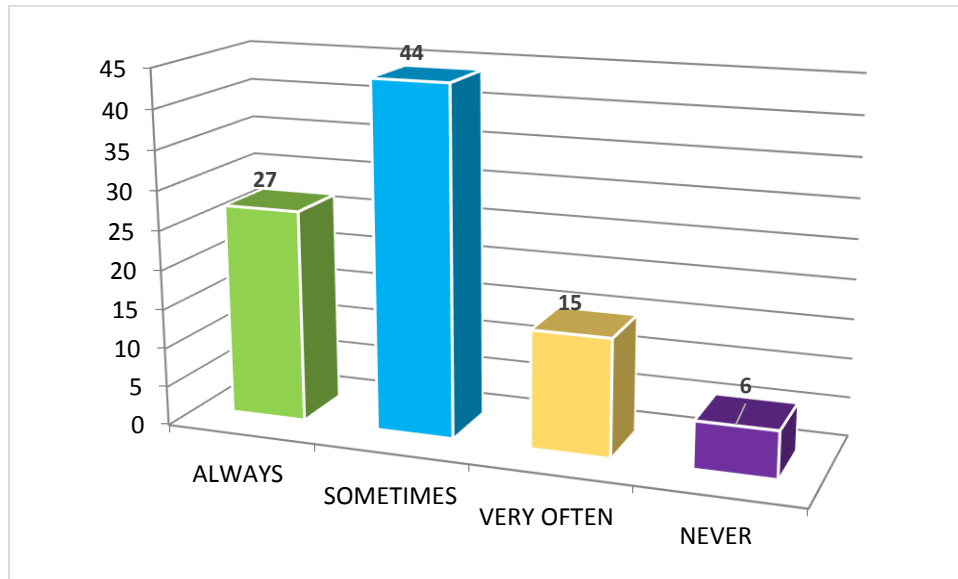
- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never



The results showed that 41 of the students said that their teacher sometimes monitor if they speak English or Spanish during the class. 18 people answered that their professor always supervises whether they use their native language or not. An identical quantity (18) responded that this monitoring process never occurs. 15 of them said it happens very often. This reveals that teachers do not monitor students at all times maybe due to the large classes they have to teach. As the groups of Readings and Comprehension range from 20 to 40 students each. Students need to consciously use English without the constant supervision of their teacher.

26. Does your teacher encourage you to speak English during and after the class?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never

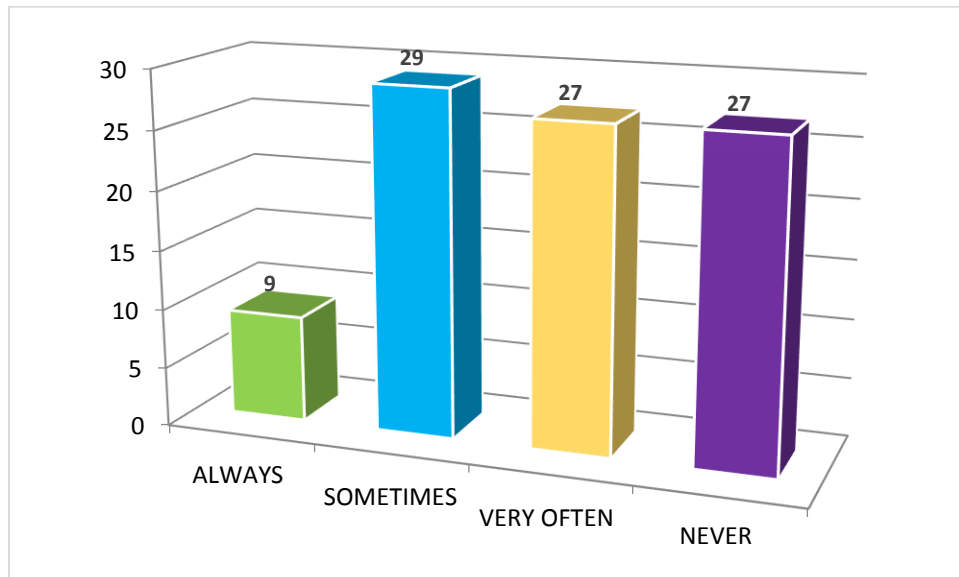


Students were asked if their teacher encourages them to speak English during and after class. 44 of them said they sometimes do. 27 people replied that it always happens. 15 students expressed their teacher very often motivates them and only 6 said this encouragement never takes place. In general terms, it can be observed that the majority of teachers tell their students to use English as much as they can even if they are not in class. This is essential because students see the importance of practicing English whenever and wherever they can. Gardner and Lambert (1972)²⁹ emphasize that student's aptitude towards the foreign language is significant but motivational factors which reinforce their attitude can override the aptitude issue.

²⁹ Gardner, R., Lambert, W. (1972), *Attitudes and Motivation in Second-Language Learning*. Newbury House Publishers.

27. How often does you teacher introduce the class with a warm up activity that encourages your English participation?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never

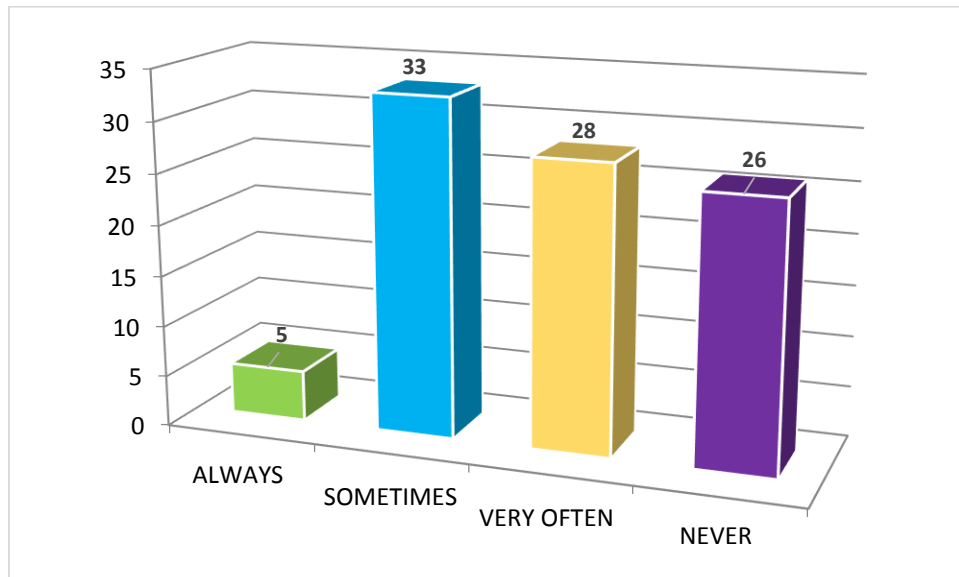


The two lowest ranges have been chosen by students related to the teachers' methodology so that it is remarkable how teachers' activities may cause a positive impact on students for them to participate during the English Class. Nation and Newton³⁰ (2009) mentioned: "*Performance conditions can affect speaking oral production*". They suggest four types of performance conditions: Time pressure, planning, the standard of performance and the amount of support.

³⁰ Nation and Newton. (2009). Factors affecting students' speaking performance. Retrieve from <http://www.multidisciplinaryjournals.com/FACTORS-AFFECTING-STUDENTS'-SPEAKING.pdf/>, pp 9

28. Does the teacher use pictures, flash cards, etc. to help you to understand and acquire new English vocabulary?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never

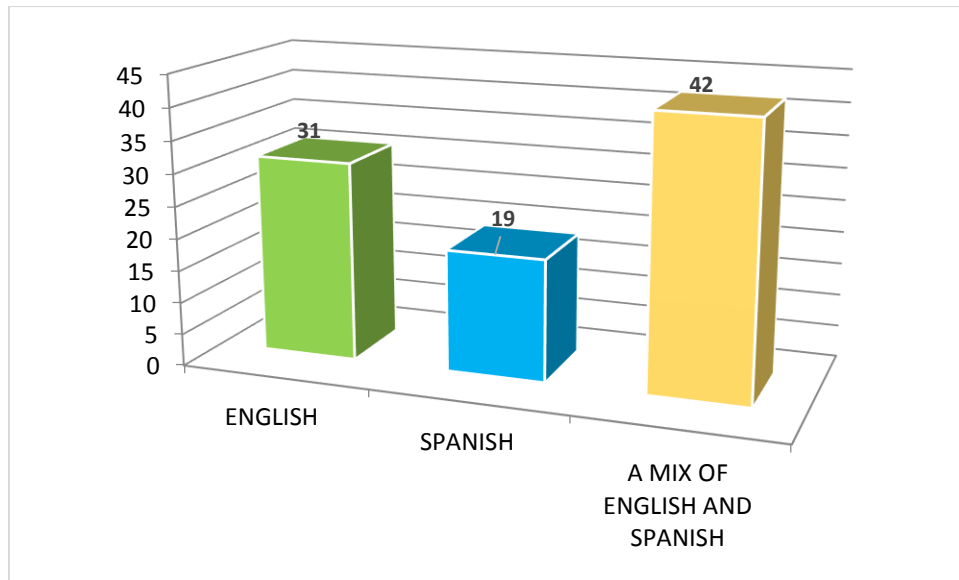


It is important to emphasize how students are positively influenced by teachers' methodology during the learning process of a foreign language. In this case most of the students agreed that visual aids are not an option for teachers to develop the English class. Juliana Stancampiano³¹ noticed the importance of visual aids as a part of the learning process of a foreign language: *"The visual aids helps the learners "see" what they are learning*

³¹ Stancampiano, J.(2013). *The Benefits of visual facilitation in the classroom*. Retrieve from <https://www.trainingindustry.com/content-development/articles/the-benefits-of-visual-facilitation-in-the-classroom>.

29. When the teacher explains something and you do not understand, does he/she do it in English or Spanish?

- a) English. The teacher uses English all the time
- b) Spanish. The teacher speaks his/her native language
- c) A mix of English and Spanish

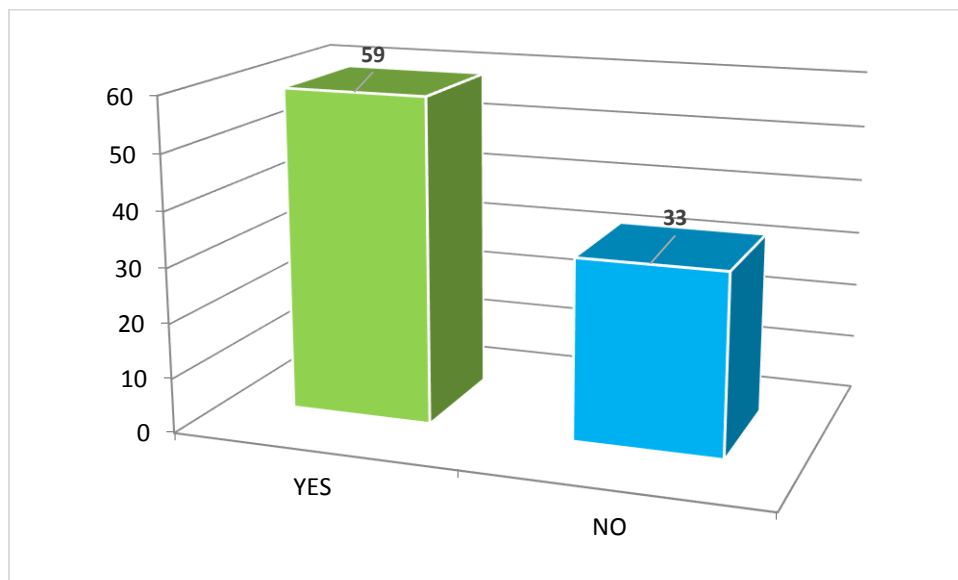


As part of the bilingual method, students agreed that their teachers tend to explain ideas that have not been understood during the course, with both languages (English and Spanish). Even though this method suggest the use of both languages in order to enhance the foreign language's learning process, it does not mean that students should speak Spanish all the time since native language is just seen as a tool to clarify ideas in certain times during the class.

A) PERFORMANCE AND CLASSMATES' MOCKERY

30. Is your English oral proficiency affected when your classmates make fun about the way you speak?

- a) Yes
- b) No

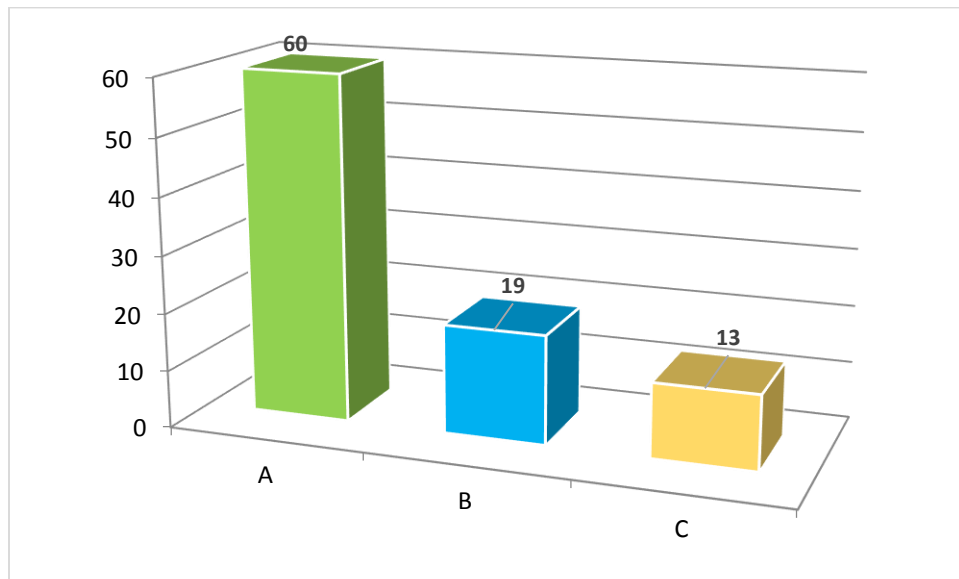


59 of the students from Readings and conversation I courses are affected by other classmates who might be known so much more than those who do not speak English fluently or in a correct way. A study revealed that effectiveness has an important influence on language learning success or failure. Krashen³² (1982) states: “*Effectiveness influences students at the moment to learn a second language in three different areas: motivation, self – confidence and anxiety*”.

³² Krashen, S. (1982). *Factors affecting students' speaking performance*. Retrieve from <http://www.multidisciplinaryJournals.com/FACTORS-AFFECTING-STUDENTS'-SPEAKING.pdf/>, pp 9

31. What does your teacher do when your classmates make fun of the way you speak?

- a) The Teacher tells them to be more respectful.
- b) The Teacher also makes fun of the way I speak.
- c) The Teacher does not do anything about it.

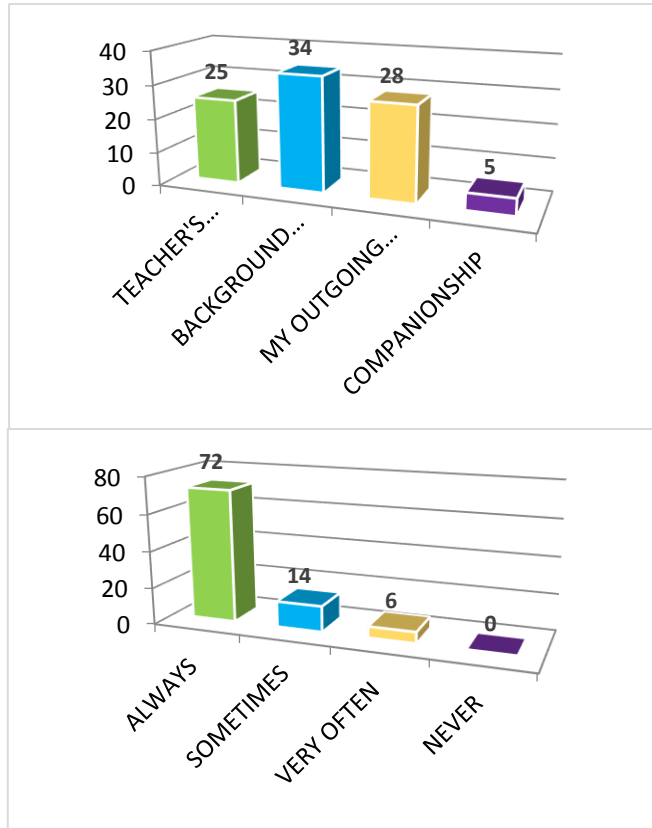


60 of the students refer a good teacher’s classroom management during the development of the Readings and Conversations classes. Man studies have shown that teacher’s management has a great influence on students’ learning process. In addition, experts as Robert J. Marzano, Jana S. Marzano and Debra J. Pickering³³ agreed: “*Well – managed classrooms provide an environment in which teaching and learning can flourish*”.

³³ Marzano, R., Marzano, J., and Pickering, D. (2003). *The Critical role of classroom management*. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for supervision and curriculum development. Chapter 1.

➤ **Bivariate analysis**

32. Do you think that the teacher's acknowledgment make you feel confident to continue participating in class?



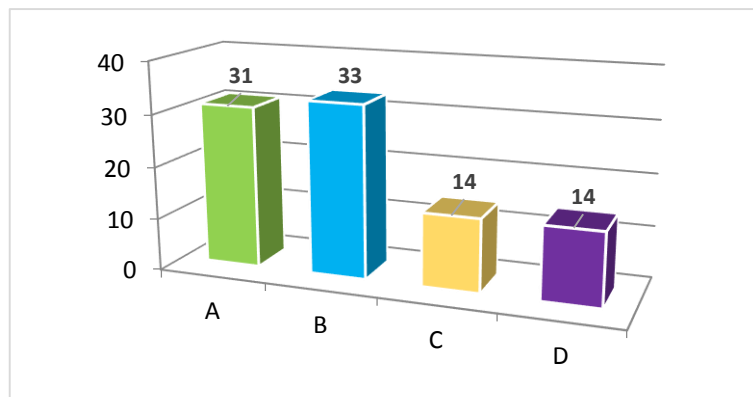
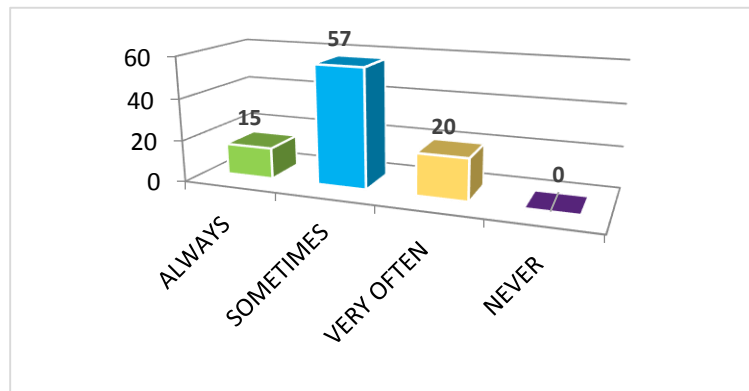
Teachers play an important role at the moment to learn a foreign language, not only with their presence but also their knowledge, support, patience, methodology, and some other teaching characters that may motivate students to enhance their skills on the foreign language they are learning.

The results shows how students feel when they are support and motivated by their teachers, in order to participate in the classroom and how it will be helpful to improve their oral skills. According to some experts (Cindy Harrison and Joellen Killion)³⁴ described how teachers become a classroom supporter providing new ideas to students, a leader serving on a committee

³⁴ Harrison, C., and Killion, J. (2007). *Ten Roles for Teachers Leaders*. Volume 65.

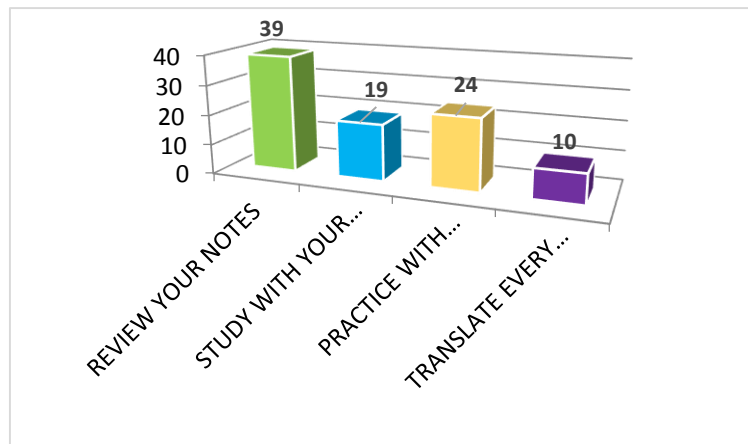
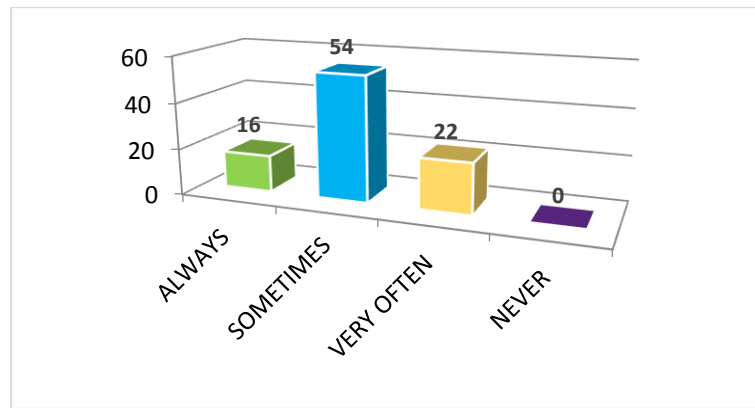
and also a mentor who takes a great deal of time and expertise and makes a significant contribution to the development of a new professional.

33. Despite background and wide range of vocabulary some students have, does the native language interferes on their oral performance?



57 of the students conclude that even though they have an English background knowledge, they sometimes may use their native tongue. This represents almost the half of the time during the English class. What has been observed is that some classes become ‘Spanish speaking’ at the second part of the class, and there are many reasons around this idea, for example some experts agree that students use Spanish with certain topics as: Emotional topics, English grammar, joking with their friends and some other activities that take place in the classroom. In addition, the bilingual approach supports the idea that is impossible do not use the native language but it is important to do it measurably and not continuously.

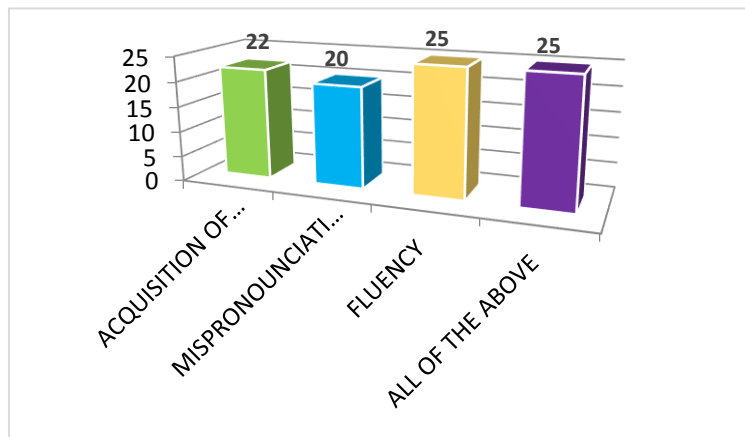
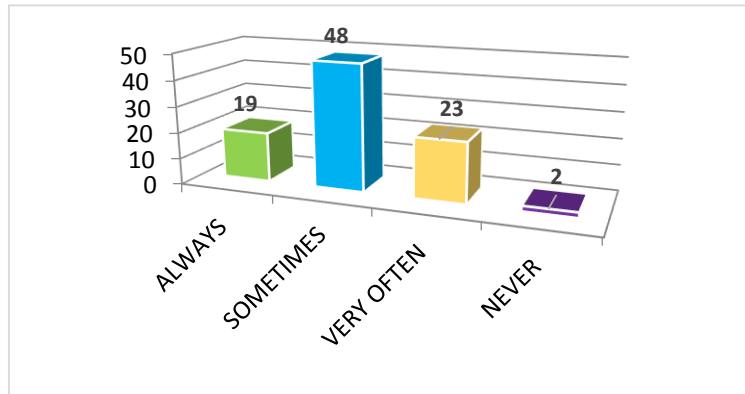
34. How often do you study English and what are the most common techniques students use to do it?



Part of the improvement students have in the foreign language, depends and how much time they spend studying. According with this results students sometimes decided to study and it seems that the most common technique they have is reviewing their notes. Some expert's opinions³⁵ say that taking notes is a great way to remember important things learnt during the class. So, notes are more effective when they write them down on their own words, if they compare these notes with some other classmates and if they organize and review them.

³⁵ How to study.com.(2013).*Take effective notes*. Retrieve from <http://www.howtostudy.com/take-effective-notes/>

35. Do you think that the lack of practice of the foreign language may have a negative impact on your English oral skills?



Definitely, students agree that they do not practice enough to improve their English skills, specifically their oral production. What results show are that all the oral skills are affective, consequence of the lack of practice

IX. FINDINGS

A. Hypotheses' test

Hypothesis #1

Lack of vocabulary, teacher's methodology and students' shyness are the main reasons why they speak Spanish instead of English in the classroom.

After carrying out the research and analyzing the results of the instruments administrated, the researchers concluded to prove this hypothesis right.

Firstly, regarding lack of vocabulary, students' choices in the questionnaire administered showed that the majority of them believe that it is probably the biggest reason why they use Spanish in the classroom because in order to be fluent in the foreign language, it is necessary to have enough lexical knowledge to produce logical and meaningful speech. Although the problem is that students do not practice the way they should inside and outside the classroom; therefore, they do not acquire as much vocabulary as they need. That causes less participation in class as well and more use of their mother tongue in order to understand better what the teacher and other classmates say.

Secondly, in relation to the teacher's methodology, around 63 of the students believe that their teacher has a great influence on the fact that some of them prefer to speak Spanish rather than English in the classroom. This may be because according to the observation, certain teachers used Spanish themselves and that gave students the confidence to use it too. This situation was also observed in the classroom. When the professor did not monitor, students usually used Spanish between them to talk about things not only about the lesson but also about their lives.

Besides that, 18 students said that their teacher never monitors whether they speak Spanish or English and 41 of them answered he/she sometimes does it.

At last, students' shyness is also a factor for students to speak Spanish, although probably in an inferior level than the other two aspects. Some students claimed that they do not always feel confident to participate in class. That might be because they do not have enough vocabulary. Consequently, they prefer not to talk because they feel they will not know what to say. In a different scenario, they tend to use Spanish because they lack confidence to use English. As the Krashen's Filter Hypothesis³⁶ suggest: learners use their native language to lower their levels of anxiety.

Hypothesis #2

The more frequent use of Spanish in an EFL classroom, the less practice of English as a foreign language.

After the analysis and interpretation of the data collected during the course of this project, the researchers decided to prove the previous hypothesis right. 62 of the students answered that they believe using Spanish helps them to understand the class better. That is why some of them frequently use their native language to clarify vocabulary and relate Spanish to English structures. In addition, thanks to the observation of real classes, the authors of this paper could notice how the constant use of the native tongue affects the way students produce speech in the foreign language. The researchers observed four different groups of Readings and Conversation I; however, only one of them implemented the Monolingual approach³⁷ using only English as means of communication between the teacher and the students. The other three sometimes used Spanish

³⁶ Krashen, S. (1982) *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. New York: Pergamon Press.

³⁷ Method which only allows the use of the target language and no use of the native language.

in order to clarify vocabulary, emphasize understanding, give personal examples and clarify doubts. So, we could compare students speaking skill in each group. Learners who belonged to the classroom of English-only policy were more fluent when giving their opinion and completing oral tasks like presenting a book summary. There was also a larger number of students who were willing to participate in class and practice their English. In contrast, one group in which students and even the teacher often used Spanish; learners were less fluent when speaking English. They tended to hesitate more and resort to Spanish whenever they encountered obstacle to produce in the foreign language.

Hypothesis #3

Using Spanish affects negatively students' English fluency and pronunciation.

Thanks to the instruments administered and the posterior analysis of the data, the investigators could prove this hypothesis right. In general terms, the majority of students believe that their native language usually interferes when speaking English in the classroom. 48 of the students said that the most affected factor by their lack of vocabulary is fluency. This could be observed as when students did not know how to say something in English they used Spanish which negatively affects their fluency because they hesitate and 51 of them switches between languages every time they participate. Regarding the sub skill of pronunciation, through observation, the researchers could experiment how Spanish influences the way students pronounce words/phrases in English. The most frequent case is when students find it difficult to pronounce some sounds that do not exist in Spanish. For instance, the “s” at the beginning of English words. Students ended up pronouncing “espain” “estudy” “eskill”. We can also mention the sounds of past tense regular verbs “ed”, as many learners do not pronounce it correctly because there is no similar sound in Spanish.

B. Answer to the research questions

➤ What are the main factors that lead students to speak Spanish instead of English in an EFL classroom?

According to the questionnaire and the observation process, lack of vocabulary was the most frequent factor why students used Spanish as it got the highest amount (41) among three other possibilities. Schmit, (1997) claims that vocabulary is the most important element to communicate in a meaningful way. Therefore, students lacking enough vocabulary did not fully understand some of the teachers' instructions during the class sessions observed. That is why they spoke Spanish with their classmates. Fluency is also affected as the majority of students said they tend to switch from English to Spanish when they do not know how to say something. It was observed that students hesitate and try to translate words in their mind (grammar translation method).

The teachers' methodology was the second principal factor why students speak Spanish in an EFL classroom. Some students said that the methodology often influences in the fact that students prefer to use Spanish instead of English. This could be observed as there were three groups of participants in which Spanish was used (Bilingual Approach), in those cases, the teacher usually spoke Spanish to clarify meanings or to give personal examples. When this happened, students tended to use Spanish as well even to communicate with the teacher. There was a tendency where Spanish was mainly used after and during the second part of the class. Another reason is that when completing tasks, the teacher not always monitored if students spoke Spanish or English. Consequently, they felt confident to use their mother tongue.

➤ **Does the frequent use of Spanish have an incidence on students' English oral production?**

Yes, it does. Through the observation, the researchers could compare the four different groups of Reading and Conversation I, who served as the population of the study. The nature of one of the groups was unique and it was observed different kind of role plays, games and practical exercises, although the main difference was that only this group adopted the Monolingual Approach where the teacher used only English to communicate with the students and provided communicative tasks as recommended by the Direct Method of teaching. One group was the complete opposite because in general terms, Spanish was used more than English. The other two groups applied the Bilingual Approach by using the native language in order to enhance understanding.

This diversity allowed to conclude that in the classes where the use of Spanish was too frequently, students presented a lower level of oral proficiency when participating in class. On the opposite, in the group where Spanish was not directly permitted, learners participated more and demonstrated more accurate speech and diversity of vocabulary. This phenomenon may be due to the fact that not all students are practicing English as they should inside the classroom as for most of them it is the only place to do it.

➤ **How does the use of Spanish in an EFL classroom affect students' English oral performance?**

Language transfer or interference makes reference to two main scenarios: positive or negative transfer. During the observation, both types were perceived, although the negative part predominated. In relation to the positive aspect, students and teachers used Spanish to understand each other better. When students did not know a word or phrase, some teachers used to translate them to Spanish or to state an example to emphasize comprehension. That saves time and helps students to get the idea of the foreign language. Spanish also caused interference, especially in mispronunciation and grammatical errors. When students participated in class, they mispronounced some words because there are sounds that do not exist in Spanish. For example, the sound of “ th” (/θ/) in words like “thing “ or “three” which were constantly heard during the classes. Students also produced phrases and sentences with grammatical mistakes due to the influence of their native language. Thus, a student said the phrase “don't be interested” confusing the use of the verb be and omitting the subject which in Spanish does not affect the syntax but in English is mandatory.

C. Most outstanding findings

- Throughout the observation, one of the courses spoke only English during the whole class. Also, in two groups the second part of the class was mostly in Spanish and the fourth group frequently spoke Spanish.
- When students worked in groups they hardly ever spoke English. Instead of practicing English with their classmates they spoke Spanish about topics that were not related to the class.
- 61 people of the sample agreed that students who have an advanced English background knowledge make an influence on their classmates to speak English only, when they do teamwork.
- Almost 80 of the students feel motivated when the teacher recognizes the good job they were doing.
- Students identified the lack of practice like a factor that affects their confidence to participate in class.
- 66 of the students from Reading and Conversation I, answered that Spanish is regularly used in their classes even by students who possess a wide range of English vocabulary. They think that Spanish will always influence their English oral production because it is impossible to separate it from their learning. There are two main ways to use Spanish in

the classroom: To understand classes better by relating terms and structures of both languages and to translate words into your mind when speaking.

- 51 persons of the population said that they switch from English to Spanish every time they participate, and 17 of them answered they spoke more Spanish than English in the classroom. That is unexpected because students enrolled in the third year of the major are assumed to have an advanced English vocabulary in order to produce fluent speech. But according to the instrument, they are not using English as much as they should. Mainly, due to the lack of vocabulary which reflects an urgent need of harder practice.

- 21 of the learners mentioned that they believe Spanish never helps them to understand their class better. This reflects, at least for some students, that they are trying to learn English like Krashen`s Theory of the Second Language Acquisition states: *“Just like they learnt their native tongue (without reference to other language). It also shows that some teachers are providing them comprehensible input in English, so students enhance their comprehension and speaking skills”*.

- 41 of the students indicated that they spoke Spanish when they did not understand something in the class. This shows that they lack vocabulary and practice to fully comprehend the contents.

- When working in groups, students sometimes spoke Spanish among them even though they were completing tasks in English. One reason observed was that teacher did not monitor if students spoke Spanish, so they feel free to use it. Groups sizes have a lot to do

with this because the average number of students per group is 25 to 30 and teachers cannot fully supervise.

- Teachers usually set plan communicative activities to encourage English production like the Direct Method. The most common were pair work, class discussions and book presentations. It was observed that the most effective activity was class discussion, where students gave their opinions and performed something in front of the class. They had the opportunity to practice their oral skills. However, pair work is less efficient as students spoke Spanish and the teacher could not completely monitor.
- One surprising outcome was that students usually tended to switch from English to Spanish when talking about personal experiences and emotional situations. This is because they feel more comfortable speaking Spanish when they shared personal events related to their moral values and ethics.
- According to observation, the majority of students who looked for seating in the back of the classroom spoke Spanish at some point during the class because they were not at the teachers reach and he/she could not supervise if they were speaking English or Spanish.
- One of the main reasons students did not speak English class is because of the lack of vocabulary. As a consequence of this issue students have troubles in their English pronunciation and oral skills. For example, when participating in the class students tend to pronounce some English sounds as they would do it in Spanish; this is the case of

words that begins with a [s] so students add the phoneme [ɛ] before the [s] (/ɛspem/
/ɛ'studnt/) or the mispronunciation of the 'stress' of some English words.

- Tang (2002)³⁸ stated that a foreign language is best learned through massive exposure to it and a very limited time using Spanish. According to this expert this has to be applied in all levels when learning a foreign language, in the case of Readings and Conversation I courses, teachers reduced students' stress by allowing them to speak in their native tongue, so that the second part of the class was developed in Spanish. In addition, it is important to remark that teacher's methodology encouraged their students to use either English or Spanish.

³⁸ Tang, Jinlan. (2002). *Using the L1 in the English Classroom*. English teaching forum, pp.36-43.

X. CONCLUSIONS

- The use of Spanish negatively affects students' oral production when they participate in class because some of them translate Word by Word from English to Spanish in their minds which leads to periods of silence and constant hesitation. That blocks fluency in the foreign language.
- The partially application of the monolingual Approach resulted to be more beneficial for students' oral skills. Thus, the students enrolled in the group where Spanish was not openly allowed presented a better fluency and speech production.
- Personality is a fact that may influence student's learning. Some of the students from the Readings and Conversation I courses, demonstrated an outgoing personality which allowed them to participate more during the English class and as a result they may enhance their English oral skills.
- It is important to notice that there are some other factors that are not under the teacher's control. One of those is the overcrowded classrooms which rests the level of teacher's classroom management. As a result, students tend to use their mother tongue since there is nobody who encourages them to practice the foreign language.
- The negative incidence of the native language depends of the frequency overuse in the EFL classroom.
- The Teacher has a great influence in students learning process of a foreign language inside and outside the classroom

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout this investigation, as researchers, we observed the problems that students face at the moment to express themselves in English inside the classroom, particularly when learners mix the native language with the foreign one or speak more Spanish than English in the EFL classroom. Also, teachers play an important role in the improvement of the speaking skill in the learning process of the students. So, we provide the following recommendations in order to improve the English oral production.

For the department:

- It is important to create an environment that gives students enough confidence to participate and express their ideas in the classroom.
- Promote the conversation clubs and activities regarding oral production outside the classroom because the opportunities to practice the foreign language are limited.
- Be patient and try to reduce the use of the native Language in the classes so as to encourage students with the example to do it as well.
- Expose as much as possible students with native speakers and provide extra audio-materials that help them in their oral production.

For students:

- Practice more English as the foreign language by making small groups with your classmates to discuss or debate topics that appeal you.

- Do not be afraid to express yourselves in English because it is normal to make mistakes at the beginning of this learning process and you gain knowledge of those errors.
- Try to avoid the frequent translation to Spanish for the reason that your brain needs to get used to comprehend and analyze the Foreign Language like you do in your Native Language and then to be able to speak fluently and naturally.
- Take advantage of the opportunities that you have to talk to native speakers.

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APPENDICES

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT



Topic: “The incidence of Spanish on English oral production: Case of Reading and Comprehension I students from the English Teaching Major at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador, 2015”.

Percentages

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 100% = Always | 40% = Occasionally |
| 90% = Frequently | 20% = Seldom |
| 80% = usually | 10% = Hardly ever |
| 70% = Often | 0% = Never |
| 50% = Sometimes | |

Statement	100%	90%	80%	70%	50%	40%	20%	10%	0%
Classroom’s management allows the use of Spanish.									
Students ask the teacher in Spanish when they have a doubt related to the class.									

<p>Students ask their classmates in Spanish when they have a doubt about the class.</p>									
<p>Students' personality influences their English oral participation inside the classroom.</p>									
<p>The more overcrowded classroom, the more Spanish is spoken.</p>									
<p>Students' English oral participation is predominant.</p>									

Students' English oral participation is interfered by the native language.									
When students do not understand a word or phrase the teacher translate them to Spanish									
When doing team or pair work, students speak English.									
When doing team or pair work, students speak Spanish									
The teacher corrects mistakes in English.									

<p>The type of teacher's activities encourages students to speak English.</p>										
<p>When talking about emotional topics, students switch from English to Spanish.</p>										
<p>Students sitting at the back of the classroom use more Spanish than English</p>										



QUESTIONNAIRE

Topic: “The incidence of Spanish on English oral production: Case of Reading and Conversation I students from the English Teaching Major at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of El Salvador, 2015”.

Objectives:

- ❖ To define the main factors that lead students to speak their native language in a foreign language classroom.
- ❖ To find out if the frequent use of Spanish has an incidence on students’ English oral production.
- ❖ To identify how the use of Spanish in an EFL classroom affects students’ English oral performance.

Directions: Mark with an “X” the best option for you.

PART I. SOCIAL DATA

STUDY

STUDY – WORK

PART II. SPANISH USE

A) BACKGROUND

1. Did you study English before enrolling in the University?

a) Yes

b) No

2. What was the level of English you acquired before starting the major?

a) Elemental

b) Low intermediate

c) High intermediate

d) Advanced

3. Do you consider that your previous English knowledge helps you to speak English instead of Spanish, since the beginning of the major?

a) Totally Agree

b) Agree

c) Disagree

d) Totally disagree

4. Do you think your English background forces your classmates to speak English when doing pair or group work?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very Often
- d) Never

5. Despite English background, does your native language interfere when speaking English in the classroom?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very Often
- d) Never

B) CONFIDENCE

1. How often do you feel confident enough to speak English in front of the class?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never

2. What is the main reason that makes you feel confident to participate in class?

- a) Teacher's encouragement
- b) Background knowledge
- c) My outgoing personality
- d) Companionship

3. What do you think is the most common factor that make students feel shy when speaking English?

- a) Lack of vocabulary
- b) Lack of practice
- c) Mispronunciation
- d) Classmate's mockery
- e) Teacher's methodology

4. Do you feel motivated to continue participating in class, when teacher recognizes your good job?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very Often
- d) Never

C) LACK OF VOCABULARY

1. How often do you think that the lack of English vocabulary is the main reason why students speak Spanish in class?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very Often
- d) Never

2. Which of the following aspects are affected because of your lack of English vocabulary?

- a) Fluency
- b) Oral comprehension
- c) Participation in class
- d) All of the above

3. Do you think that students who have a lot of English vocabulary do not use Spanish in any way?

- a) Yes, I do.
- b) No, I do not. They sometimes need Spanish to understand better.
- c) No, because they still think in Spanish instead of English.
- d) No, because Spanish will always influence our English learning.

4. Which of the following situations do you feel more familiar within class?

- a) I switch from English to Spanish every time I participate.
- b) I hesitate because I translate every word in my mind.
- c) I use more Spanish than English in class because I do not have enough vocabulary

5. How often does your lack of vocabulary affect your English speaking skill in the classroom?

- a) Never. (I always use English)
- b) Sometimes. (I think in Spanish before speaking English).
- c) Usually. (I usually mix Spanish and English when I speak).
- d) Always.(I speak to much Spanish)

D) STUDY HABITS

1. What is the most common habit you have to study English?

- a) Review your notes.
- b) Study with your classmates.
- c) Practice with oline exercises
- d) Translate every single word to Spanish.

2. How often do you study English outside the classroom?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never

3. What do you think is the best way to get a good English oral proficiency?

- a) By practicing with a native speaker.
- b) By listening to English music, news, audios, etc.
- c) By practicing with classmates in social groups such as conversation clubs
- d) By participating in class discussions or debates.
- e) By using blogs or websites on Internet.
- f) By practicing in front of the mirror

4. Do you consider that using Spanish in an English course helps you to understand your class much better?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never

5. When do you speak Spanish in the classroom?

- a) When I do teamwork/ pair work
- b) When the teacher is busy doing something else
- c) When I do not understand something.
- d) Every time I feel like it

E) LACK OF PRACTICE

1. How often do you practice English outside the classroom?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very often
- d) Never

2. Which of the following areas are the most affected due to the lack of practice in English?

- a) Acquisition of new vocabulary
- b) Mispronunciation
- c) Fluency
- d) All of the above

3. When you participate in the class, is it more in English rather than Spanish?

- a) Always
- b) Sometimes
- c) Very Often
- d) Never

PART III. ENGLISH ORAL PRODUCTION

B) TEACHER'S METHODOLOGY

1. Do you think the teacher's methodology has a great influence in the fact that some students prefer to speak Spanish rather than English?

a) Always

b) Sometimes

c) Very often

d) Never

2. Does your teacher's methodology motivate you to speak Spanish or English?

a) Spanish

b) English

3. Does the teacher monitor whether students speak English or Spanish?

a) Always

b) Sometimes

c) Very often

d) Never

4. Does your teacher encourage you to speak English during and after the class?

a) Always

b) Sometimes

c) Very often

d) Never

5. How often does your teacher introduce the class with a warm up activity that encourages your English participation?

a) Always

b) Sometimes

c) Very often

d) Never

6. Does the teacher use pictures, flash cards, etc. to help you understand and acquire new English vocabulary?

a) Always

b) Sometimes

c) Very often

d) Never

7. When the teacher explains something that you do not understand, does he/she do it in English or Spanish?

a) English. The teacher uses English all the time

b) Spanish. The teacher usually speaks Spanish.

c) A mix of English and Spanish

C) PERFORMANCE AND CLASSMATES' MOCKERY

1. Is your English oral proficiency affected when your classmates make fun about the way you speak?

a) Yes

b) No

2. What does your teacher do when your classmates make fun of the way you speak?

a) The Teacher tells them to be more respectful.

b) The Teacher also makes fun of the way you speak.

c) The Teacher does not do anything about it.

Thank you so much!