UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH TEACHING

THESIS SUBMITTED TO OBTAIN THE LICENTIATE DEGREE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

INFLUENCE OF THE USE OF SPANISH IN I CYCLE ENGLISH CLASSES AT CABO BLANCO SCHOOL IN LEPANTO, PUNTARENAS DURING THE FIRST SEMESTER OF 2020 SCHOOL YEAR

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June, 2020

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Sworn Statement

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Thesis Tutor's Letter

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Puntarenas, 12 de mayo del 2020.

Diego Torres Moreno
Director-Enseñanza del Inglés
Universidad Hispanoamericana

Respetable jefe:

El estudiante Gabriel Segura Villalta, cédula de identidad número 2-0635-0404, me ha presentado, para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado: "INFLUENCE OF THE USE OF SPANISH IN I CYCLE ENGLISH CLASSES AT CABO BLANCO SCHOOL IN LEPANTO, PUNTARENAS DURING THE FIRST SEMESTER OF 2020 SCHOOL YEAR", el cual ha elaborado para optar por el grado académico de Licenciatura en enseñanza del Inglés.
En mi calidad de tutor, he verificado que se han hecho las correcciones indicadas durante el proceso de tutoría y he evaluado los aspectos relativos a la elaboración del problema, objetivos, justificación; antecedentes, marco teórico, marco metodológico, tabulación, análisis de datos; conclusiones y recomendaciones.

De los resultados obtenidos por el postulante, se obtiene la siguiente calificación:

a)	ORIGINAL DEL TEMA	10%	8
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C)	COHERENCIA ENTRE LOS OBJETIVOS, LOS INSTRUMENTOS APLICADOS Y LOS RESULTADOS DE LA INVESTIGACION	30%	29
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Atentamente,

Judy Villalobos Montero
Cédula identidad N 1-1226-0984
Carné Colegio Profesional N 76441

Thesis Reader's Letter

Puntarenas, 12 de agosto del 2020

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Señores Oficina de Registro

Universidad Hispanoamericana

Sede de Llorente

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Se me ha asignado para la lectura correspondiente, el trabajo de investigación bajo modalidad Tesis denominado: **INFLUENCE OF THE USE OF SPANISH IN I CYCLE ENGLISH CLASSES AT CABO BLANCO SCHOOL IN LEPANTO, PUNTARENAS DURING THE FIRST SEMESTER OF 2020 SCHOOL YEAR,** del estudiante Gabriel Segura Villalta, cédula 206350404, para optar al grado de Licenciatura en Enseñanza del inglés.

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Gabriel Segura Villalta 2-635-404
Firma y Documento de Identidad

Dedication

I dedicate this research paper to my mother, who certainly was and will always be by my side. For so many years, she kept correcting me, modelling me with rigor and love; mainly giving up everything from herself to make me excel in life for I am eternally grateful to her. I could not be more thankful and words would not be enough to show my endless gratitude. From heaven, I know she takes care of me and my only wish is to make her proud on every important step that I embark in my life until we will meet again.

Appreciation

In the first place, I want to thank God for granting me the gift of life and for allowing me to advance forward both academically and professionally to where I am today. Moreover, I am full of gratitude to Him for giving me the patience, discernment, and resilience in order to get ahead with life, accept His will, and take one more step to finish my licentiate's degree; and for giving me the strength and faith that everything with effort is accomplished.

In addition, I want to recognize the great effort and emotional support of my family, friends, and couple; especially my parents, who have believed in me since I began this academic journey and for their constant moral and spiritual formation that defines me as the individual I am today. Finally yet importantly, I am very thankful to the university and in turn, to its excellent professors, whose teaching and example have been preparing me to be a better student, professional, and citizen eager to put into practice the knowledge acquired in favor of Costa Rican society.

Abbreviations[1]

Auditory (listening) skill: any or all skills related to hearing, including: auditory discrimination, auditory attention, and auditory memory (Psychology Dictionary, 2013).

Classroom: a room where a class of children or students is taught (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Communication: the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Curriculum: the subjects that are included in a course of study or taught in a school, college, etc. (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Education: a process of teaching, training and learning, especially in schools, colleges or universities, to improve knowledge and develop skills (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Error: a mistake, especially one that causes problems or affects the result of something (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

False cognates: a word in one language that has a different meaning from a similar-sounding word in another language, for example the English 'actual' and the German 'aktuell'. These similarities can confuse language learners and often cause errors (MacMillan Dictionary, 2020).

Fossilization: the way in which some errors become a permanent feature of a language learner's language (MacMillan Dictionary, 2020).

Grammar: abstract system of rules describing how a language works. Traditionally consists of syntax and morphology with the modern systems of phonology and semantics (Psychology Dictionary, 2013).

Interlanguage: a language system produced by somebody who is learning a language, which has features of the language that they are learning and also of their first language (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Intonation: the rise and fall of the voice in speaking, especially as this affects the meaning of what is being said (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Language: it may be defined as a system of symbols with commonly recognized meanings which facilitates our thought processes and enables us to communicate with (Psychology Dictionary, 2018).

Language competence: the implicit internalized knowledge of a language that a speaker possesses and that enables the speaker to produce and understand the language (The Free Dictionary, 2020).

Language (cross-linguistic) Influence: it is typically defined as the influence that knowledge of one language has on an individual's learning or use of another language. This influence can involve various aspects of language (Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning, 2012).

Language interference: it is the effect of language learners' first language on their production of the language they are learning (Psychology Wiki, 2020).

Language (linguistic) performance: a speaker's actual use of language in real situations; what the speaker actually says, including grammatical errors and other non-linguistic features such as hesitations and other disfluencies (Vocabulary.com Dictionary, 2020).

Language transfer: the process of using your knowledge of your first language or another language that you know when speaking or writing a language that you are learning, which may make the process of learning the new language either easier or more difficult (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Learning process: a process that people pass through to acquire new knowledge and skills and ultimately influence their attitudes, decisions and actions (Igi-Global.com Dictionary, 2020).

Lesson: An experience, example, or observation that imparts new knowledge or understanding (The Free Dictionary, 2020).

Linguistic (language) skills: the ability to use language (Collins Dictionary, 2020).

Knowledge: Familiarity, awareness, or understanding gained through experience or study (The Free Dictionary, 2020).

Mediation (learning) activity: The things learners and facilitators do, within learning events that are intended to bring about the desired learning outcomes (Igi-Global.com Dictionary, 2020).

MEP: Ministry of Public Education

Mother tongue: the language that you first learn to speak when you are a child (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Oral (speaking) skill: the action of conveying information or expressing one's thoughts and feelings in spoken language (Lexico.com, 2020).

Phonological awareness: refers to an individual's awareness of the phonological structure, or sound structure, of words. It involves the detection and manipulation of sounds at three levels of sound structure: syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes (The Free Dictionary, 2020).

Pragmatics: the study of the way in which language is used to express what somebody really means in particular situations, especially when the actual words used may appear to mean something different (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2020).

Pronunciation: is the way a word or a language is spoken, or the manner in which someone utters a word (The Free Dictionary, 2020).

Schooling: the education that you get at school (MacMillan Dictionary, 2020).

Second language: a language that is learned in addition to the language a person first learned as a young child (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, 2020).

Semantics: the branch of linguistics that deals with the study of meaning, changes in meaning, and the principles that govern the relationship between sentences or words and their meanings (The Free Dictionary, 2020).

Society: A community, nation, or broad grouping of people having common traditions, institutions, and collective activities and interests (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, 2020).

Student: One who is enrolled or attends classes at a school, college, or university (The Free Dictionary, 2020).

Syntax: the way in which linguistic elements (such as words) are put together to form constituents (such as phrases or clauses) (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, 2020).

Target language: A foreign language which a person intends to learn (Lexico.com, 2020).

Task- based approach: is an approach in which learning revolves around the completion of meaningful tasks. In the TBL approach, the main focus is the authentic use of language for genuine communication (Zakime, A., 2018).

Teacher: one whose occupation is to instruct (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, 2020).

Teaching methodology (method): the principles and methods of instruction (The Free Dictionary, 2020).

Vocabulary: a sum or stock of words employed by a language, group, individual, or work or in a field of knowledge (Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, 2020).

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[1]Most of the definitions were consulted through online dictionaries listed on used bibliography below.

Abstract

This research paper seeks to determine the influence of Spanish use in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year. Being more specific, it is projected to identify the frequency of Spanish use in the classroom when involving I cycle students and English communicative skills are being developed. Additionally, another goal is to recognize which reasons activate the use of Spanish during the learning process of English and then, verify which mediation activities that the English teacher can resort to diminish the Spanish impact during the English lessons.

In order to achieve these objectives, this dissertation is divided in different chapters that are dedicated to fulfill these particularities. First at all, there is a section called research problem, which particularly provides information that surrounds topics about education, native language, target language, and language acquisition problems that impact the learning process of English contextualized for I cycle students at Cabo Blanco School. It presents background information to understand the pursuit of this research.

The second chapter that is called theoretical framework is in charge of supporting with reliable sources punctual details about the main topic in question, generalities about the subjects involved (introduction to Cabo Blanco community, their socio-cultural and economic situation from past to present) and context where research takes place, and important terminology (information about the role of the mother tongue in education, the influence of the student's native language when learning a target language like English, and language intermediate process known as interlanguage) and theories (the Task-based didactic approach) to allow a better understanding of the role of a native language

of young students while learning a second language as well as problems derived from uncontrolled Spanish use when learning English such as fossilization, false cognates, and phonological transfer.

Methodological framework is the next chapter to appear in the written work and technically explain which elements define and guide this research. Initially, it is crucial to indicate the type of research by defining several characteristics that help to mold and understand its inner parameters involved. The fourth chapter is called the analysis and interpretation of data and as it suggests, it is in charge of describing all the findings after applying the measuring instruments (an observation rubric, a small survey, and an interview) for collecting data through descriptive graphs.

Conclusions and recommendations chapter is considered a closing phase to the research paper in order to manifest the most significant details found through the constant analysis of information provided by the previous chapters and it is a special section to provide advice regarding inviting readers to contemplate the advantage of finding out more data about the topic.

Lastly, there is a chapter committed to the creation of a proposal in order to give some solution to the research problem. It has been noticed that particularly I cycle students at Cabo Blanco School does not show enough interest to English subject; consequently, this proposal looks for motivating them during classes and ultimately make them participate more and use efficiently oral and auditory skills while Spanish use is being reduced gradually. Such engagement to English is fundamental, so that teacher's lesson will turn into significant spaces for students to use English in a confident, enthusiastic, and effective way.

CHAPTER I: RESEARCH PROBLEM

Education, and thus, the process of schooling together with the incipient socialization of each human being during their childhood, transcends from a mere academic process or from the initial insertion into the educational system in a given educational community. The whole process goes beyond. Without a doubt, education is not an end in itself. It is rather an invitation for society and its members to move multidimensionally (e.g. through the learning and practice of values, principles, good manners, self-regulation of behavior, customs and traditions) in every aspect that includes idiosyncrasy and worldview of each nation when compared to the rest of the world. Consequently, the human being is an individual and social being who is always seeking continuous fullness; with goals or life projects that can be achievable so that one's performance in reality is then positive toward others (Bolaños and Molina, 2007, pp. 19- 21).

In the particular case of Costa Rica, this nation and covered by its legislative system (specifically, the Political Constitution of Costa Rica in the education section), ensures that every citizen is provided with early, compulsory and free literacy at primary schooling level. In addition, Costa Rican educational system provides to citizens academic development by giving all necessary human, procedural and material resources such as: teaching centers, curricular programs, teaching tools, teaching and administrative staff, scholarships, and education modalities, among others equally important. Thus, each stage of human development and its learning process, reaches the appropriate parameters that all formal education demands and Government pursuits (Const., 1949, Title VII, art. 77- 78).

Within the academic and school life of an average child, it can be said that a few lessons devoted for the learning process of English language will never be enough

because such linguistic process encompasses practice, recognition and memory of words that being structured, make simple phrases and then, more complex sentences. Likewise, an extra effort is required from the student in class upon the target language because English pronunciation differs greatly from Spanish.

Considering that human beings naturally start mastering any language by oral and aural exposure, the acquisition of English does not escape this assertion, to such an extent that in Primary schooling, the emphasis begins with these two so-called linguistic skills and simultaneously, interactions and influence of the mother tongue that is taught at school, comes into play as well (Byers & Lew, 2013, pp. 6-7). Additionally, “In terms of the quantity of language exposure, immersion classrooms do not rival infants’ language environments. However, they often foster functional bilingualism, and equip children with language skills that help them in later educational and professional contexts” (p.7). It is at this very moment that the teacher in charge must prioritize his/her lesson in order to find suitable methodologies that manage to stimulate in the first instance, the oral skill for students, so that they can become receptive to English language. Subsequently, primary school students will feel more at ease and familiar with the target language and keep in track regarding the process of inferring and combining concepts with sounds, reproducing words in English, feeling comfortable with using English orally and in public, and as an ultimate goal, thinking in English.

Since 2017 school year, more primary schools nationwide are benefiting from the arrival and pedagogical innovation from the current MEP curriculum for English subject (teacher’s guide, 2016, pp. 2, 6). According to this renewed English curriculum, one of its most important intentions is to strengthen the oral and auditory competence of the pupil

through curricular contents and topics that are based on applying what is learned on real contexts for the practical use of the language (pp. 9-10).

As a result, the challenge of the English teacher is to foster scenarios and mediation tools in the classroom necessary for the student to stimulate these linguistic skills. Additionally, teaching methodologies need to be adapted for learning difficulties be diminished and aimed whenever appear and affect students. Arranging teaching methodologies will only facilitate positively the acquisition of English in class and the influence of the mother tongue will be kept at bay.

Consequently, the student's influence of the mother tongue in class and the use of both languages may result on confusion (since they are English beginners after all), provided that students begin to exchange them indiscriminately (Vargas, 2015, pp. 226-227, 231). As a result, they usually fall into problems with pronunciation or mishandling of lexicon. Similarly and becoming one of the biggest concerns reported by teachers, distinguishing and differentiating English words is often difficult for first cycle students, who are starting their learning in English (Byers & Lew, 2013, pp. 2-3).

> In fact, code mixing is a normal part of bilingual development, and bilingual children actually have good reasons to code mix (…). {It} is that, just like young monolinguals, young bilinguals are sometimes limited in their linguistic resources. (…) If a bilingual child does not know or cannot quickly retrieve the appropriate word in one language, she might borrow the word from the other language. (p. 2)

1.1 APPROACHING OF PROBLEM

The communication of the human being is enabled by the simple fact that each person is a thoughtful and rational being capable of having developed a modifiable language transmitted from generation to generation over time and closely connected to a historical and territorial reality; variable and exuberant by nature. Therefore, "The speaker of a language implicitly possesses the ability to express himself, but he/she acquires with learning, the knowledge and successive improvement of communication signs and also gathers the mechanisms of language" (Ochando, 1992, p. 145).

If one perceives the dimension of education as such and its close relationship with language, it can be concluded that it works indisputably as an irreplaceable engine for the cognitive, sociocultural and intellectual development of every human being. Undoubtedly, the mere fact of knowing things, either out of mere curiosity or for some particular interest, facilitates the inherent capacity to capture, analyze, understand, archive, learn, and reproduce all kinds of information present in the daily life and necessary for the optimal functioning of the person within the social context where he/she operates in daily.

Through early schooling, and a few years later when the first cycle of public basic education begins, children must fulfill accurately and adapt themselves to the requirements and goals that such a level requires in relation to their learning process for their correct immersion in academics and in the affective, cultural and ethical matters. Also, adding the learning of a second language such as English within the same schooling process, students will relentlessly increase the level of effort, dedication, and compression because English subject will work as a challenge while it opens up as a new panorama to them; a new culture full of peculiarities.

It can be said that any language in its oral form (whether it is first or a target language such as English), is subject to be acquired because each individual is usually born with skills and abilities innate and suitable for his/her linguistic performance (Byers & Lew, 2013, pp. 6-7). “In other words, our brains may be more receptive to language earlier in life. But importantly, our environment is also more conducive to language learning earlier in life” (p.7). Therefore, the influential path of the learning process experienced in the early years of schooling set and create the necessary guidelines for each speaker to be able to function in a reality that requires unified communication. For example, effective communication is characterized by aspects of expressiveness such as intonation and diction as well as psychosocial elements, such as the addition of assertiveness, conviction and security within the discourse that is either planned or spontaneous. Similarly, Ochando (1992) summarizes the arguments above by stating that,

> In the case of oral language, learning must go through the correct pronunciation of sounds, intonation, until the production of sentences-like structures and speeches. In written language, later, one must learn to relate sounds to letters, and then to spelling and punctuation standards. (p. 146)

It is, thus, observable that the mother tongue can affect the language skills to be developed in the second language. During his/her early years of schooling, the student encounters a system of pronunciation, grammar, writing and literacy that promotes a greater understanding of the society he/she belongs alongside with the corresponding mother tongue (i.e. Spanish). Hopelessly, the learning of a second language, which does

not usually come into use on a daily basis among different social spheres, can become a challenge and even an academic burden for the student.

In the case of Costa Rica, the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) has endeavored to present an academic curriculum in primary school with content that encourages the use of the English language in common and everyday situations so that the student develops skills to communicate effectively according to the scenario presented to him/her. Likewise, MEP has emphasized in its new program, the need for students to develop phonological awareness; that is, students need to be able to discern the correct pronunciation of vowels and syllables while they are working on word tracing and obtaining new vocabulary. Definitely, such efforts in learning this second language resemble somehow the process used in maternal language teaching.

This research paper considers the particular case of the first cycle primary school student population at Cabo Blanco School located in Lepanto, Puntarenas and the relationship that could be established by applying the current English course curriculum, which seems to dedicate on strengthening the learning of oral and auditory skills within 2020 course year. Similarly, particular relevance is given to common errors that slow down somehow the improvement of oral and aural proficiency as an undisputed premise of successful communication in this second language and special emphasis on the analysis of the use, effect and consequences of mother tongue on students during the English learning process in the classroom in order to provide accurate and practical solutions.

1.1.1 Problem antecedent

It is intended with this research to establish the importance of mastering the speaking proficiency of the English language for Costa Rican school populations and any influence resulting from the mother tongue. The innate potential of children during their early years of schooling should not be spared in terms of their curiosity, dynamism and susceptibility to the new and different; so teachers and the education system should take advantage of such traits of their personalities and lead them in learning a second language.

Consequently, the fusion of these peculiar characteristics (kid's personality traits like curiosity) plus the adaptation of the current curriculum of English subject allows a better performance and educational process that actually promotes the use and learning of the second language by the student. As a result, any teacher may be able to modify and enhance his/her methodology, techniques and activities in each English lesson to achieve a certain degree of competitiveness and ease when students interact with the target language.

For a greater understanding of the involvement of the mother tongue in learning the oral and auditory competence of English in primary schools in Costa Rica, an exhausted inquiry is chosen on the Internet and in the database of *Universidad de Costa* Rica (UCR), *Universidad a Distancia* (UNED), and *Universidad Nacional* (UNA). Regarding the university database, there were certain findings but more targeted on practical application of English language in class; nonetheless, information was still taken into account for their contribution to the development of mediation strategies applicable in the second language and later mentioned in this research paper. For this reason, it is then necessary to extend the search to international sources, which were most fruitful on

the subject at hand. The results collected during the whole search are then presented briefly:

The first thesis is entitled: Innovative teaching strategies to promote oral management in the English language towards tenth-level students at Professional Institute of Community Education of Liberia in 2013 and was developed by Yaneth Mora Morales, Floribeth Mora Villanea and Teresa Torres Rugama (2013) to obtain a bachelor's degree in Pedagogy with an emphasis on Didactics at UNA. This thesis presents a situation on regards of the oral expression of English language from tenth graders at the Professional Institute of Community Education of Liberia (IPEC). This research document indicates the need to pay close attention to the lack of oral communication from the students by proposing some didactic and innovative strategies to improve the performance and management of English.

The key aspect that is mentioned in this thesis regarding the teaching and learning process and acquisition of a second language lies in the urgency of gradually variation of teaching strategies to incentivize the desire of the student to learn. Therefore, it is recommended to include exercises and teaching activities that are attractive and self-motivating, so that English lessons bring a meaningful notion towards students.

To achieve the recommendations above, interactive workshops are proposed for the student population in order to improve oral communication and oral expression skills. The application of the workshops consisted on taking tenth-grade into dynamics that would engulf them to use English language in a practical and meaningful way through exercises based on real-world scenarios, which required active management and

spontaneous oral skills. After the activity was completed, a survey was provided among the participants to assess the degree of satisfaction and effectiveness of the activity.

In relation to the contribution from this research paper, the great amount of didactic activities, recommendations and methodology applicable within the teacher's daily task in terms of his role as a knowledge facilitator is evident, giving greater development to the oral skill of English language. It also conducts a study on theoretical foundations aimed at enhancing oral ability after modifying the teaching methodology of the second language.

The next thesis is identified with the title of: Supplementary material for the integration of skills in the teaching of English in the IV cycle of academic public schools of the San Jose area. This research work was developed to obtain a bachelor's degree in Applied Linguistics with an emphasis in English at UNA. The authors Magdalena Arias Quintanilla, Laura Monge Núñez and Marlon Orozco Campos (2013), defend the relevance gained from pedagogical and didactic effects of the Communicative Language Teaching theory, specifically focused on the requirements and guidelines of MEP curriculum.

The research work represents the concern found regarding the need to strengthen with supplementary teaching material the curricular plan of MEP designed for student population of tenth and eleventh grade at high school. The reason had come from the fact that there was no official and approved material to neither address the content of the curriculum nor meet the learning needs of this academic cycle during those years. This thesis centers on the impact of printed material in the classroom and the influence it

projects on the acquisition of English four language skills (oral, writing, reading and speaking).

In regards of the relevance of this work, it can be mentioned that it shows, within its results and conclusions, a perspective of the reality that is happening to the country's education system back in time. A lack of specialized material that was not oriented to solve context's particularities was a persistent issue and unfortunately, it was usually the teacher's job to collect material, without any help of guides or advice; having to rely on unofficial material available to him/her. In addition, it is very valuable this thesis's theoretical framework since it presents to readers a reliable source of numerous search of theories, methods, approaches, and hypotheses through decades that have served to contribute to the teaching of a second language.

Another valuable research work is titled: Oral skill of the communicative approach and the real possibilities of putting it into practice in the third stage of the Costa Rican public high schools. This dissertation work is to obtain a bachelor's degree in Applied Linguistics with an emphasis on English. The authors Ingrid Lidieth Madrigal Vindas, María Inés Mejías Arguedas, Seidy Montero Ceciliano, Esmeralda Montero Vindas and Doreen Walters Brown (1997), report in their thesis the possibility of putting into practice the principles from the Communicative approach by means of two perspectives: theoretical and field study. The main objective of this research work consists of researching and determining whether each unique aspect in relation to the teaching-learning process (e.g. teachers, students, context and teaching material) can be adapted to the demands of the approach both practical and methodological.

Therefore, this thesis emphasizes the need to apply a comprehensive and unifying method in which the Communicative theory of a second language is extended and manifested in each field of the educational reality of the discus so that its learning is more practical and pay more attention to the prowess of oral communication in English. For achieving this goal, a whole synthesis of methodological approaches, guides, suggestions, and didactic activities based on the Communicative approach is designed but taking into consideration MEP curriculum structure. Also, it gives importance to oral skills, making a continuous before and after contrast in relation to the Communicative approach and detecting any improvements discovered when fieldwork was performed on the high school students.

This work contributes with theoretical data by explaining in detail concepts that surround the class context, such as: classroom management, teacher role, student role and motivational factors; all these elements gathered to give stability to the Communicative approach. Furthermore, the thesis presents a large and interesting list of characteristics similar to an introductory and outgoing profile that the pupil can and needs to develop in order to promote his/her own learning, which is useful to contemplate when considering an instruction based on active, conscious and motivating communication of each and every English linguistic skill.

Proceeding with the documents employed for developing the research paper, now it is turn of the international sources. These papers are academic documents and have relevant information (author, page numbering, and year of publication, among other crucial details) for appropriate use in this document. In the first place, the thesis entitled: Influence of Mother Tongue (Spanish) on the Learning of Foreign Language (English)

was designed to obtain a bachelor's degree in Spanish, English and French language. Its authors Jennifer Agudelo Quintana, Andrés Guillermo Díaz Casallas and Karen Julieth Zabala Avila (2017), emphasize in their research that there are factors and difficulties for Spanish-American speakers when learning a second language such as English. Therefore, key aspects such as social context, student's age and corresponding period for the acquisition of the mother tongue are decisive in indicating which strategies work for the understanding and completion of activities in class for learning the foreign language.

Additionally, it is stated that moderate use of the mother tongue facilitates the understanding of a second language because it produces a frame of reference that the student can compare and contrast simultaneously. Similarly, in the lower levels of schooling, it is virtually impossible not to make use of student's mother tongue to give and corroborate instructions or clarify abstract concepts, in which translation saves time and effort in class. Consequently, the English teacher must use all the techniques, strategies, and procedures that are necessary to help students achieve the foreign language proficiency (Agudelo and others, 2017, p. 3). In other words, all available resources that the teacher has handy to transmit information in the second language must be used. However, the student has more certainty and comfort in the use of the mother tongue as least if it is perceived as an extra support during certain explanations, participation, questions, and activities that leads to reinforcement of English in class, provided that these actually encourage the acquisition of foreign language.

To proceed, this research work has a positive impact on details of each individual's ability to convey similarities and differences when both languages are compared, analysis

of phonological transfer, phenomenon of false cognates or negative idiomatic transfer, and role of translation; all of these topics are highly useful. Additionally, there is a description of the most common linguistic errors when interference occurs in the mother tongue and the associated causes or triggers are sought while high school students in Bogotá, Colombia learn the second language. It is concluded that lexical interference is predominant and it is more noticeable when written skill is applied.

The next international thesis is entitled: The Influence of Mother Language in the Teaching and Learning of Foreign Languages: The Perspective of Stephen Krashen. This thesis is to obtain the licentiate degree of French teaching. The author, Andrea Pando Sevilla (2014), analyzes whether or not it exists interference of the mother tongue when learning some other language and therefore, she intends to determine if it is really a positive or negative element for the process of acquisition of the second language. In addition, this paper presents a brief description about what can be understood by mother tongue, including methodological approaches that indicate its use in learning a foreign language. Also, it emphasizes theoretical contributions of Stephen Krashen, who explains by means of key concepts, the acquisition and learning of a second language, dealing with themes such as the environment of learning, mistakes during class and errors coming from influence of the mother language.

The importance of this research work is that initially clarifies generalities on what mother tongue is, its cultural, social and communication function, and how it affects the speaker when faced with the challenge of learning another language. Additionally, it includes the distinction between both concepts second language and foreign language where their contextualized use and accessibility within different social spheres determine

which is mentioned. It also explains similarities and differences in the learning of the mother tongue and the foreign language, as well as the degree of influence of one another and recommendations to give good use to mother tongue.

The third thesis holds the title of: The Use of Mother Language in the Compulsory Secondary Education English Class. This thesis is for obtaining a Master's Degree in Education. The author, Angela Mejías Higuera (2016), performs a comparative work with high school students in Spain, who are tested as participants to measure the instruction of the second language taught by a native and non-native teacher, in order to analyze the methodologies applied for the acquisition of the second language and role of the mother tongue in both cases. Also, a review of the different methodologies used throughout history for learning a second language is presented and an analysis of results when comparing the measures taken by both native and non-native teachers when facing the high school students' mother tongue during instruction.

Among the contributions of this thesis, it can be stated the relevance of English in the world and the evolution of methodologies used for their learning in the classroom. Likewise, the relationship and effect of mother tongue is determined from perspective of the student and teacher during English learning. In addition, a proposal is designed with strategies and recommendations for the classroom in order to use the mother tongue moderately and eliminate any obstacles from its excessive use and thus, determining which factors and practices (from both teacher and student) are more appropriate for learning this foreign language.

1.1.2 Problematization

Firstly, there are numerous reasons to carry out the learning process of English Language. According to the article published by Universal Languages (2015), it is estimated that around 450 million people speak English as a first language and more than 700 million speak it as a second language or as a foreign language. Therefore, this language is considered as the “lingua franca” per excellence, taking into account that its use goes beyond trade and business, since it is a language that allows communication between speakers of different cultures and latitudes. In addition, much of the digital information totality (approximately 80% worldwide) and more than half of the scientific journals are published in English.

As a result, learning English deserves to be strengthened from primary school through a comprehensive methodology that achieves progressive and mid-term results, with the aim of having a certain language mastery that allows the individual to function in this language as needed. Therefore, MEP has been tasked with modifying the curriculum by one that really strengthens oral and auditory language skills, emphasizing phonetic proficiency and oral expression. It is extremely important to note that such a modification resembles the first instances involved in learning and acquiring any mother tongue, because it is given attention to basic notions to promote speech dexterity, such as pronunciation, fluency, phonemes and graphemes.

No doubt, the possible relationship and impact of the Spanish language on the learning process of English in the classroom should not be strange. It is necessary to determine whether there really is the possibility of taking advantage of the influence of the mother tongue and through the new MEP curriculum program, strengthening English

language learning. Consequently, this research work seeks to discover which factors influences the foreign language learning by considering the mother tongue impact on first cycle primary school students, whose literacy has just been uprooted and therefore, whether it is feasible to make changes to the curriculum or to use the mother tongue as a linguistic reference.

1.1.3 Problem justification

The English subject certainly has the role of enlarging the world's vision and perspective, presenting a culture somewhat different from the usual one (in other words, Costa Rican culture), but which has had a great influence in recent years, mainly in the economic and work field (Ruffino, 2009, p.1). By being English taught in schools and high schools, students are being given the opportunity to ascend to a better lifestyle with a higher percentage of success (in what corresponds to greater job offers when managing one or more foreign languages and to get an additional economic remuneration, mainly). It is no secret that such language has boomed and can be found in many places and contexts of Costa Rican reality such as entertainment, telecommunications, business, education, among others (Ruffino, 2009, p.1).

Bearing in mind the great relevance of handling a second language such as English, it is necessary to substantiate the convenience of this research. It is intended to analyze the oral and auditory skills of English progressively within the first cycle students of Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas and which results come from adding within the learning process, the influence of mother tongue. Because such influence is undeniable during foreign language learning, it would be appropriate to use it to improve

understanding and have a positive impact on students, without hindering the purpose of the class work proposed by the current MEP curriculum.

It is now turn to analyze the social expediency of this research work for several advantages can be mentioned. First, the subjects of research (I cycle graders) who will provide their experiences and contributions by being an integral part of this writing. They will directly receive the advantage of being helped to improve gradually their oral and auditory skills with the language by compiling classroom, practical recommendations. Additionally, it will be determined the impact of using the mother tongue during activities that requires it, allowing students to vary their learning, reduce stress in the face of a new language and have more control over it, while encouraging interaction and flexibility whenever there are classroom exercises and activities that can be facilitated by using the mother tongue. On the other hand, any English teacher who wants to soak up more of the subject, can take as a reference this research and apply within his duty as an educator, some ideas and discoveries found throughout the work.

Moreover, practical involvement is highlighted in incorporating and giving true teaching use to the mother tongue, in order to be employed as required in one of the facets of the class such as at the beginning of the lesson, during development, to carry out the evaluation assessment or as a closure activity. It is equally important to analyze both oral and auditory skills present or missing according to the degree of schooling of the students subject to study, in order to know what aspects influence their growth or rather, limit their progress in the acquisition of a second language according to the requirements of the current curriculum.

Additionally, it is intended to provide solutions to deficiencies detected in oral and auditory skills during English language practice by I cycle students with techniques that facilitate understanding and communication in this language. It is well known that it is currently relevant to manage this language precisely and correctly. Therefore, it is essential to eliminate problems related to oral skill at an initial level (in primary) so that the acquisition of the language is more profitable, so that a more effective management is gradually achieved according to the demands of the market.

Among the theoretical reasons to support this research work, it is intended to analyze the different theories regarding the use of the mother tongue as a tool that affects the learning of the second language and thus, determine what benefits or problems result of such use. In addition, the information obtained and developed as a result of the topic of this thesis will serve to support the connection and use of the mother tongue in the learning of oral and auditory skills according to the current MEP first-cycle curriculum.

Furthermore, in order to give methodological sustenance, the oral and auditory skills of first cycle students are analyzed. In addition, the use of the problem-solving method as a teaching technique is envisaged with the intention of developing the first-cycle curriculum profile by contextualizing the contents, so that the student finds meaning in what he/she internalizes and learns in class. Also, it is intended once again to determine the problems that first-cycle speakers are currently facing in the oral and listening area. In addition, this research proposes some tools for collecting information in order to be able to subtract data, using different resources in different scenarios and moments of the interaction between teacher-student to make the results richer in detail and quality.

1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

Education in Costa Rica has been undergoing a transition of significant changes in the last decades in order to improve the quality and learning process within the classroom scenario. Certainly, teaching English in primary school is not an exception from such ongoing improvement. As a matter of fact, education policy seeks to transform completely from the previous paradigm (characterized for academic lectures with an outdated teacher- centered technique oriented to repetition and mechanic memorizing) to welcome a renewed education style; characterized by being more student- centered and autodidactic through active and proactive learning.

This new education policy believes that the student should become the center of the educational, pedagogical process and is the one who creates and regulates his/her own knowledge with support and guidance of the teacher whose main role is based on providing the appropriate teaching, mediation tools, monitoring, and feedback. Thus, there is a dilemma to consider when both reality and context of I Cycle students, who have just started schooling and the process of literacy in the mother tongue (Spanish) is incipient and aside of that, they need to encounter a brand- new language to learn (English).

In addition, I Cycle students are assigned the task to learn a second language (English), which by curricular requirements, emphasizes on the process of phonological awareness, development of linguistic skills (oral and auditory for first grade level and subdivided into other skills) and development of some “soft” skills such as critical thinking, problem- solving resolutions, and teamwork. At to this point, it raises the question of whether there is a relationship (advantageous or disadvantageous) between the effects

of the mother tongue (Spanish) on I Cycle students with the learning of linguistic skills according to MEP curriculum program of English.

Furthermore, a process of intertwining English subject with other curricular programs that are part of the national curriculum of I Cycle has always been a MEP education goal. Thus, if it is possible to make a connection with English subject with the use of the mother tongue (Spanish) in class during English lessons with the only purpose of satisfactory consequences, such joining may shrink the breach from regular public education to move into a more bilingual learning experience. Therefore, the student receives and manages several stimuli from both languages (e.g. listening comprehension, reading process, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, among others) almost simultaneously during regular schooling and it is at this point where the following question appears: **How is the influence of Spanish used in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year?**

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.3.1. General objective

Analyze the influence of use of Spanish in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year

1.3.2. Specific objectives

Identify the frequency of Spanish use in the classroom during I cycle students' English-speaking skills development

Establish which reasons trigger the use of Spanish from I cycle students in the English classroom during the learning process of English speaking skills

Determine which pedagogical mechanisms the English teacher can apply in order to reduce the use of Spanish during the learning process of I cycle students' English speaking skills

1.4 SCOPES AND LIMITATIONS

1.4.1. Scopes

The main scope pursued in this document is to test the effectiveness and importance within the learning process of English by detecting the influence of the mother tongue as to improve the acquisition of this language by first cycle students at Cabo Blanco School located in Lepanto, Puntarenas. The reason for such an aspiration is focused on the fact that many students have some difficulties to perform fully in this language. As a teacher concerned for the well-being of the student population and knowing the great influence that English currently has, it is sought that the speakers at the end of their school process and before entering to high school education, already possess and manipulate the knowledge of this language with a degree of ease and precision. In other words, that they have an acceptable language level that facilitates the transition to high school education with respect to this subject.

Another scope to fulfill that relates to the previous one is the attempt to raise awareness about the new methodology that appears in the current curricular program of MEP for English lessons. One of the ideals is to be able to gather in the document the experiences detected when putting into practice activities that use this methodology while analyzing the impact of the mother tongue.

One more scope to be achieved is to determine what strengths and weaknesses first cycle students have regarding their English learning; whether these characteristics come from themselves or from an external factor (e.g. the educator, the context of the classroom, the family, among others). Having a general idea of what causes them and what are these can provide better support when planning activities and lesson for the students. It is very important to understand and recognize how students learn and how to facilitate or hinder the process in order to do everything they need to meet their needs. Although it is an exhausting task for the teacher, it will provide strategies to face daily challenges such as addressing a content that has some difficulty for the student, but knowing in advance which capacities the students have and which one needs to be molded, then the teacher could bring solutions with certain confidence and capacity of action.

1.4.2. Limitations

Presenting now the limitations found throughout the accomplishment of this research work, it can be mentioned first, the possible resistance of the students to participate actively in the research. Both the students and the teacher in charge may not agree to switch to a different way of learning and teaching to the one they are accustomed to diurnally. Thus, the motivation towards the innovative and the need to convince the student and teacher in engaging to a different strategy of study (the use of the mother tongue) are points that must be reinforced and planned during the research. Consequently, if the interest is low on both sides, there will be participation but not intrinsically applied to what they are asked to be part of and perform.

Another possible obstacle is the limitation of the lesson planning as such because it must be taken into account that teachers have limited time to present, explain and evaluate their classes. It is a reality that cannot be ignored at all since even when a given time is provided for each phase of a lesson, unexpected changes always occur that modify planning, causing certain activities to be shortened or extended over others. It becomes necessary then to take advantage of every second of the class, to have all the resources prepared and to manage adequately the attention and discipline in the classroom.

The lack or incomplete knowledge of the oral and auditory skills of English subject by first cycle students is also a challenge that could possibly pause the progress of the research. It is expected to discover some causes and factors that somehow improve the correct development of students in the area of speech and listening and prevent gaps on these. It is also a wish to check whether there is any improvement when moderate use of the mother tongue happens in class.

It is important to indicate that a wider sample that permits to make generalizations (application of probabilistic approach) of the results is advisable since current sample at Cabo Blanco School was small due to low student's population. Moreover, it should be considered II cycle students as a possible sample who are a little bit more mature and have more learning experiences at school in order to be considered when applying measuring instruments like a survey or interview. Likewise, if there were more English personnel at Cabo Blanco School, there would be more findings to consider, contrast, and compare.

Another possible limitation deals with considering just one semester of the school year for the research. Extending the research to a complete school year in order to have an “after and before” parameter will certainly allow deep analysis of the influence of Spanish use in the English lesson though both semesters. Therefore, during the second semester, it is possible to apply actual solutions to reduce the mother tongue impact observed during the first semester and prepare a correlative study to establish progressive evolution of interlanguage to appropriate use of target language.

CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The community of Cabo Blanco is located between coordinates 425 – 428 north latitude and 210 – 215 east longitude. It is bordered to the north by the Gulf of Nicoya, to the south by Fila Cerro Las Torres, to the west by Fila Cerro Las Minas and to the east by Quebrada Indales and Cerro Clavas. It has a territorial extension of 15 square kilometers (the present information is found written in Cablo Blanco communal diagnosis, facilitated by Cabo Blanco's school principal, Licda. Sandra Johanna Briceño Mendoza).

It was founded in 1939 by a group of enterprising people, ready to deal with the inhospitableness of the region. The proximity to the sea was the main factor in choosing the site, despite the excess humidity of the area and the large amount of Anopheles mosquito, the main vector of malaria. Some of the first people who inhabited this community were: Victoria Torres, José Pérez, Herminia Gómez, José Reyes Reyes, Bernarda Hernández, Victoria Rodríguez, José Jiménez, Isabel Calero, Guadalupe Casanova and Pablo Aguirre (most of them came from Guanacaste Province).

At that time, there was no school and people were supplied with the essentials in the community of Lepanto by impassable roads. However, it was not enough what they obtained from that community. There were two means of transportation, the horse and the boat; the latter transported people and merchandise by rowing or sailing. Sea crossing was very risky, so they moved only when necessary, such as to sell a product, due to someone's illness or to baptize a child.

Most of what they consumed was produced in the community, and what they got from selling their products, served them to buy other things they needed. There were no

robberies; however, during dancing activities with marimba or guitar, there were some quarrels that would end up in fights, because of the excessive consumption of liquor.

There was a wide variety of wildlife such as tapirs, ocelots, cougars, macaws, among others. In addition, there was a wide variety of mangrove-specific seafood such as *chucheca*, *pianguas* and *cambutes*. Many of these animals became extinct or are about to go extinct. Among the typical flora of this community we can mention *cedro*, *pochote*, *espabel* and *cenízaro*.

People were mainly engaged in agriculture, livestock, logging and artisanal fishing, then found other sources of employment such as guards in prisons, mainly at I*sla San Lucas* (St. Luke's Island) and tourist centers. The landowner status predominated mainly among Acón and Evelio Benavides brothers while other people had a relatively small property.

Cabo Blanco is a town of people highly conservative of religious customs, whose patron saint is *la Virgen María Auxiliadora*. Legends are also heard as *la leyenda de la Mica*. In 1949, Don Ricardo Saprissa kindly donated the land to build the school, the soccer field and the church. That same year, the first school was built, which was a ranch. Approximately six years later, two cement classrooms were built, with material brought by boat from *Bejuco* Island.

The beach ferry service of *Playa Naranjo* began in 1973, which gave other opportunities to people in this community, such as greater access chances and improvements in its neighborhood roads. Subsequently, other events happened that contributed to the development of this community such as electric lighting (1978), the

construction of the aqueduct (1982) and the founding of the first Community Development Association (1983).

Currently, teachers still work in this same school, which has three quite new classrooms, a cafeteria in very good condition, made by town people with the help of *diputado* Carlos Rudín; a teacher's house, sanitary batteries with septic tank and a storage cellar. This school is named after the town "Cabo Blanco" and is located on the east side of the melon field. The first teacher who was in this town was Don Nicolás Ruiz de Santa Cruz in 1949, a very laborious person, who left very good memories with his teaching devotion.

In the particular case of the student population of Cabo Blanco School at present, the enrollment does not exceed 61 students (32 men and 29 women) and having a low tuition, the school is identified as Address 1 (*Dirección uno* according to MEP). It is also part of the community of Lepanto district, which is a place characterized by its low density and rural area and has considerable restrictions on public transportation, health and employment. Despite these disadvantages, the community organizes itself and devotes efforts through the local Board of Education and Municipality to have funds for the maintenance of the school, which new facilities were inaugurated in 2018. Similarly, the school maintains proper promotion and has not had any school dropout problems at the moment. Because of its low tuition characteristics, teaching staff are in the faculty to provide individualized student care.

All the people who populated this region were farmers; members of families who subsisted from agriculture, logging and domestic animal farming. Currently, melon planting is one of the largest sources of work in the community. Most people have to offer

their services outside the locality, such as informal security guards or employees of nearby resorts. Some people are engaged in fishing by short periods.

In addition, the community of Cabo Blanco belongs to l*a Dirección Regional Peninsular* of MEP and is part of circuit 03, together with other educational centers. Demographics are relatively low and socio-economic development is part of the fact that most employments focus on fishing, agriculture, industry and nearby businesses. These characteristics feed a profile of the inhabitant and their families and through it, it is possible to make conjectures that somehow show the influence on the educational process of the student of this community. On the other hand, it is noted that the traditional and conservative family model still stands out and religious doctrine is mostly practiced, among the adult and elderly populations. Also, among the leisure activities, the community has a soccer field, bars, beaches, and rivers as nature abounds on the site.

Figure 1. Cabo Blanco Community Places

Source: Communal Diagnosis, Cabo Blanco School, 2019

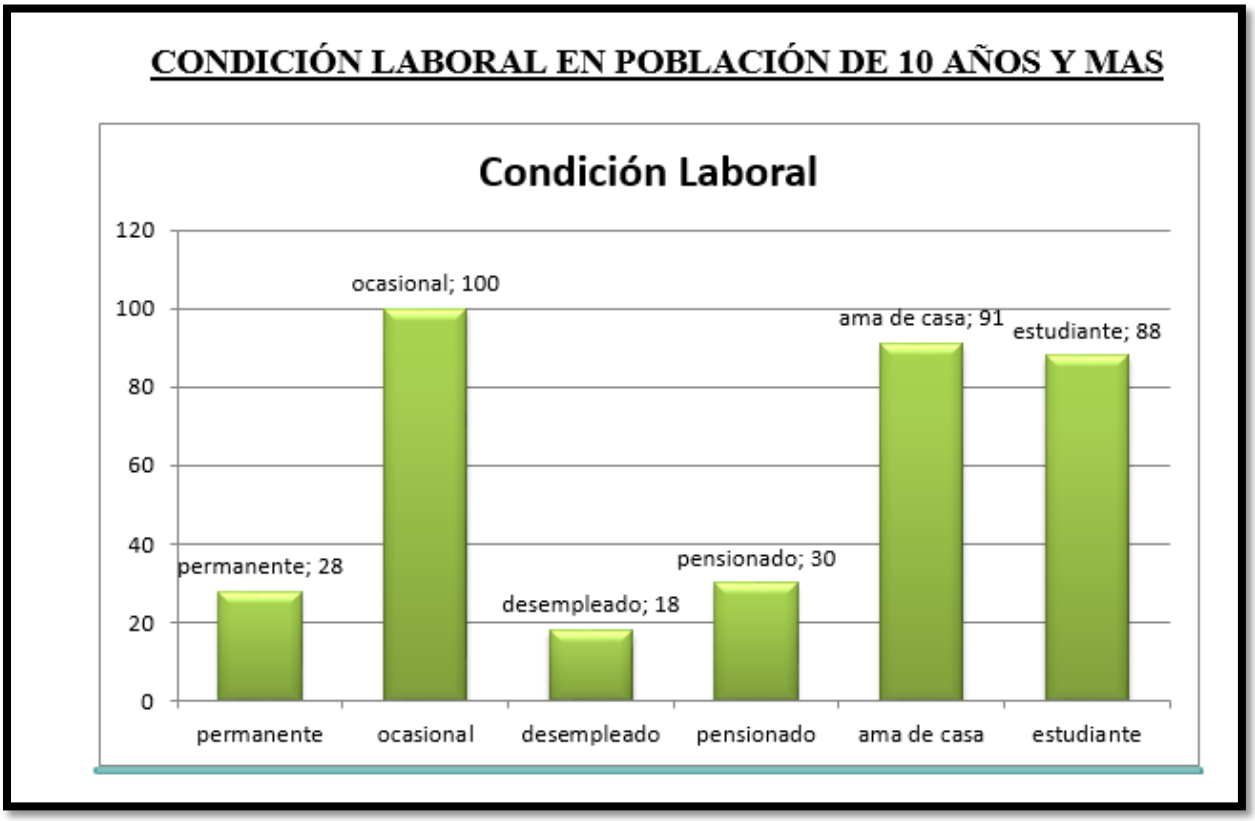


Figure 2. Cabo Blanco Population's Working Condition

Source: Communal Diagnosis, Cabo Blanco School, 2019

Cabo Blanco currently has 383 inhabitants. Among group activities, they practice soccer. Soccer matches are celebrated only during Holy Week with live performances and in May during the feast of the Patron of *Maria Auxiliadora* at town. Since 1983, the first Association of Integral Development was created and that same year with the enthusiastic participation of José Sandí, the first civic festivals were organized, which continued to take place every year. People travel by pilgrimage to *la Tigra*, a town that is about 25 kilometers away, in order to resemble the pilgrimage to the Virgin of the Angels, on every August 2nd in Cartago Province.

PRINCIPALES FORTALEZAS DE LA COMUNIDAD Y DE LA POBLACIÓN

- Gente muy entregada a la comunidad.
- Recursos naturales productivos.
- Profesionales trabajando en su campo y cerca de la comunidad.
- Se encuentran valores religiosos.

PRINCIPALES PROBLEMAS QUE ENFRENTA LA COMUNIDAD

- Falta de empleo.
- Drogadicción.
- Contaminación del Golfo.
- Desintegración Familiar.
- Escasez de servicios públicos.

Figure 3. Main Strengths and Weaknesses of Cabo Blanco Community

Source: Communal Diagnosis, Cabo Blanco School, 2019

With regard to the above, it can be noted that the community of Cabo Blanco has low population density. There are more young adults and older adults than children and adolescents. Its inhabitants have deep-rooted customs and traditions that portrait the traditional family, where patriarchy, chauvinism and *"Guanacasteca"* heritage still prevail because of its geographical position bordering that province. Families are made up of few family members. These can be classified either nuclear or extended (in the same household grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins inhabit) for the most part. The father usually works, while the mother takes care of household chores, childcare and school concerns. Education level is low. There is an incidence of incomplete primary schooling or incomplete third cycle high school education among both young adults and adults.

DATOS DE LA POBLACIÓN POR EDADES

menos de 6 meses	1 año	2 años	3 años	4 años	5 años	6 años	7 años	8 años	9 años
2	2	2	7	4	1	8	9	8	6

10 años	11 años	12 años	13 años	14 años	15 a 19 años	20 a 24 años	25 a 29 años	30 a 34 años
7	6	11	8	8	41	35	31	28

40 a 44 años	45 a 49 años	50 a 54 años	55 a 59 años	60 a 64 años	65 a 69 años	70 a 74 años
20	21	22	15	11	11	7

75 a 79 años	80 a 84 años	85 y más años				
5	9	8				

Figure 4. Cabo Blanco's Population in 2019

Source: Communal Diagnosis, Cabo Blanco School, 2019

NIVEL EDUCATIVO POR SECTOR POBLACIÓN DE 7 AÑOS Y MÁS

PRIMARIA		SECUNDARIA		UNIVERSITARIA		ANALFABETISMO	
completa	incompleta	completa	incompleta	completa	incompleta	MUJERES	HOMBRES
154	76	39	69	6	3	3	4

Figure 5. Literacy Level of Cabo Blanco's Population

Source: Communal Diagnosis, Cabo Blanco School, 2019

As for cultural activities, this school presents a cultural evening event every year to enhance the celebration of the annexation of Nicoya to Costa Rica, with the presentation of different choreographic and dancing folkloric groups in the area and even international. For the celebration of *Virgen Santa María Auxiliadora*, masses are held throughout the week of celebration. The Catholic congregation serenades the virgin and citizens make sales of food and drinks as well as cultural presentations.

2.1.1. Mission

We are an Address one Educational Institution, located in the *Dirección Regional Peninsular*, School Circuit 03; we provide our students with the service of I and II cycle Education, Preschool Education, English Teaching, Physical Education, Music, and Religion Education; in addition to scholarships and school cafeteria services.

As an institution, we work with students, parents, and the community, strengthening the civic and moral values of an Integral Education, capable of forming citizens useful to society. We use technological and didactic strategies, as well as an educational system that provides us with resources to achieve meaningful education, primarily attacking weak areas and strengthening the virtues of our students. All within a field of harmony and establishing strategic alliances to achieve a global unity between institution, family, and community with the ability to face the great challenges that this globalized world demands of us.

2.1.2. Vision

We will be a meaningful institution for life. It will count with high competence in education matters, necessary to ensure a quality education for all the involved in this process.

It will have a modern infrastructure and it will have both excellent faculty and qualified administration personnel, committed with leadership in the exercise of their functions. It will mold more critical and productive students; parents and community committed to a teaching of excellence that meets the demands of today's society.

2.2 THEORETICAL – CONCEPTUAL CONTEXT

2.2.1 The role of mother tongue

The mother tongue is the ideal communication engine par excellence and which is learned during the early years of childhood, thanks to its continuous exposure within a defined cultural context, having a direct impact on the social facets of individuals and their cognitive and emotional abilities. Regarding the above, Pando (2014) states that: “The Mother Tongue is developed by the social or interpersonal contact that the child has had from birth and the early stages of his life with the people who raise him daily” (p. 6). Therefore, you cannot skimp or overlook the great influence that the mother tongue of any person has when he or she engages in learning and acquiring new knowledge.

Similarly, it is imperative to note that the mother tongue is the first link that binds and opens up the possibility of interaction of the subject with the world around it. It is for that very reason that the human being is conditioned to develop his linguistic skill early, naturally, and unconsciously, in order to create bonds with his fellows for survival, adaptation and manipulation of the environment where he lives. Accordingly,

> The Mother Tongue fulfills a function of socialization, communication, and expression because through it, people are able to imply to others what one thinks, feels or wants. It also allows creating a mental structure, since it makes

> possible the construction of notions and concepts, which in turn, drive the development of the intellect. (Pando, 2014, cited by Vargas, 2006, p. 6)

It is concluded then that the mother tongue plays a fundamental role, not only as a social body for communicative expression, but also allows the compression, inferences, and creation of new knowledge.

However, it should be borne in mind that learning a new language tends to be to a greater or lesser extent, affected by the influence of mother tongue because it is a reference and starting point for assimilating the other language. It is also relevant to determine the socio-cultural context of the new language in order to differentiate the true emphasis for its teaching and learning, importance, scope, and practical application of the new language. In this respect, it can be classified in two ways. According to Pando (2014), it argues that:

> A Second Language is one that fulfills a social and institutional function in the linguistic community in which it is learned; that is to say that it is a dominant language in society while a Foreign Language is one that is learned in a context in which access to the language in question is relatively limited or is done through specific devices and interests. (p. 7)

Consequently, due to the idiosyncratic characteristics of Costa Rica and having a single official language such as Spanish, the teaching and learning process of the English subject turns out to be referred to as a foreign language. As a result, its exponential exposure and use in the social environment has not yet spread to other borders outside

the classroom mostly, which causes a disadvantage to student's mastery, considering that little practical application of English instruction occurs in both primary and secondary public schooling.

Despite the above, there is the advantage that the apprentice of the second language has within his linguistic repertoire, the previous learning of his native language that according to the methodology used by the English teacher and the approach given to the mother tongue, it could lead to an ideal environment for the incorporation of a second language. Pando (2014) agrees with the information before and explains that: "The subject already possesses a MT, which represents a cluster of knowledge, thinking skills and tools of expression that will come into contact with a new linguistic system" (pp. 7- 8). Bearing in mind that the two languages differ in aspects of lexicon, syntax, pronunciation and grammar, it is a challenge for the student and teacher to find the balance regarding learning strategies that allow a positive interrelationship for the student to advance in the acquisition of English.

2.2.1.1 Influence of mother tongue

Now, it becomes necessary to indicate the influence that mother tongue has during the learning of the foreign language. There are several elements that participate during the acquisition of the other language, such as the learning environment, student's motivation, age, needs, and particular interests of the student; likewise, objectives of the curriculum, teaching method of the teacher, teaching material and last but not least, quality, quantity, and frequency of exposure to the target language. However, a question arises regarding how different or similar two languages must be for a student to learn it with support from his or her own native language. According to Pando (2014),

> (...) The greater the distance between both systems of the Mother Tongue and Foreign Language, the greater the interference and problems to learn the FL, while (...) there are similar structures between the MT and the FL, it would favor the learning of the second one and its different structures; but the more distant they were, it would only cause difficulties or obstacles. (p. 9)

In the particular case of Spanish and English, mutual partial similarities can be established with regard to simple notions of grammar, simple sentences, and vocabulary meanings. Certainly, as the complexity upon English learning increases where all pedagogical resources favoring L2 has been exhausted, it will be more necessary to resort to methods such as translation where the mother tongue is indispensable.

On the other hand, the influence of the mother tongue does not escape to produce errors when learning the new language, which is completely normal as the apprentice resorts to filling linguistic spaces or approaches to interpretations in the second language, based on prior knowledge of his native language. Accordingly,

> The Mother Tongue will always be an element present in the minds of FL students, because it is their main means of communication and natural reference point to communicate with other people. For this reason, MT is often present in the different second language learning scenarios, regardless of the age of the apprentices. (Pando, 2014, p. 32)

In fact, the student's tendency to refer to prior knowledge to analyze and discern the new L2 input cannot be decoupled and thus, the support resource provided by the mother tongue is no exception.

This is how the occurrence of errors during the learning of the new language is extremely common and normal. Firstly, the student performs a whole filtration process that allows him to adapt to his own understanding of the emerging knowledge of the other language. After that, the student tends to compare, assimilate, and separate the similarities and differences with respect to linguistic information, comparing, and contrasting both languages. Immediately after, he then produces more accurate and similar statements to the target language and sometime later, he will develop greater complexity upon the language that permits him to communicate effectively and efficiently in different scenarios, applying the second language (Pando, 2014, p. 32).

With regard to the errors between the interaction of the mother tongue and the second language, it highlights the fact that they are of various kinds. For example, errors may be considered of a phonetic, spelling, syntactic, or semantic type. One of the most common mistakes among students is the so-called false cognates. Pando (2014) defines them as: “Parallel words from one language to another which, because of the spelling or phonetic similarity that exists between them, promote a misinterpretation” (p. 34). Also, the error generated regarding article, gender and number agreement is mentioned, as the transformation varies by language, based on its degree of complexity and grammatical rules that host irregularities and exceptions. In addition, error alluding to the grammatical order of statements should be considered. Within this example, it is the subject and

adjective order that usually varies in both languages (Spanish and English) for indicating emphasis and importance according to the order of the elements among the sentence.

Logic dictates that this process of “trial and error” experienced by the student when facing a new language, will gradually culminate as long as there is enough significant knowledge that is assimilated and implemented frequently. Consequently, the students develop, in the medium term, their language skills (such as oral communication, writing and reading) regarding the new language, with the sole purpose of creating statements almost autonomously and getting to think about the target language. In short, Pando (2014) explains that:

> (...) As the student advances in the learning and acquisition of the L2, the greater his knowledge about its syntactic rules, structures, and uses, so the frequency and number of errors attributed to the influence of the MT will be less. In other words, when the student reaches a better understanding and dominates the L2, he will rely less on his native linguistic system to express himself and produce instead oral and written elements in the target language. (p. 36)

In other words, the learning process of the second language is largely determined by internal factors (e.g., motivation, interpretation, and comprehension) and external (such as the learning methodology in class and support material). The student, who has linguistic knowledge of the mother tongue, is able to success in the acquisition of the second language, provided there is rigor and transcendence in what is learned.

2.2.1.2 The interlanguage

The interlanguage can be considered the way and intermediate process that every L2 student embarks upon using elements of their own native language by combining them with the target language, resulting in a variation of both that usually contains errors, but allows the student to learn from these and to refine the use of foreign language progressively. According to Ordúz (2012), it is defined as:

> (...) The non-native student system of a second language that functions as a mediator between the mother tongue system and the foreign language system. Its complexity is increased in a creative, evolutionary, and continuous process, marked by the new structures and vocabulary that are being acquired. In other words, it is a non-conventional linguistic system of the learners of foreign languages, employed in an effort to use the new language. (p. 95)

This creative, unique, and dynamic sub-language meets the objective of directing the student for the proper use of the foreign language while processing and assimilating the differences and similarities between the languages, applying prior knowledge of the mother tongue and adapting new information of the target language.

In the particular case of the phonology between Spanish and English, it is highlighted the fact that the process of interlanguage produces the effect of linguistic transfer, which involves the application and inclusion of phonemes, rules, and other sections of the mother tongue in productions and partial solutions to problems of communication in the foreign language. Therefore, this linguistic transfer often leads to

simplification or overgeneralization of the language elements of the new language. As stated before, Ordúz (2012) indicates that:

> People takes ownership of their mother tongue and when they hear another language, they employ it involuntarily for the analysis of what they hear. The phonological “filter” that is habitual to them; that is, that of their mother tongue. However, as this screen does not adapt to the foreign language, there are many mistakes and misunderstandings. The sounds of the foreign language receive an inaccurate phonological interpretation because they have been passed through the phonological “filter” of the language. (pp. 97-98)

Consequently, the phonological structures and variants of both languages constitute the conforming of the interlanguage until the student learns to differentiate from one another, discerning key aspects such as pronunciation, grammatical rules, lexicon, and syntax of foreign language.

Regarding the mistakes made during the interlanguage phase, they can be considered the different steps that the student makes as an approximation to the management and mastery of the target language. These mistakes are completely valid, normal, and unpredictable and usually vary according to the context of the learning experience, the communicative function of the second language, social demands towards it, personal skills, and methodologies used for teaching. In short, Alexopolou (2011) cited by Cornago (2017) argues that:

> (...) The Contrast Analysis hypothesis argues that the mistakes of students in a second language are the result of interference with their mother tongue, generated by the divergences between the structures of the two systems in question. On the contrary, when the structures of the two systems have similarities, the effect on learning is positive. (p.15)

Thus, errors have a necessary impact on the learning process of a foreign language, provided that they allow the analysis and subsequent improvement of the productions and understanding of the student in the target language since its stadium (the interlanguage) affords the comparison of two linguistic systems.

2.2.1.3 Practical applications of mother tongue

The mother tongue can be a great class ally when the teacher faces the difficult task of getting the student to understand a grammatical concept or structure in the target language. When other pedagogical instances have been exhausted (for example, charades, signals, images, among others) to convey the idea itself, the teacher can resort to translation, so it will allow the linguistic advancement of the student. For Cornago (2017),

> (...) It is important to use the mother tongue in language learning and should not be excluded in the classroom because it can help to establish connections with the language that is learned much faster and can save time of explanations and hours of study. (p. 4)

Undoubtedly, students have their mother tongue as the basis and the process of learning a second language and the former becomes ideal since they can resort to their cognitive, pragmatic, and linguistic experiences and knowledge from their native language as support.

It is necessary to demonstrate the practical and pedagogical use that brings the measured support from the native language of the student as an alternative and creative process for the acquisition of the second language. Besides, this alternative for L2 learners is temporary because the student progressively advances in his understanding and linguistic production in the target language, as the mother tongue facilitates the comparative understanding and motivation necessary. According to Ferrer (2014) cited by Cornago (2017),

> A large number of language teachers consider that their students' mother tongue plays an active role in acquiring the target language, as they have been able to verify from their classroom experiences as students and teachers. Accordingly, they emphasize the methodological need to include in the teaching practice a guiding use of the mother tongue. (p. 8)

Therefore, it is appropriate for the teacher to determine the precise timing and the real need to make the use of the mother tongue during lessons in the second language, without the abuse and exploitation of this resource.

Now, it is necessary to determine the pedagogical functions of the use of the mother tongue during the learning of a second language. Firstly, time saves in exhaustive instructions and long explanations of grammar and complex vocabulary in the target language. Instead, both students and teacher should make use of the mother tongue and thus, they will take advantage of the lesson to devote more time to communicative activities. In addition, knowledge of the mother tongue allows comparisons between the two languages while learning in class. In connection with this, Cornago (2017) affirms that: “They make comparisons contrasting grammatical aspects, pointing to false friends, idioms, etc., which can lead to errors of transfer” (p. 9). It is extremely helpful to have a framework for conducting a deep analysis between the two languages to indicate semantic, grammatical, syntactic, and inclusive similarities and differences of pronunciation provided that it ultimately results in a positive language transfer analysis.

In addition, the mother tongue can be used for class management issues, for establishing standards, maintaining class discipline, reducing cultural barriers to the new language, and for creating a positive affective atmosphere between teachers and students. It is worth noting that the main objective of the employment of the mother tongue is to be a transitional link that involves the linguistic and communicative competence of the second language. Cornago (2017) sustains that: “(...) The mother tongue can play a facilitating role in activities such as the presentation of vocabulary, grammatical explanations or contrastive exercises of translation” (p.14). Thus, a sensible use of the mother tongue gives way to better distribution of time and resources to empower the learning of the foreign language and a better future performance and linguistic competence on the part of the student.

2.2.2 Basic skills of English language

In order to have a uniform and equitable scope during the learning and teaching of English subject in class and the best results are obtained from students, it is essential that four linguistic skills that comprise all language, which are therefore speaking, listening, reading and writing be strengthened and practiced throughout their school life. These linguistic skills contribute to form communicative abilities, so that anyone can express himself and understand everything and every aspect of society, its culture, its historical, and temporal context, as he/she perceives the reality of both his/her native language and the influence and origin of the foreign language.

Briefly, it can be pointed out that in the first instance, the reading competence implies the progressive skill of acquiring knowledge written after reading it; interpret it so that it can be used later, showing genuine interest in the written content and being understandable enough for the individual (Sag, 2010, p. 3). Likewise, it can be indicated that the use of the writing ability, which demands from the learner an active, constructive, transmitting, and a creating capacity for unifying words, phrases, and/or texts, that systematically together, are able to transmit a message either of its own invention or transcribed from another source (Sag, 2010, p. 4). On the other hand, the oral and auditory function implies that the person can be placed in the context and place involved, including also content, intentionality, and timing of events and should be used one or the other or even both skills simultaneously to successfully complete the achievement of a given statement (Sag, 2010, p. 6).

As mentioned before, it is possible to indicate with certainty that the four linguistic skills have immensely impact on the performance and process of schooling for every

student indifferently of the school year or curriculum. People learn to talk, read, listen, and write from a very young age and as they grow, these skills are polished and become more competent as challenges appear along the way, which require an extra effort. At the same time, such communicative faculty gives way to a number of benefits for the person in different areas of his/her life such as "(…) Selection and processing of information, autonomy, decision-making skills, group work, polyvalence, and flexibility… are essential in the different social contexts: labor market, cultural activities, and social life in general" (Imbernon and others, 2005, p. 16). Certainly, these advantages are also obtained with the learning and training in the foreign language, as the last long-term goal of the current MEP curriculum program in English subject, which is to build a bilingual society with high communicative capacities.

2.2.2.1 Need of four linguistic skills integration of English language

However, for a long time, a separate and individualized teaching of each linguistic skill was maintained, rather than unifying and imparting them all together. Therefore, with the integration of the four skills at the same time, it is possible to obtain a true use of the English language that results in communicating and managing the language satisfactorily. There should be a connection between the receptive and productive skills with the content and the material that is chosen in the teaching of the lesson. At all costs, it must be avoided an isolated teaching that only seeks to fulfill some professional and academic needs and goals that society requests that students know (Mayora, 2009, pp. 102-103). This is where MEP has decided to innovate in its current curricular program (English syllabus), through task- based methodology, which involves and unifies the four skills

together (and its respective subdivisions), applying content and objectives to be applicable in everyday life moment using English language.

It is clear that the systematic development of the four linguistic skills is more than beneficial instead of focusing on each one individually. Consequently, class activities should be designed to help apprentices perceive the interrelations between listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, and at the same time, such activities must reach a balance where each one is given the same priority and are sufficiently attractive to make the student acquire the language in a natural and gradual way (Sánchez, 1982, p. 91). Only then will the students truly observe the foreign language as a method of communicating both oral and written with wide benefits and not as a set of linguistic knowledge fully unattached from reality and only used in the context of the class.

2.2.2.2 Listening skill

Every act of communication begins with two essential elements that correspond to the sender and receiver. The listening and comprehension capability of the message that is transmitted determines the effectiveness of the communication largely. Therefore, it is pertinent that the disciple is accustomed to sharpen his ear with sounds, intonation, accent, and rhythm of English language early (Sanchez, 1982, p. 91). To apply this, there are certain guidelines when including activities that exploit hearing skills.

For example, the teacher needs to select very well the activities to be used, determine the level of difficulty according to the knowledge that the students have, the didactic material to be used, and the time to be consumed during the application of the dynamics. The main objective should be to present real scenarios and that are useful and reproducible for the students (López, 2010, p. 9). Therefore, class dynamics should be

aimed at strengthening the listening ability to clearly distinguish phonetics and pronunciation in the second language, so that students can associate and understand words, meaning, and the correct way to pronounce these concepts.

2.2.2.3 Speaking skill

The other linguistic skill intimately connected with the above is the ability of speaking. The sooner a person starts with oral practice in class, the easier it will be for students to get used to and repeat words and ideas using correct words and sounds; to the point where they are able to think and express themselves in English. Adequately, López (2010) declares that: “Talking is the first of the productive skills that can be differentiated in the teaching of a language, and it is the main mechanism of exchange of information by the speakers {and that is why it must} (…) be stimulated through activities proposed in the class” (p. 56).

It is advisable to start with repetition exercises, through chorus or individually, so that students become familiar with the way in which statements are made and in this case, the teacher will increase the level of complexity of the statements and will provide examples according to the topic in study. Also, it is recommendable to provide a creative and fun environment by using this foreign language and monitoring student progress (Sánchez, 1982, p. 92). Obviously, the teacher's role falls on the successful performance of the disciple in serving as a provider and promoter of oral and didactic practice that inspires students to initially repeat and then, produce statements with a degree of autonomy.

2.2.3 Brief review about evolution of didactic approaches upon English subject in Costa Rica

The intention is to establish how the teaching of English has evolved in the classrooms of primary schools in Costa Rica since it was perceived as a valuable language in different areas of society. Also if possible, such a requisition will be made with the aim of reflecting on the leading role of the school curriculum for this subject from the past to the present day and verifying really whether the needs and demands for proper language teaching and progressive dominance by students had been accomplished because the boom to learn this language has grown enormously and has become an indispensable requirement. It is also intended to include and analyze the role of the recent curriculum of English, with the intention of knowing its methodology and proposals for the learning of a second language.

Centuries ago in Costa Rica, the need to express oneself had begun to praising not only in one's mother tongue, but this desire was also evidenced with force with the introduction of Latin in the incipient education of this country's society (Córdoba and others, 2005, p. 2). Over the years, and by various influences, it was prioritized to other languages, mainly English and for numerous socio-economic, geo-political, historical, and social reasons, this language has persevered and adhered continuously within the Costa Rican society and hence, in its educational centers (Córdoba and others, 2005, p. 2).

The debut of this language (English) within the territory, dates back around the nineteenth century. To be more precise, according to historical records, formally the teaching of English occurred through the decree drafted by the Executive Branch in 1825 to grant authority to the House of Teaching of Saint Thomas (*la Casa de Enseñanza de*

Santo Tomás) to expand its teaching of languages (among several, English) (Córdoba and others, 2005, p. 3). Initially, the lessons taught had a methodology and memory basis rigor and repetition by the students (Grammatical Method) and the staff in charge were foreign teachers, since there were no national teachers who possessed the necessary domain of English for their recruitment (Córdoba and others, 2005, p. 3).

As schooling is expanded both in primary and high school throughout the country, teaching English is included within the national curriculum. It is worth noting that this new subject was launched and implemented as a pilot plan in the founded schools of the era (Córdoba and others, 2005, p. 3). It was not until 1887 that English language was incorporated into public high schools. Natural methodology is applied (for several decades), which involved teaching a second language, applying the same techniques that are taught and used when teaching a mother tongue. This language approach must include and be, as expressed by Cordoba in the words of Brown (2000), “Spontaneous, with a lot of oral activity, without using translation and with little or no analysis of grammatical rules” (2005, p. 4).

In 1935, several educational reforms were approved to be effective and meet the needs of student populations and in the case of English subject, it was also modified. The government agency in charge of education in Costa Rica at that time (the Board of Directors of Second Teaching) had taken charge of a five-year project (Córdoba and others, 2005, p. 4). In one of the thematic areas (philological-historical), the teaching of English was located. It is notorious the little pedagogical preparation and lack of training for both national and foreign teachers. Consequently, the very recently founded University of Costa Rica with some scholars and elite characters responsible for the administration

of this institution, agreed and shared the concern and immediate need to foster a rigorous and modern methodology for the era that had to be efficient and effective in solving the pedagogical and didactic deficiencies present in the educational centers. It was why the use of Audio- lingual Methodology had been implemented (Cordoba and others, 2005, p. 4).

On the other hand, teaching English took the form of professional career until 1957. It had first been offered by the Faculty of Education of the University of Costa Rica (Cordoba and others, 2005, p. 4). Among its major subjects can be mentioned language, literature, methodology, and teaching practice while continued to maintain the method in vogue (Audio-Lingual); as it was the unifier and responsible for interconnecting the execution and practice of the four language skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking) and this integration was achieved by applying, “On repetition of patterns, memorization of dialogues and mimicking” (Cordoba and others, 2005, p. 5).

Around 1972, the almost current curriculum on the subject of English provided by the Ministry of Education was established. Within this, the objectives, mediation activities, and evaluation recommendations were already drafted to be included in the lessons by the teacher as a guide plan (Córdoba and others, 2005, p. 5). Between the years 1978 and until 1990, a new modification was made to the previous syllabus and it was simplified to a small guide (thematic contents), where only a list of possible books by level and some topics of didactic units per level were indicated. Also, more attention and research was given to oral dexterity to improve it. Even the Government of England, through an advisory service, had provided evaluative and budgetary assistance for the creation of books

according to the modern needs of students, as for providing further development of the actual acquisition of the language (Córdoba and others, 2005, pp. 5-6).

In primary schooling field around 1994, there was a significant advance on the teaching-learning process. During the government of José M. Figueres O. and with the intervention of the PROLED program (Foreign Language Program for Development), it was achieved that around 27 schools in rural, marginal, and tourism areas, would be given the opportunity to provide a higher cultural level with English to open up more work opportunities (Córdoba and others, 2005, pp. 6-7). In the subsequent years (1998-2003), other substantial advances were obtained. First, English had become a complementary basic subject of I and II public primary schooling cycles. Second, Costa Rica was given the privilege position in Central America for incorporating a detailed second language teaching plan (Cordoba and others, 2005, p. 7).

2.2.3.1 Current didactic approach: Task- based learning

It is clear that language is an efficient and effective tool that allows constant interaction and communication between humans. Such an instrument has now become a decisive link in the success and improvement of people's lives; even more beneficial, if it is included the learning and subsequent handling of a second language, aside from one's mother tongue. Currently, the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) has endeavored to emphasize the need to develop communicative language skills (oral and auditory), striving to provide content that really invites students to express themselves actively in the target language.

According to MEP's first-cycle curriculum guide, the need to know the basic principles of the task-based approach for English subject is a must and is accurately

exposed and presented. This new approach considers students as social agents, who use the target language to perform specific actions in real life contexts significantly (teacher's guide, 2016, p. 16). Similarly, communicative activities are based on tasks and real life, so the teacher must work on establishing meta-cognitive, meta-affective, and meta-social strategies that involve the disciple in order that he/she autonomously develops these activities (p. 16). Also, it is stated that the use of authentic material (realia) and understandable information (L2 exposure) is essential, as well as the benefit of incorporating technological tools (use of ICTs) in class to create meaningful, learning experiences (p. 16). The approach and need to foster intercultural awareness among students play an important role in facilitating communication and appreciating both cultures. The learning of vocabulary, syntax, grammar, and phonology serve the main task of propitiating communication (linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic competence) in the target language (p. 20).

2.2.3.2 Pedagogic mediation of Task-based approach

Regarding the official MEP guide, the pedagogical measurement of the task-based approach prioritizes oral comprehension while simultaneously exposing the student to oral and printed material production. Writing and reading skills are progressively introduced (teacher's guide, 2016, p. 24). The lessons follow a sequence based on tasks that focus on linguistic and non-linguistic elements, such as phonetic awareness, language forms, vocabulary, oral and written production, and cognitive and affective strategies development (mediation activities) in the classroom (p. 24). The development of the lesson plan involves several steps such as pre-task, task planning, task achievement, and task evaluation (p. 24).

During lesson planning, the teacher can select three or four goals per week depending on the unit worked (teacher's guide, 2016, p. 24). Oral or written comprehension goals can be combined, while leading to the production stage to develop the skills outlined in the lesson (p. 24). It is necessary to take at least one lesson per week to conduct phonetic awareness on the speakers (p. 24). The procedure of each lesson is that the teacher starts each topic with a warm-up activity, which is part of the pre-tasking phase (p. 24). After that, framed phrases such as visual aids, vocabulary, sounds or sociocultural aspects of the learning unit are introduced; all these components are at the center of the lesson (p. 24). The teacher then shares the learning goals and the essential question of the unit to be discussed throughout the class (p. 24). This question links the three fundamental pillars in the task-based approach, which are: learning to know, learning how to build, and learn to be and live in community (p. 24). Learning mediation and strengthening activities are characterized by tasks that help students remember, internalize, and pronounce useful words and phrases according to the dynamics in order to be completed, through audiovisual and printed resources (p. 25). At the end of the unit, the speakers carry out a mini project to demonstrate the achievement of the unit's goals (p. 26).

2.2.3.3 Importance of Task-based approach

There is a need to point out the benefits and scope from using this pedagogical approach that is concerned with encouraging the student to create oral production in English language, while raising awareness of English pronunciation and phonology and considering significant contexts where concrete and realistic use of the target language is given. According to MEP's guide, there are several points to consider for its

implementation. First, students' particular needs and interests should be fulfilled when planning the class (teacher's guide, 2016, p. 32). During the lesson, the opportunity to work in pairs, small groups or the entire class should be provided; remembering that the emphasis is directed to the student (p. 32). Also, it is necessary to create a context or scenario where the unit themes are developed for the student to view and find them meaningful (p. 32). In addition, class assessment strategies must provide a variety of options for developing communicative proficiency, taken directly from the English syllabus (p. 32). Finally, it is necessary to accommodate the class in different ways to eliminate the traditional rows in front of the board (p. 32).

However, among the advantages seen during the application of this pedagogical approach to first cycle students, it may be indicated that these scopes are geared towards meeting the needs of knowledge, replication of language skills, and incorporation of different scenarios (realities from the country) and contextualization of the community where the student lives depending of each topic studied; while implementing English language (teacher's guide, 2016, p. 2). Within the repertoire of academic competencies, the student is expected to extract explicit information from simple texts and manage to use oral and written codes for the communication of simple and familiar ideas (p. 33). In addition, the student is required to identify space-time information by means of images in order to indicate sequence and order of things (p. 33). It is extremely important that the student understands the purpose of instructions and gradually recognizes relevant information (p. 33).

In the case of socio-affective competencies, it is expected that the student recognizes the different styles when working as a group according to their skills and

motivations (teacher's guide, 2016, p. 33). Also, the practice of assertive peer communication and the innate skills of teamwork is encouraged (p. 33). With regard to socio-cultural competencies, the student is desired to recognize his or her own rights and responsibilities, as well as those of others (p. 33). It also strengthens the value of diversity in the family, school, and society (p.33). In addition, the student is encouraged to judge and take daily actions that contribute to self and social welfare (p. 33).

2.2.4 Problems of using mother tongue

Although mother tongue contributes to the consolidation of foreign language learning, it usually does not escape to produce negative interferences that, if not addressed, can result in setbacks, deviations or jams in the process of acquisition of the target language. Owens (2003) cited by Avila (2015) argues that: "Mixtures or interferences are more likely to appear when children lack the necessary word in one of the languages, or when the word that is interfered with is very striking to the child" (p. 25). In other words, the student consciously creates or combines grammatical, morphological, syntactic, semantic or phonological structures of one or both languages because there is ignorance of the correct form and it is easier for the pupil to opt for applying the error to fill a blank on knowledge.

Taking into account the great impact of linguistic interference in the learning of the second language and that this appear during the student's interlanguage, it is necessary to classify such errors. According to Agudelo and Others (2017) he argues that: "(...) Linguistic interference can be seen from different aspects, from the lexical and syntactic level to the level of speech acts, discursive level, among others" (p.13). It is

therefore concluded that errors are common when the student exchanges patterns from the mother tongue to the target language or vice versa.

2.2.4.1 Fossilization

Fossilization appears as an alternative technique that the student resorts to when there is a lack of language proficiency (whether for reasons of inadequate instruction, incorrect assimilation of linguistic material or over-generalization of the rules of the second language) in the target language so it prevents him/her from communicating properly. According to Vasquez (1991) cited by Cornago (2017) defines fossilization as:

> (...) The phenomenon by which deviated elements are preserved in the interlanguage, as a result of a situation of “stagnation”. This phenomenon occurs before the student reaches a stage of maximum behavior regarding the knowledge of the target language. On the other hand, fossilized errors alternately reappear until the last stages of learning and are due to the inability to apply known rules. (p. 20)

Therefore, even though a student has understood and learned a structure of the target language, whether morphological, syntactic, phonological, lexical-semantic or discursive at a certain time and context, it does not mean that he/she is able to use it in every moment and then, the teacher must monitor his/her progress and try to detect in time, any fossilization errors in order to implement some remedial plan capable of avoiding their frequency and permanence.

2.2.4.2 False cognates

This phenomenon occurs when in both languages there are morphologically related words, similar but with different meanings or even happens with words that have a pronunciation approximate to the equivalent of the word of the native language (for example, in English the word “embarrassed” which means ashamed of something is confused in Spanish by “*embarasada*” and the correct term in English to use is “pregnant”) and the individual decides to make the substitution instead of the correct word in the target language. In this regard, Pérez (2001) cited by Agudelo and others (2017) defines false cognates or false friends as:

> (...) The relationship between two words that bear similarities in the writing or pronunciation of the two languages. An example of the above may be the incorrect use of the word “actually”, wanting to express “currently”, for the student it is inevitable to make such mistakes, since a relationship is established between the two languages in an unconscious way. (p. 29)

Therefore, this negligence during the learning of the second language and particularly in relation to the lexicon, leads to the conclusion that it is necessary to differentiate by means of lists of words false friends, consciously making a comparison of the two languages and looking for the correct terminology as the case may be.

2.2.4.3 Phonological transfer

There is evidence of phonological transfer when the individual creates new vocalic sounds that do not exist in either of the two languages or incorporates the pronunciation

of the native language to fit according to the word in the target language that it is reproducing. Pizarro and Lamb (2015) explain that

> There are difficult English sounds for students, depending on the position they are in or if they do not exist in Spanish. In addition, the use of each phoneme or an allophone, according to the lexeme or root in which it is located, leads the learner to pronounce it in a different way. (p. 143)

In fact, both phonological systems have their distinct differences. For example, variation in vowels, diphthongs and consonants, as well as articulation of the vocal cavity differs between the two languages. Pizarro and Cordero (2015) comment on how the phonological variation between Spanish and English varies enormously and affects the learning of the target language:

> In the case of Standard English, for Spanish speakers it is difficult to produce certain phonemes and to understand the allophonic variety they manifest. It is then that the learning of particular sounds, which are not in the phonetic repertoire of Spanish, becomes complex and difficult for the learner. (p. 149)

Undoubtedly, it is necessary for the teacher to address the issue of pronunciation very cautiously and dedicates quality time of the lesson by reinforcing and practicing the phonological system of the target language to achieve fluency, accent, and diction comparable to English and that the mother tongue is not compromised during the process.

2.3 HYPOTHESIS

The more adequate use of the mother tongue as a pedagogical, functional resource in the classroom, the greater development of the oral and aural skills in the English subject will result.

2.4 OPERATION OF HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis	Concepts	Variables	Indicators
The more adequate use of the mother tongue as a pedagogical, functional resource in the classroom,	Use of the mother tongue as a pedagogical, functional resource	Use of the mother tongue as a pedagogical, functional resource	Observations Questionnaires Interaction of students in the class Mediation activities Teacher's sharing experiences
The greater development of the oral and aural skills in the English subject will result.	Development of the oral and aural skills	Development of the oral and aural skills	Class participation Evaluation activities Exams Class performance Assessment strategies Student's self-assessment strategies

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 TYPE OF RESEARCH

3.1.1 Purpose

First of all, it should be mentioned what exactly this research is looking for itself, considering the type of purpose it pursues. It can therefore be noted that it is an applied research because its fundamental function is to identify a specific and contemporary situation that requires analysis to provide successive recommendations in this regard. According to Barrantes (2002), applied research seeks: "(...) Solving practical problems to transform the conditions of a fact that concerns us. The fundamental purpose is not to contribute to theoretical knowledge" (p. 64). As it is perceived, this purpose is not responsible for directing an effort to produce new knowledge, but rather, it is based on existing theories and seeks to address an applicable, practical phenomenon or that has some problem. Regarding this research, it is fundamental to describe and understand the situation regarding the teaching-learning process of first cycle students in front of a new language, while mediating the influence of their mother language.

3.1.2 Temporary dimension

In relation to temporary dimension, it becomes equally necessary to define it within the research as such. It can be stated that according to the intentions of this paper, it is first and foremost desired to rely on a certain, short and delimited time so that the cross-sectional or synchronous studies clearly explain that it is intended to develop and investigate it. Barrantes (2002) makes it clear when he mentions what this scope consists of: "They study aspects of the development of subjects at any given time" (p. 64). In other words, data collection takes place at a specific and unique time, where the sample, context or phenomenon does not vary considerably and thus, its description is continued

to be provided. In the particular case of this research, the time space of a single school cycle will be delimited and the subjects of research will be analyzed within that period, giving special emphasis to the experiences found in relation to their learning English prowess and the possible role of the mother tongue during class development.

3.1.3 Framework

Regarding the magnitude and scope of the research, it can be considered as micro because it covers a small and concrete place and its population and shows it is also considerably reduced. In addition, the results achieved can be deepened by being a specific and condensed research to a small sector. According to González, Chinchilla, Guerra, and Jara (2018) in the quantitative guidance for final graduation work, they explain that the micro framework refers: "(...) To one part, an element, a sub-theme or a micro-space, about which the researcher will do his research" (p. 27). Therefore, this research is classified as micro because it is conducted in a single educational institution and the population is limited to few students of I cycle, which allows the results to be significant with respect to the research problem.

3.1.4 Nature

It can be said that in relation to the characteristics of the research work, it turns out that it shares several elements of each approach. First, it is qualitative in nature because it is intended to emphasize the study of a specific and current social phenomenon that requires inquiry. Therefore, in order to support such an assertion with regard to the approach, the following reasons shall be set out. One of the strongest points is announced by Hernandez (2014) by referring to this approach by saying that

> Qualitative research focuses on understanding phenomena, exploring them from the perspective of participants in a natural environment and in relation to their context. The qualitative approach is selected when the purpose is to examine how individuals perceive and experience the phenomena that surround them, deepening their views, interpretations and meanings. (p. 358)

For this reason, the qualitative approach is used to provide a broader and in line with the particulars of the phenomenon to be investigated. As a result, it is incurred in the experience and reaction of the students (sample) when facing a new language such as English and additional to it, it is intended to include during the process of teaching-learning of the target language, the incorporation of the mother tongue in order to explore the resulting interaction in the classroom.

In the particular case of this research, there is a great influence of the qualitative approach. No doubt, Hernández (2014) illustrates this very well by mentioning that any research that is considered qualitative performs specific descriptions of events, people, interactions, observed behaviors and their manifestations since it conducts studies on the actual context of the subjects of study and at the same time, it is interpretative because according to the observed phenomena, the latter takes on preponderance according to the meanings that are captured (p. 9).

In this sense, such a qualitative characteristic is perfectly justified in that the first cycle students of Cabo Blanco School were chosen as central axis and their active and daily participation in the English lessons will serve to make guesses, comparisons, and

reflections on the research problem under study. Also, it can be said that every piece of information collected is interpreted according to the coexistence and interaction between student-teacher and student-school context throughout the same research.

However, it is important to clarify that this document also has certain traits of a quantitative nature. According to Hernandez (2014), the quantitative approach: "(...) It uses data collection to test hypotheses based on numerical measurement and statistical analysis in order to establish behavioral patterns and test theories" (p. 4). Without a doubt, this approach is very useful for measuring and collecting data through standardized procedures and thus, generalizing any result by tabulating it.

Another reason justifying the use of such a quantitative approach comes from its inherent characteristics. For example, the choice of this approach allows the following: "(...) It is intended to confirm and predict the phenomena investigated, looking for regularities and causal relationships between elements. This means that the main goal is the formulation and demonstration of theories" (Hernández, 2014, p. 6). Therefore, this research wants to determine the degree of influence and consequences of the use of the mother tongue on the sample of first cycle students during the exposure and acquisition process of English and then, to identify patterns that corroborate or reject the hypothesis proposed here.

With regard to the mixed approach, it is evident that this research paper is complemented and has characteristics that link it to the other two approaches mentioned above. In relation to the treatment of the phenomenon, the participating subjects and manipulation of the results obtained. This statement is declared because

> The mixed methods represent a set of systematic, empirical and critical research processes and involve the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, as well as their integration and joint discussion to make inferences resulting of all the information gathered (meta- inferences) and achieve a greater understanding of the phenomenon under study. (Hernández, 2014, p. 534)

Thus, the incorporation of the mixed approach allows a broader picture by analyzing the research problem, context, and subject of study within two aspects such as qualitative and quantitative, with the sole purpose of obtaining several perspectives that complement each other. Consequently, this research paper is based on the mixed approach to enrich the results of research by studying the phenomenon of the role of the mother tongue in learning a second language, considering the creative stage of the language in first cycle students for their respective qualitative analysis while checking at the same time, the degree of frequency and magnitude of errors produced by this interaction with the mother tongue and learning English in a quantitative way.

3.1.5 Character

Having stipulated the research approach, which in this particular case reflects a mixed written work due to its characteristics, it is then possible to use a scope or purpose that works on the basis of that approach. Within the options present, the one that best supports this approach is called descriptive. One of the reasons for justifying such a statement comes from the need to observe, detail, and rely on specific contexts that occur faithfully

in reality and are ideal for identifying patterns or behaviors of a group of people or phenomenon with the aim of collecting information that may be subjected to analysis (Hernández, 2010, p. 92). Once, it is selected what is required to verify, the next step is to subtract relevant components or aspects that will make up the studying variables that will serve to make the data inquiry sufficiently capable of projecting a wide and characterized panorama that will allow to form conjectures or relationships between the selected elements, attributes and / or behaviors (Hernández, 2010, p. 92).

The descriptive research fits perfectly with the main objective pursued in this document. The aim is to sustain research through what is observed and measured. It emphasizes the reactions of the student during the application of mediation and ludic activities related to English learning and his corresponding short-term outcome on them, with regard to the achievement of oral and auditory skills attained in the English subject after the influence of the mother tongue during the process. In addition, the information collected will serve to gain a better understanding of which aspects require improvement, change or reinforcement by the teacher in charge. That is the reason why, in describing everything that happens in class before, during, and after the research, will serve as a guide to better serve the student population by providing recommendations to assist them in their facet as students.

It should be also mentioned that this research paper supports another type of scope. It can be therefore pointed out that it is an explanatory research because

> (...) It is aimed at responding for the causes of physical or social events and phenomena. As the name implies, its interest is in explaining why a phenomenon occurs and under what conditions it manifests itself or why two or more variables are related. (Hernandez, 2010, p. 95)

Indeed, this research focuses on investigating the precise moment when the mother tongue influences the foreign language learning and the conjectures why errors occur during the development of oral and auditory skills in first cycle students.

3.2 SUBJECTS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

3.2.1 Units of analysis

The next point to be addressed are the subjects of research, who are an integral and indispensable part in the construction of any academic paper. To achieve this objective, the unit of analysis, which in this case the population under study would turn out to be, must first be established. Its choice is determined by the research problem, the objectives of this written work, and the variables to be analyzed; as well as the importance of their input according to the information the research population provides (Barrantes, 2002, p. 135). In the specific case of this research paper, the primary school students who are taking first, second, and third grade at Cabo Blanco School, located in the district of Lepanto Puntarenas, are selected. It should be noted that there is only one section for each grade and mostly all members are male.

3.2.2 Primary sources

The sources of information used to solidity this research work will be described since without the valuable information collected and analyzed, this project would never have begun. This written work made use of information obtained in both printed and digital documents to provide sustainability. Dissertation papers were primarily consulted and these were developed to opt for a bachelor's degree (mostly) in Education career. However, it is necessary to make a parenthesis here to point out that also first-hand information from the selected sample that is precisely the first cycle students who are ultimately a new, meaningful and reliable source of information to support and verify which results can be obtained according to the research problem of this work. Likewise, valuable contribution and experiences of the English teacher in charge of the groups provides valid and reliable information about the process of learning, the methodology applied in class, and the role of the mother tongue.

Author	University	Country	Year
Agudelo Quintana, J., Díaz Casallas, A. G. y Zabala Ávila, K. J	Universidad de la Salle	Colombia	2017
Arias Quintanilla, M., Monge Núñez, L. y Orozco Campos, M.	Universidad Nacional	Costa Rica	2013
Ávila Mora, Y. K.	Universidad del Valle	Colombia	2015
Cornago Tarín, L.	Universitat Jaume I	Spain	2017
Madrigal Vindas, I., Mejías Arguedas, M., Montero Ceciliano, S.,	Universidad Nacional	Costa Rica	1997

Montero Vindas, E. y Walters Brown, D.			
Mejías Higuera, A.	Universidad Internacional de la Rioja	Spain	2016
Mora Morales, Y., Mora Villanea, F. y Torres Rugama, T	Universidad Nacional	Costa Rica	2013
Pando Sevilla, A	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional	Colombia	2014

3.2.3 Secondary sources

Secondary sources include articles from academic journals, dissertation papers for referential use, books, recent MEP English curriculum, and other documents (monographs, abstracts, and essays) with details on oral and auditory skills of English language; while other sources were in charge of investigating theories and classroom experiences on the application of mother tongue in the educational framework for pedagogical purposes that allowed to discover in what ways both can be united to work together and to directly influence the linguistic competence of the target language of the student population.

This compilation of research information found (mainly from other countries and to a lesser extent from Costa Rica) also provided information to sustain primary sources and deepen knowledge about education. Thus, books and articles containing data on purposes of education, school context, education, and its influence within society, generalities on pedagogy, the process of teaching-learning, learning innovation, teaching methods and techniques, among others. The information found was used only as a reference to know and be able to understand a little about the universe so wide that

characterizes the educational system, which helped to identify and formulate more easily the research problem, objectives, and theoretical-conceptual framework.

3.2.4 Tertiary sources

Other books, however, served as consultation and reference to base and refresh details, concepts, and all sorts of valuable information that was very helpful in providing this written report of content and validity (i.e., these documents also propitiated the finding of the primary sources). From these books some quotes were taken as reformulated ideas, giving the deserved recognition to the respective author. The other type of source used was a set of digital documents extracted from the internet of authors and websites that expressed through essays, abstracts, and articles in magazines or other research papers, their views, concerns, and experiences mainly regarding the importance of learning and mastering English language today, basics on education, use of mother tongue, and its possible use in English classes, among other topics.

3.3 SAMPLING SELECTION

3.3.1 Population

Similarly, it becomes unavoidable to identify and describe the type of subject, whose contributions sustain and give meaning to the research problem. Firstly, the population or universe constitutes those who are actively involved in the pursuit of the research and are an essential part of the phenomenon, which is being explored. According to Barrantes (2002), we must follow a rigorous procedure to choose the population in question:

> It must be clearly established which and how many of these informants are, how large and the characteristics of the universe they come from, what size and characteristics the sample has, which sampling procedure was followed, the

reason why that procedure was chosen and how these subjects will be considered. (p. 92)

Therefore, a process of inquiry is required with respect to the subjects to be taken into account and their respective role within the research, as well as to delimit the population to a sample if necessary to make the results accurate and substantial.

Consequently, it is worthy to briefly analyze within the selected primary school, the panorama of the students who make up the population in order to have an idea about their current situation and their relationship with the research problem. The majority of the students come from families of medium-low and low extracts. Some pupils have different home problems and many behaviors in class that reflect what they have lived at home. For example, some may have a timid, introverted behavior while others distract their companions with their own occurrences and jokes, contributing sometimes to class disruption. Academically, most of them have strengths and weaknesses depending on the subject; although most have usually an acceptable performance in English subject and keep motivated in class. In the area of values, it can be perceived harmony in the classroom and that almost all students have learned and have been raised up with principles.

3.3.2 Sample

Having briefly compiled a part on the most relevant features of study subjects, the population can be delimited to their most evident similarities and then, make use of a sample of that total population because they comply with the general particularities and

requirements to carry out this research work. In this regard, Hernández (2014), indicates that the sample:

> (...) It is a sub-group of the population of interest on which data will be collected, and that it has to be defined and delimited in advance with precision, in addition to that it must be representative of the population. The researcher pretends that the results found in the sample are generalized. (p. 173)

According to the above, it is extremely important to make this remark that both the research universe and the selected sample will be working one hundred percent of its totality, which is equivalent to the first-cycle children at Cabo Blanco School because it is an ideal school cycle to carry out the research and also due to its age and its initial literacy process in the mother tongue. Unquestionably, it can be more rigorous to determine the real impact during the learning of the foreign language.

The first cycle group of students consists of 16 pupils and it can be divided in eleven boys and the remaining five are girls. Their ages range between six to nine years old. All students belong to Cabo Blanco neighborhood and many of them travel together. Likewise, they all started their schooling at this school. Also, it is extremely relevant to indicate that within the research subjects, the English teacher of these school grades is taken into account. In the particular case of the teacher, he is a thirty-three-year-old man, graduated from UNED and has worked in both elementary schools and private institutions

in different provinces. It is evident that exists a good relationship between these groups and the teacher at Cabo Blanco school.

3.3.3 Non-probabilistic

It should be noted that the choice of sample meets the need to sustain the objectives of the research faithfully, so that a random choice would not fit, since it is specifically desired to analyze the role of the mother tongue in a group determined by its characteristics and particularities (as well as their beginning learning at English subject), apart from the other students who are also part of the chosen school. Therefore, the non-probabilistic sample meets the requirements of the research. Hernandez (2014) states that: “In non-probabilistic samples, the choice of elements depends not on probability, but on causes related to the characteristics of the research or the purposes of the researcher” (p. 176). Thus, the sample of first cycle students provides valuable information as subjects who begin their schooling process in both Spanish and English, as well as the other graders that are tested by the recent MEP curriculum program of English, so they are perfectly in line with the research purpose.

3.4 TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS TO COLLECT INFORMATION

Techniques and instruments used in all scientific research are the next topic to investigate. It is vital to analyze them according to choice, importance, and function within this document. It should be noted that each research makes use of both data collection and measurement techniques, which in turn are used and depend on instruments of different nature and scope (Sweeps, 2002, p. 177). With regard to this research, it is predominantly qualitatively mixed in nature so that the data collection tools fulfill this objective of obtaining information related to behavior, experience, and actions of the

selected subjects. In addition, according to Hernández (2014), “Collecting the data involves developing a detailed plan of procedures that lead researchers to gather data for a specific purpose” (p. 198). In other words, these instruments help to give more validity and feasibility to research, since the real and natural context of the problem stated is studied and these tools are also an essential complement to the techniques to be implemented.

According to the peculiarities of this research work, it is decided to use three techniques or tools for collecting information that are adapted to both the sample and the space-time scenario of the chosen subjects and that also allows the possibility of extracting information in a simple, effective, and truthful way. One of the instruments is known as observation. Barrantes (2002) describes it as follows, emphasizing its two key elements, which are perception and interpretation:

> Observation is the product of the perception of the observer; it includes goals, prejudices, the frame of reference, skills, as well as some instrument or apparatus used to make and record observation. Alongside this process is the interpretation to be made of what is observed (p. 202).

Therefore, it is not simply the fact of observing an isolated phenomenon, but rather to have a relevant and concise itinerary about who will be part of the observation, what is to be verified, and both moment and place where this instrument occurs and is applied; maintaining an order and noting and measuring the results obtained within criteria that

aims for a significant purpose. It is important to specify that the type of observation to be used and for more practical purposes and in relation to the research problem, is participatory observation and turns out to be the most appropriate.

Participatory observation allows a more substantial interpretative compendium because the observer is actively related to participants within the context (Barrantes, 2002, p. 208). In fact, with a more interactive link between these, the information collected will be more easily, naturally, voluntarily gathered and without a negative air that resembles a laboratory experiment and specimens to observe. However, the observer must be empowered in his social interactions and know how to approach and be part of the group he/she observes; only then the information obtained will be of first hand and highly related to the context in which the research develops (Barrantes, 2002, p. 208). In the particular case of this research paper, it is intended to help the English teacher in charge of the first cycle while observing and taking notes on the resulting interactions, strongly connected to the objectives to be measured with this instrument.

Likewise, it is important to note that a checklist allows data to be recorded more accurately and easily, by putting in action the participant observation. According to Barrantes (2002), the checklist is defined as: "(...) A double-entry matrix in which the concepts or aspects that will be observed in rows and in columns, the qualification that is given to that observation" (p. 182). Therefore, the checklist allows to register, measure, and evaluate the observed information in class according to some indicators selected for this purpose, while assisting the English teacher with the group of students.

The second instrument that is intended to be used to collect valuable information is known as interview. According to Barrantes (2002), the interview consists of: "(...) A

conversation, usually oral, between two people, from which one is the interviewer and the other one is the interviewee. The role of both may vary depending on the type of interview" (p. 194). In fact, the interview is an appropriate instrument to assess the experiences and opinions of the English teacher in charge of the first cycle students, who is capable to answer the question of the influence of the native language on the students during the process of learning the target language. Similarly, "In the interview, through the questions and answers, a communication and joint construction of meanings are achieved with respect to a given theme" (Hernández, 2014, p. 403). Accordingly, the interview is also structured, personal, and directed to indeed focus on the relevant points among this research and there are questions to be consulted that are previously designed as a guide to avoid deviations or improvisation that could hinder the interviewee's responses.

The third instrument desirable to be used to collect more information from the subjects of study is known as questionnaire. It can be said that it is a series of questions written to be resolved without intervention of the researcher (Barrantes, 2002, p. 188). Therefore, its distribution and subsequent analysis presupposes comfort and a degree of greater agility during the data collection process because it encompasses the sample of the research in its entirety and according to its design, represents a systematic set of questions and statements that limit and guide the possible responses to be obtained from interviewees in order to formulate conclusions and contrast congruencies or differences in an all- inclusive way.

However, it is necessary to take certain precautions regarding the creation of this instrument. Firstly, it is a must to delimit the population and sample to take into account the individuals who will only actually contribute with important information to research

(Barrantes, 2002, p. 187). Also, in the elaboration of questions, it is essential to select those that keep close relation with the subject and objectives of the research. These questions should be sufficiently understandable, located in the questionnaire in order of importance and relevance, considered the type of questions (open or closed) and the way to evaluate the information provided by the candidates (Barrantes, 2002, pp. 188-190). If these recommendations are respected and followed, a highly characterized instrument will be obtained for its reliability and validity and to permit various opinions of a group of participants to be supplied; to whom a questionnaire will be designed to analyze a phenomenon that involves them and it is relevant to them. However, in the particular case of this research, it is advisable to apply the questionnaire to the English teacher because the other individuals participating are in first cycle. Considering their age and the subject in question, they are not the most suitable for the instrument to be applied.

3.5 OPERATING OF VARIABLES

3.5.1 Analysis of variable 1

First, it is reiterated that the central theme of research is the influence of the use of Spanish in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year. In short, the general objective indicates the importance of analyzing the relationship of the mother tongue of the subjects of the research with the process of learning the target language. Therefore, the analysis of the first variable is subtracted from the first specific objective.

This variable is about the frequency of Spanish use in the classroom during I cycle students' English-speaking skills development. However, each key concept of that variable is briefly explained by the conceptual definition. As *Definición.DE* dictionary

points out, the mother tongue (in this particular case Spanish) is a common expression that is also often presented as a popular language, mother tongue, native language or first language. It is defined, as it is apparent from the meaning of the two words that form it, the first language that manages to dominate an individual or, in other words; the language spoken in a given nation with respect to the citizens of it (2020). In addition, the term mother tongue connects with first-cycle students, who represent the research study population. These subjects range in age from six to nine years and are in primary school and the group of participants (sample) is made up of eleven boys and five girls.

In addition, the influence of the mother tongue on the oral skills of these students is analyzed. According to Cervantes Virtual Center dictionary, oral skill is the linguistic skill related to the production of oral discourse. It is a communicative capacity that encompasses not only a mastery of pronunciation, lexicon, and meta- language grammar, but it also encompasses sociocultural and pragmatic knowledge. It consists of a number of micro-skills, such as knowing how to provide information and opinions, show agreement or disagreement, resolve conversational failures, or know under what circumstances it is relevant to speak and in which circumstances it is better not (2020).

Also, the research paper focuses on the influence of first-cycle students' mother tongue on their aural skills. According to Cervantes Virtual Center dictionary, listening skill is one of the linguistic skills, which refers to the interpretation of the oral discourse. In addition, it intervenes not only a linguistic component, but also cognitive, perceptual, attitudinal, and sociological factors, which are involved as well. It is a communicative capacity that encompasses the entire process of interpretation of discourse, from the mere decoding and linguistic understanding of the phonic chain (phonemes, syllables,

words, etc.) to interpretation and personal assessment; so that, despite its receptive nature, it requires active participation of the listener (2020). Such influence of the mother tongue on previous linguistic skills occurs precisely in English subject, which is a mandatory subject and is part of the group of complementary subjects of Costa Rican national educational curriculum. In addition, the role of English curriculum program (syllabus) is taken into account. Regarding the definition offered by the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, a curriculum program is the set of studies and practices aimed to the student for fully developing his/her possibilities (2020). Finally, this curricular program is sponsored by MEP, which are the acronyms represented by the Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica.

Proceeding with the analysis of the first variable, it is now the turn of the instrumental definition, which is intended to indicate the instruments of measurement and gathering of information that correspond with the purpose of this variable. From the instrument called “observation”, first five indicators are used to measure the oral and auditory competence of the target language from the first-cycle students of Cabo Blanco School, annex number 3, and then the results will be recorded on a checkpoint.

The operational definition that measures the degree of achievement of this variable is presented next. If around 90% to 100% of first-cycle students manage to develop the required oral and auditory skills according to the current MEP's English curriculum, despite the influence of the mother tongue, it is considered positive for this research. Whether around 89% to 80% of first-cycle students develop oral and auditory skills required according to the current MEP's curricular program, despite the influence of the mother tongue, is relatively positive for the research. If less than 79% of first-cycle

students develop the required oral and auditory skills according to the current MEP's curricular program, despite the influence of the mother tongue, it is concluded that it is negative for this research.

3.5.2 Analysis of variable 2

Advancing with the analysis of the second variable, it focuses on the reasons that trigger the use of Spanish from I cycle students in the English classroom during the learning process of English speaking skills. Consequently, a conceptual definition of this variable is provided below to deepen the most significant terms. Within the research and one of the possible reasons that causes the use of Spanish mentioned in class is the didactic approach of English curricular program and its generalities. According to Cervantes Virtual Center Dictionary, the didactic approaches to the English subject are based on theoretical principles derived from certain theories on language and its learning. Linguistic theories try to define a model of linguistic competence, as well as basic elements of the linguistic organization and the use of language (2020).

Continuing with the analysis of the second variable, the instrumental definition is presented to determine the most suitable for the research. From the instrument known as “interview”, questions number one, two, three, four, and five were applied to the English teacher in charge of the groups of first-cycle students at Cabo Blanco School, in Annex #4, in order to gather information regarding his opinion about current MEP's English curriculum, his classroom work, the linguistic development of the students, and the causal relationship of English curriculum in the use of the mother tongue instead of the target language.

To proceed, the operational definition is presented with respect to the second variable, and thus the research scope is specified by means of percentages. If the English teacher in charge of first-cycle students manages to apply 85% to 100% of the current MEP's English curriculum to develop the oral and auditory skills required for his students, despite the influence of the mother tongue, it is considered positive for the research. If the English teacher in charge of the first-cycle students manages to apply from 84% to 75% the current MEP's English curriculum to develop the oral and auditory skills required for his students, despite the influence of the mother tongue, it is said to be relatively positive for this research. If the English teacher in charge of first-cycle students manages to apply less than 74% of the current MEP's English curriculum to develop oral skills required for his students, despite the influence of the mother tongue, it is concluded that it is negative for the research.

3.5.3 Analysis of variable 3

The third variable consists of the pedagogical mechanisms that the English teacher can apply in order to reduce the use of Spanish during the learning process of I cycle students' English speaking skills. It is necessary to provide a conceptual definition about this aspect in order to understand the most significant elements of this variable. To begin with, this research mentions the problems of the mother tongue in the learning process of English subject. The dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, defines the term problem as the set of facts or circumstances that hinder the achievement of some end (2020). In this particular case, it refers to problems related to the influence of the mother tongue on learning English. In addition, this research extends within a period of one semester. According to the RAE dictionary, one semester is a six- month interval (2020).

Additionally, it is the time that corresponds to two periods of school cycle. Finally, it is mentioned that the research takes place in the context of the teaching course. The RAE dictionary defines the teaching course as a time period officially devoted to teaching (2020).

Immediately after, the instrumental definition of this variable is designed to understand which instruments of collection and measurement of information are more appropriate. From the instrument known as “observation”, indicators from six to eight are used to measure the interference of the mother tongue on the oral and auditory competence of the first-cycle students of Cabo Blanco school, annex number #3, and then record the results on the checklist. From the instrument defined as “interview”, annex #5, questions number one to nine were used to gather information on the development of oral and auditory skills, based on the recent MEP English curricular plan and the resulting interference from the students' mother tongue. This instrument is taken by the English teacher in charge of the first-cycle students at Cabo Blanco School.

Ultimately, it is explained the operational definition of the third variable in order to measure the achievement perceptually to be fulfilled in this research. If 90% to 100% of first-cycle students do not demonstrate that the mother tongue has a negative impact on the development of the oral and auditory skills required according to the current MEP's English curricular program, it is considered positive for the research. If from 89% to 70% of first-cycle students do not demonstrate that the mother tongue has a negative influence on the development of the oral and auditory skills required according to the current MEP's English curriculum, is accepted to be relatively positive for this research. If 69% of first-cycle students demonstrate that the mother tongue has a negative influence on the

development of oral and auditory skills required according to the current MEP's English curriculum, it is concluded that it is negative for the research.

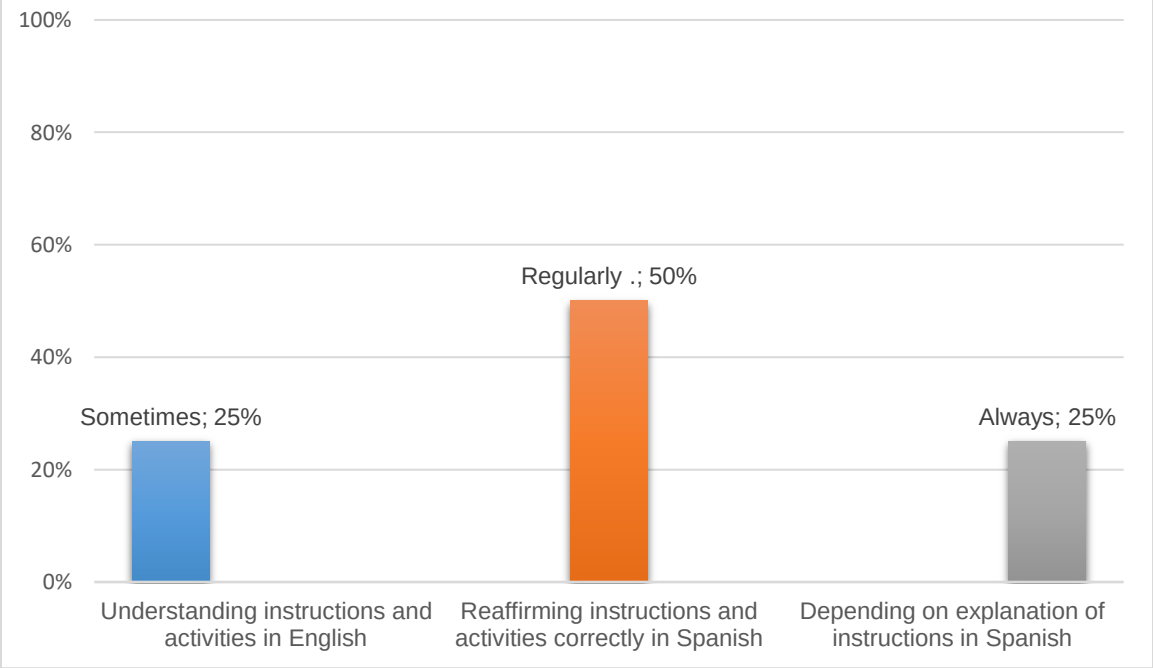
CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The following recompilation of data turns out to be some of the most significant experiences, viewpoints, and behaviors of the subjects of this written paper, including the English teacher who facilitated information as well. In fact, I cycle students were observed during several, typical lessons while developing their learning process. There was not much interaction or interruption on behalf of the observer in order to obtain more representative outcomes that intend to record faithfully the students' work and classroom context (though little intervention or assistance was conducted when necessary). Consequently, the mentioned observation was carried out through a checklist with different indicators to be assessed with evaluation criteria. It is time to analyze the giving results briefly and consistently.

On the other hand, it is very relevant to indicate that the observation checklist incorporates an evaluation criterion to measure results depending on indicators. Among the details, it includes frequency adverbs in order to designate the number of times a particular situation occurs and it is repeated in the English classroom. For that reason, it should be understood that the research paper time extension is calculated for a whole semester, which represents an estimate of one hundred and twenty lessons and a minimum of one hundred classes that can be considered active. Therefore, if referring to term "always" from the evaluation criterion, for example, it should be understood that ranges between a hundred and eight- five lessons and so on (84- 75= almost always, 74- 65= regularly, 64- 50= sometimes, 49- less= almost never, and never =0).

Firstly, the presence of the mother tongue within the English lesson provides interesting figures. A regular forty-minute English class is divided up to five stages. It is determined that in the warm- up stage, at least 50% out of the sixteen observed students regularly reaffirm in Spanish what they guess they have to do regarding instructions and activities. Only 25% of these students sometimes seem to understand what are expected to do and Spanish is not employed, yet another 25% of the students always rely entirely in Spanish to proceed upon activities.

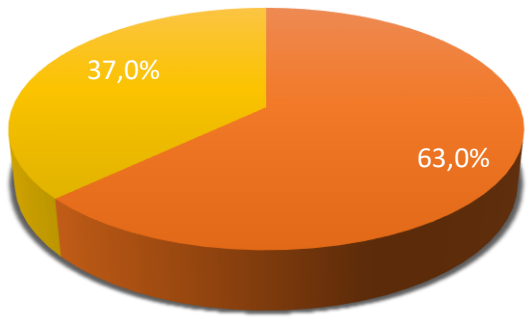
Graph 1. Student's presence of mother tongue during warm- up stage



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

In the presentation stage, it is resolved that it is managed by the English teacher mainly and sometimes he uses Spanish to explain abstract concepts and when students are not understanding his instructions. Meanwhile, most of the students (63%) regularly concentrate through the lesson, but around 37% of the students never pay enough attention and interrupt the class in Spanish.

Graph 2. Student´s attention percentage during presentation stage



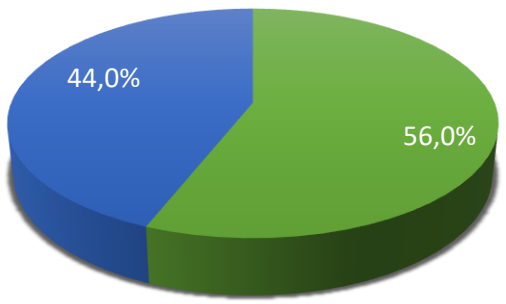
Regularly showing attention in the lesson

Never paying enough attention (constant interruptions)

Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

On the other hand, during the practice stage, around 56% of the students regularly talk in Spanish in order to compare answers between peers and explain to those who did not comprehend directions. The other 44% of the students regularly talk in English in order to help their classmates regarding completing the task assigned by the teacher since they are left behind.

Graph 3. Mother tongue on target language use when interpreting mediation activities during practice stage

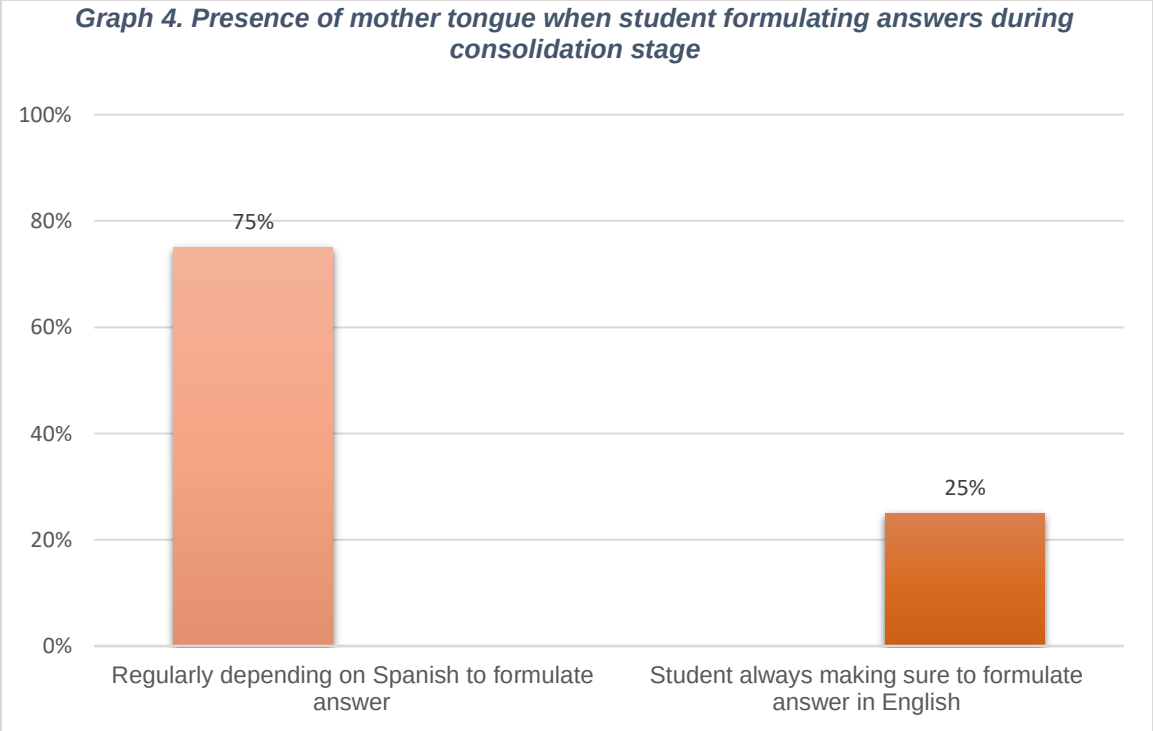


Regularly use mother tongue to compare answers

Regularly use target language to compare answers

Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

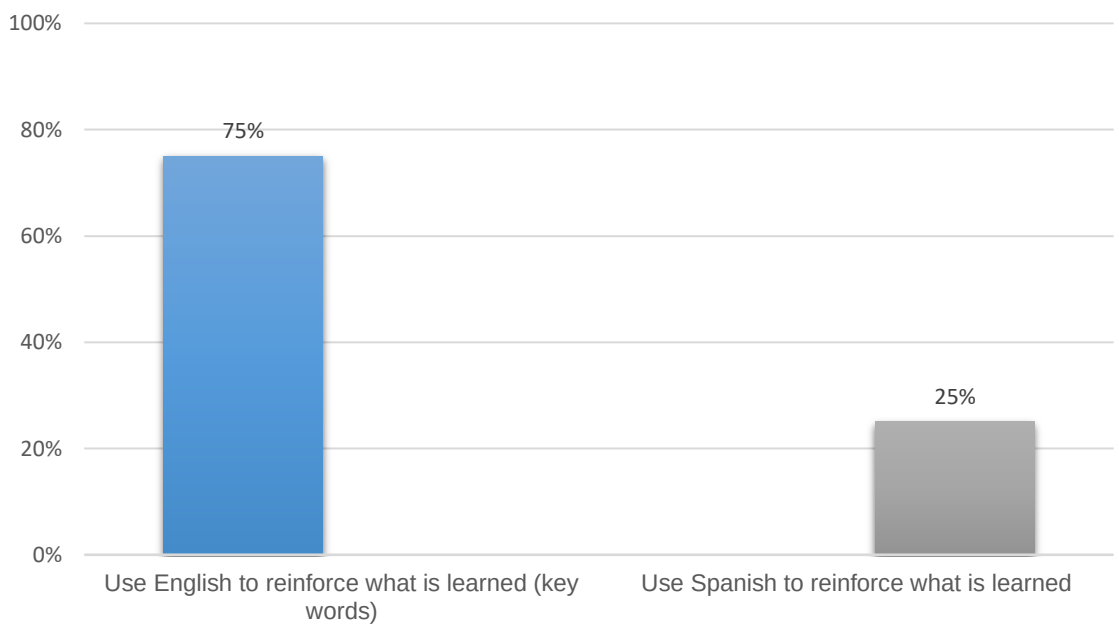
At the consolidation stage, it is observed that it is a period for checking and reviewing students' progress and around 75% of the students regularly rely on Spanish to formulate their answers, but key words are kept in English. The other 25% of the students always try to formulate their answers in English.



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

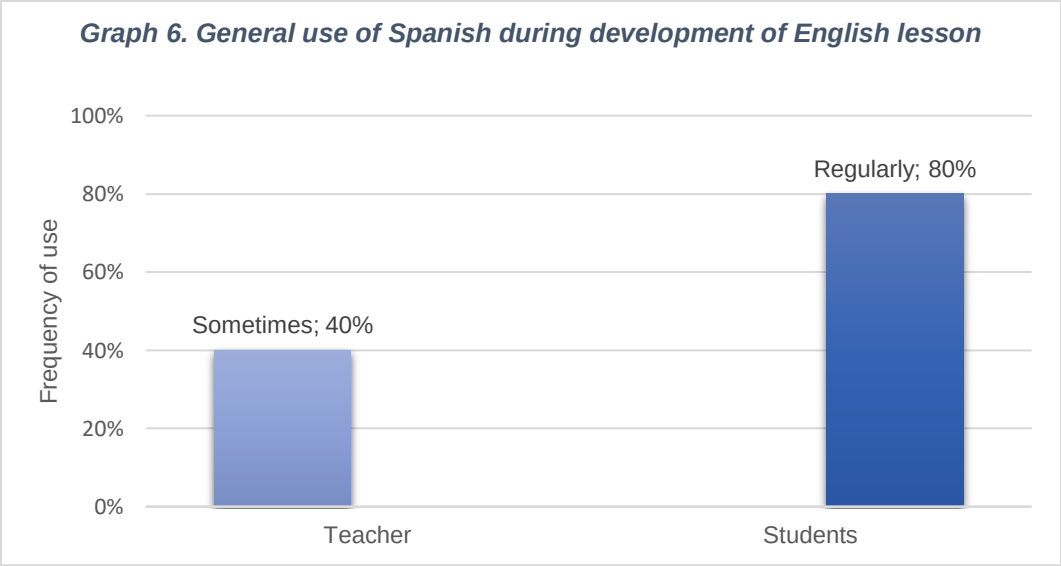
Finally, at the wrap-up stage, 75% of the students almost never use Spanish, but they intervene in English, even though it is a very short period for mediation activity. Most of the times, it is spent for choral repetition. The remaining 25% of the students sometimes use Spanish during this stage to intervene.

Graph 5. Student's interventions in the target language during wrap- up stage



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

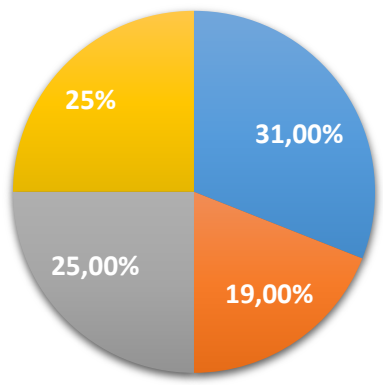
Another indicator to corroborate is whom the subject of the research is that makes use of the mother tongue during the English lesson. It is observed that the teacher sometimes uses Spanish to review instructions, indicate difficult concepts, and assure student's understanding. On the other hand, the students (100%) are regularly chatting with pals (non- related class topics), comparing answers, or reviewing understood instructions. Additionally, it can be pointed that both teacher and student sometimes use Spanish when there is revision of desired answers to check a mediation activity and then, languages are switched back and for.



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

It is important to know to mention the type of reaction from the student during the application of oral and auditory skills within the English class. Around 25% out of the sixteen students never show motivation during class because it seems they are introvert and shy, yet at least 31% of the pupils are always enthusiastic and willing to learn. Also, 25% of the students sometimes show motivation through the lesson provided that the teacher helps them. The remaining 19% of the pupils regularly feel motivated to participate in class if there is choral review of contents.

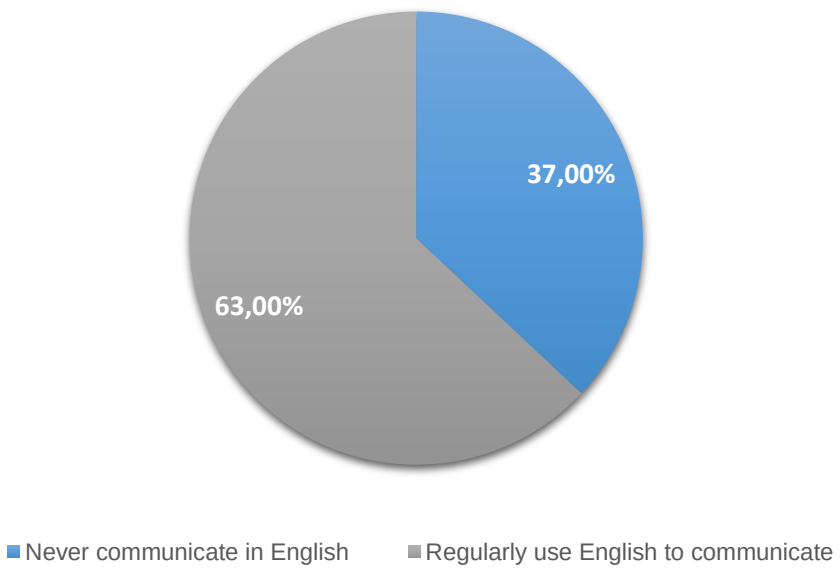
Graph 7. Student's frequency of participation based on motivation



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

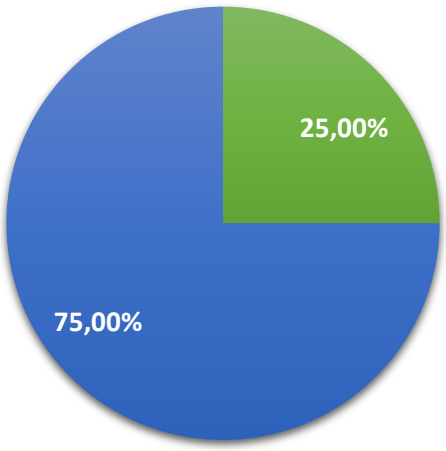
Regarding the wiliness to use oral and auditory skills in class, the students present different reactions. Around 37% of the students are never willing to use communicative skills during class since they can be considered shy; they present lack of self- confident or are uninterested. In opposition, at least 63% of the pupils regularly show willingness to try to talk in English making few mistakes regarding pronunciation and applying the target language according to their school level and curriculum specifications.

Graph 8. Student's use of English when communicating in class



When establishing the amount of students who actively participate at the time the teacher is asking for volunteers for any activity in the target language, mixed participation appears. It can be stated that 25% of the students almost never participate, expressing refusing. On the contrary, 75% of the pupils sometimes participate even though they do not know really what to do.

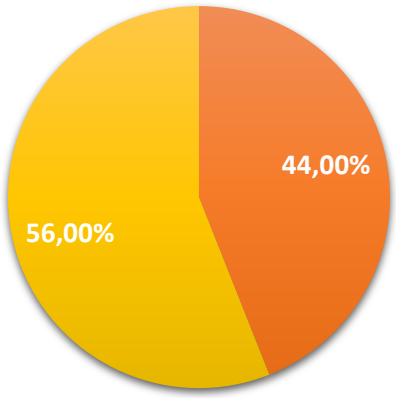
Graph 9. Student's frequency of volunteering to participate in English lesson



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Referring to the student understanding about the instructions and the activity in English, two separate results are evident. First, it is noticeable that around 44% of the students sometimes do not comprehend neither instructions nor activities because they are distracted, playing in class, or do not have enough knowledge background. The other 56% of the pupils regularly understand in class most of what is expected and explained to them through teacher's reinforcement with visual aids and gestures.

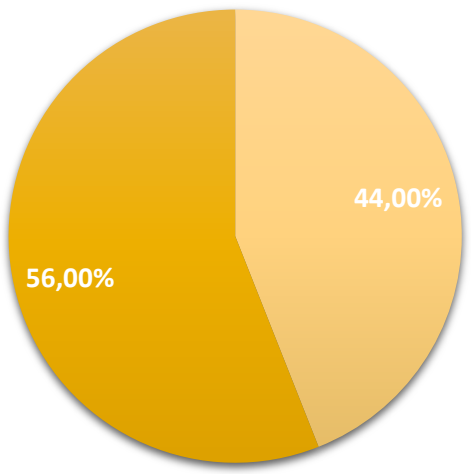
Graph 10. Student's level of comprehension of general instructions



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Another aspect to recognize by applying the class observation is whether the student acts positively during any activity in English. It appears that 44% of the students regularly behave positively during the lesson, but it depends mainly on the mediation activity's difficulty. However, 56% of the pupils sometimes behave negatively during the class because the topics being studied are not appealing and they do not feel comfortable talking or using these topics daily.

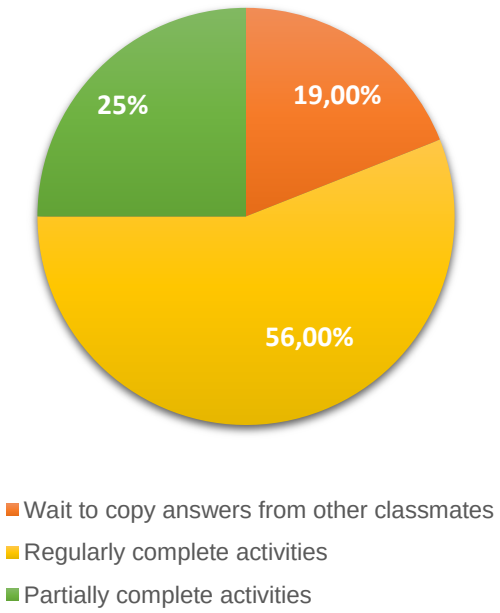
Graph 11. Student's attitude towards target language learning



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

On regards of the student's capability to finish satisfactorily each activity in English class, these results differ among the subjects. Unfortunately, around 19% of the students almost never complete classwork since they give up too early and only wait for the answers to copy them on notebook or worksheets. Also, 25% of the students sometimes complete the activities, but most of the time, their classwork is incomplete. The remaining 56% of the pupils regularly completes assigned classwork with some teacher's support.

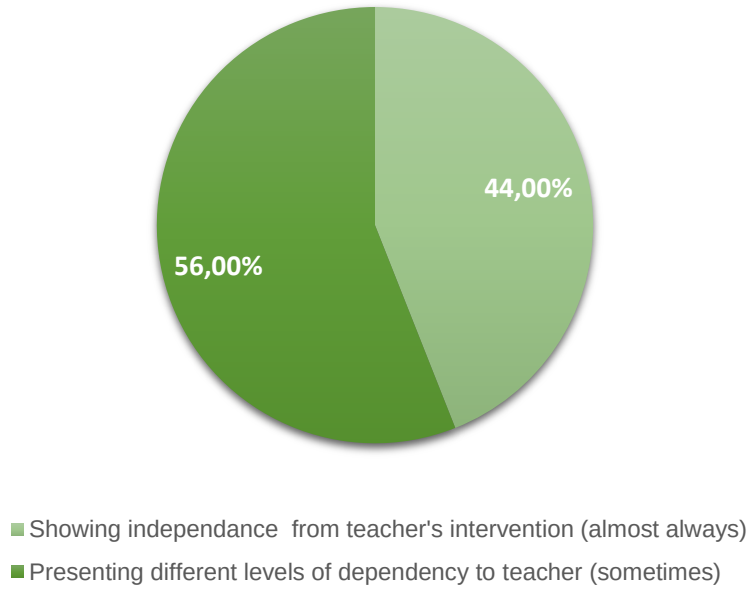
Graph 12. Student's capability to finish satisfactorily an activity



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Checking if results are favorable at the end of the activity in English, it can be declared that there is dependence on teacher's help for students to accomplish the activity successfully. In fact, 44% of the students almost always present favorable results through an oral and aural activity, showing some independence when working. The other 56% of the pupils sometimes show good results in class, but they need extra help from teacher and rely back to Spanish for clarification before feeling confident about their answers.

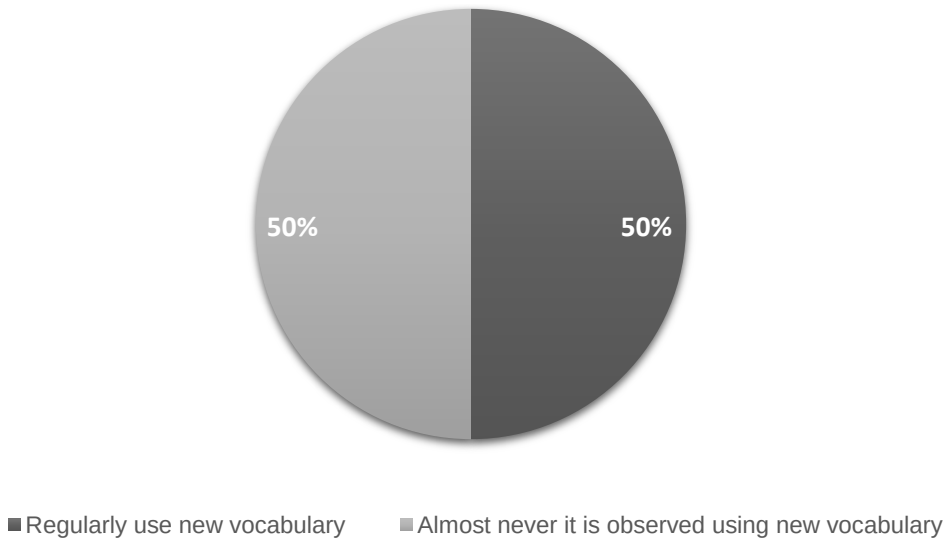
Graph 13. Student's capability to finish satisfactorily an activity without teacher's help



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

To proceed with the indicators, it is necessary to identify the practical application of oral and auditory skills in class. It is registered that around 50% of the students regularly use words of vocabulary studied in class to be employed and to complete activities proposed by the teacher through practice review and consolidation. The other 50% of the pupils are almost never observed applying words of vocabulary rather than for completing exercises.

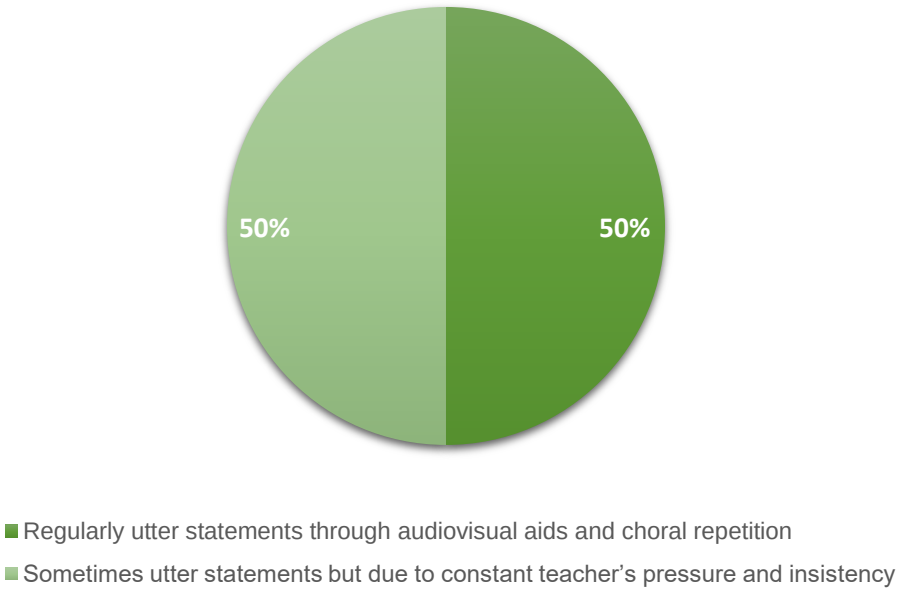
Graph 14. Student's use of vocabulary learned during English lesson



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Another point to define is the amount of students who repeat and reproduce statements initially heard or read during the English lesson. Therefore, it is perceived that 50% of the students regularly pay attention to English in class and utter what it is heard, through audiovisual aids and choral repetition mainly. The other half (50%) of the pupils sometimes practice English in class, but it only happens because of constant teacher's pressure and insistency.

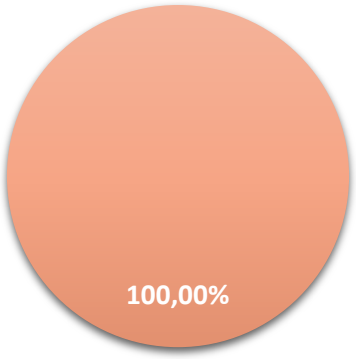
Graph 15. Student's willingness to repeat and reproduce statements in English heard from teacher or audiovisual aids



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

The next detail analyzes with what frequency the student participates and completes exercises with phrases or sentences previously studied in class or formulated by the student. It can be said that the teacher in charge of I cycle always makes sure that all the students (100%) complete at least printed worksheets.

Graph 16. Teacher's verification of students completing printed material



Always making sure students complete worksheets

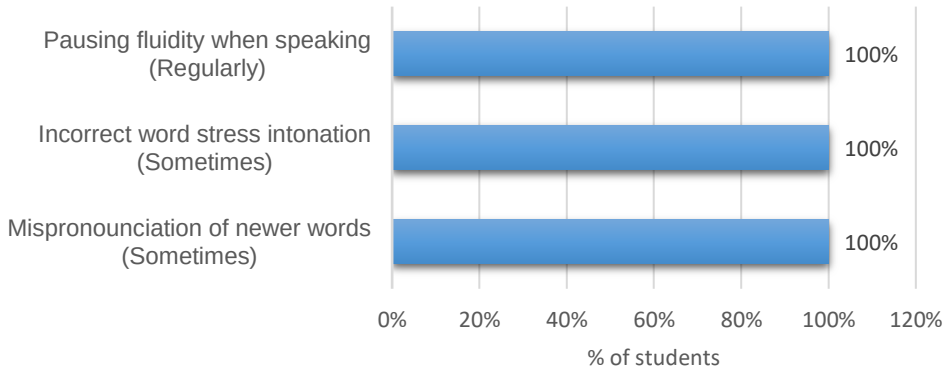
Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Continuing with the indicators of the checklist, the linguistic aspects of oral and auditory skills observed during the English lesson are fundamental to diagnose. Regarding if the pronunciation is appropriate for words and sentences in English, it is sometimes adequate after oral repetition through teacher's aim, but after a while, newer words are mispronounced (pronounced as they are written), and this situation affects all the I cycle groups (100%).

Referring to the correct intonation for effective communication in English language, there is marked influence of the students' mother tongue. The intonation is sometimes changed for all the students (100%) after a while and it is compared to Spanish since word stress is incorrectly placed on disyllables or longer words.

In relation to whether the fluidity is optimal and similar to that used by an English native speaker, the subjects observed show gradual intonation reinforced by teacher's monitoring and correction. All the pupils (100%) regularly utter short phrases pausing on new words, but fluidity is adequately according to their school level and curriculum demands.

Graph 17. Linguistic aspects of oral and auditory skills observed during the English lesson



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

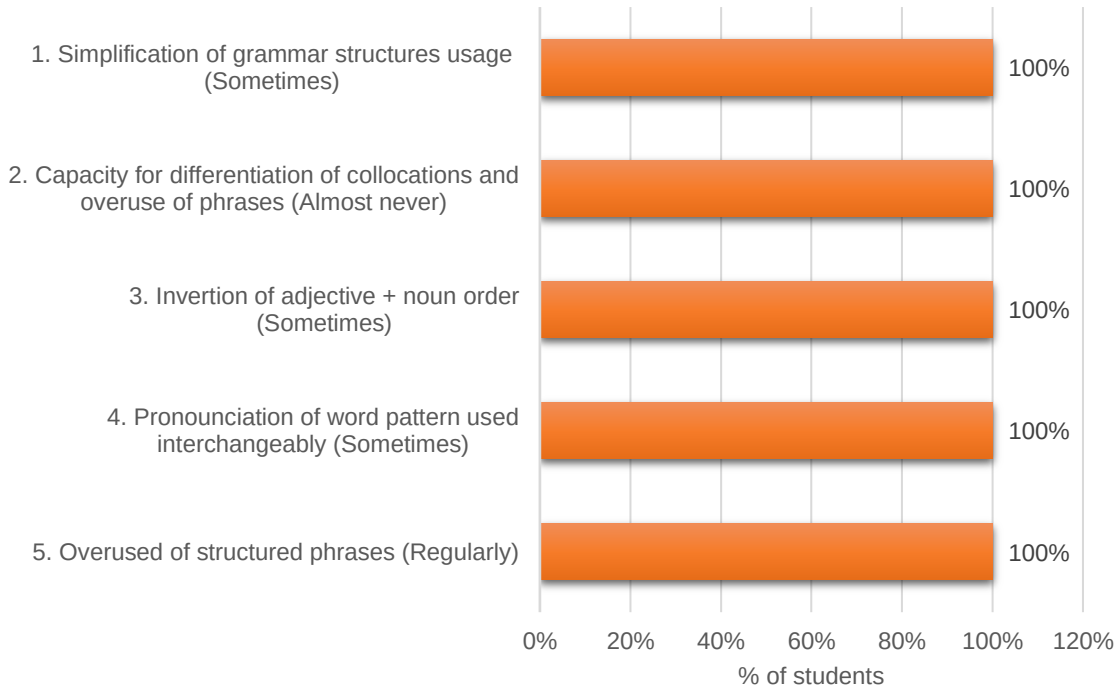
The following indicator deals with problems observed by the influence of the mother tongue on oral and auditory skills during the English lesson. To be more specific, it is ideal to verify the effect of fossilization on the English learning of the student. The observation is directly focused on indicating if the meaning of a word or phrase in English is over-used during communication in the target language. In such case, all the students (100%) sometimes tend to simplify grammar structures by using some words instead of proper phrase; for instance, when affirming or rejecting something in English (only they make use of “yes” or “no” instead of a full answer). Also, it is evident that all the students (100%) almost never differentiate collocations and overuse phrases previously learned to be applied on every context. For example, when answering questions like “what’s your name?” or “where do you live?”, they answer indifferently: *I am* Juan. *I am* Puntarenas.

Another element related to problems from mother tongue influence is if the student incorrectly employs the syntactic structure of a sentence during communication in the target language. Thus, all the students (100%) sometimes invert *adjective* + *noun* order since they apply and remember Spanish rule. Additionally, pupils’ spelling is sometimes incorrect, but it is due to student’s own carelessness.

The next aspect refers to the pronunciation of the pattern of a word or phrase in English and it is intended to indicate if it exits over-usage or such pattern is extended to other examples during communication in the target language. Some similar pronunciation words are sometimes confused by all the students (100%) and are used interchangeably. Some examples are: *chicken- kitchen*, *three- tree*, *live-life*, etc. English words are sometimes pronounced as if their pronunciation belongs to Spanish (students tend to apply same pronunciation as rule established for Spanish calligraphy).

Additionally, some structured phrases are regularly overused regardless students have other options and have knowledge about it; for example, when talking about hobbies, they can only remember and formulate something like "*I play soccer*" or regarding feeling status, they only use "*I am happy*."

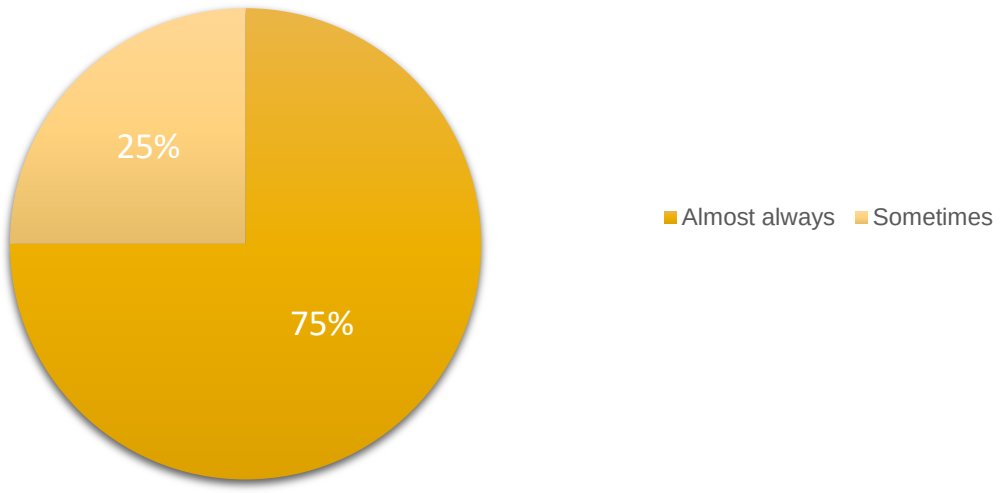
Graph 18. Problems observed by the influence of the mother tongue on oral and auditory skills during the English lesson



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

It is time to mention the role of interlanguage present in the oral and auditory skills observed during the English lesson. When referring to the student's disposition to randomly exchange words in both English and Spanish during the communication in the target language, it is clear that there is almost always a high influence on regards of Spanish language since around 75% of the students build sentences in their mother tongue and only include short answers or specific words in English. However, 25% of the students sometimes use target language in a restricted way through teacher's monitoring assistance by uttering full- English short statements.

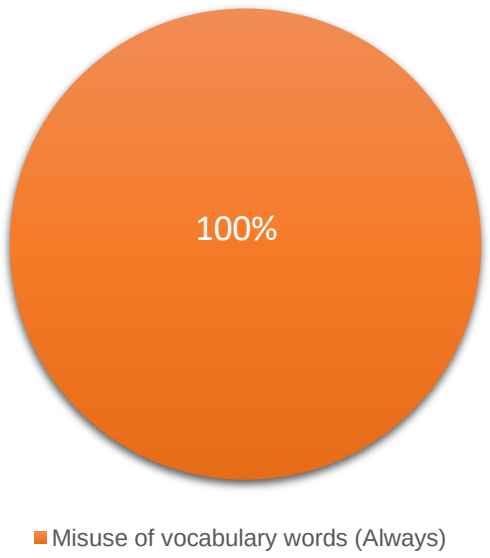
Graph 19. Frequency of language exchange (interlanguage process) indifferently in the oral and auditory skills observed during the English lesson



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Another related aspect is if the student incorrectly employs words that morphologically resemble Spanish but have a different meaning in English. During the observation, 100% of the students always use incorrectly some English words at least once. As a result, false cognates are usually present when these words reflect some resemblance to Spanish, leading pupils to confusion and word misuse; for instance, vocabulary words like *cap* confused with “capa” instead of *raincoat*, *black* confused with “blanco” instead of *white*, principal confused with “principal” instead of *main*, *pan* confused with “pan” instead of *bread*, etc. Although, it happens with isolated words.

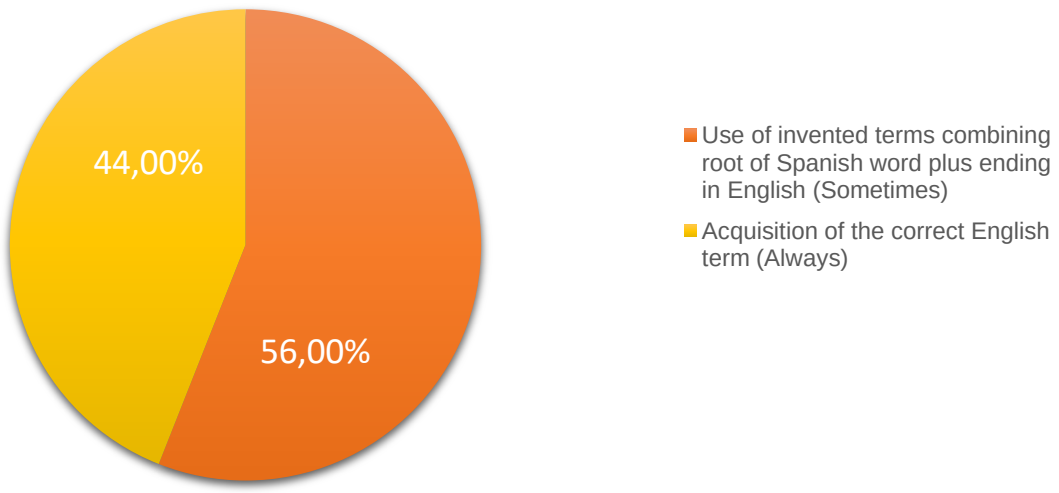
Graph 20. Incorrect use of words that morphologically resemble in Spanish but have a different meaning in English



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

It is crucial to point out if the student creates hybrid words from both languages by not knowing the precise term in the target language. It turns out that some students (56%) sometimes create invented terms combining root of Spanish word plus ending in English and it could include English simulated pronunciation. In addition, they resort to shorten the equivalent Spanish word and give an English pronunciation. For example, some invented words can be “gat” instead of *cat*, “director” instead of *principal*, “vent” instead of *fan*, “ons” instead of *eleven*, “bor” instead of *eraser*. It happens with isolated words since these students do not know the correct term in English. The rest of pupils (44%) always wait until they learn and acquire the correct English word.

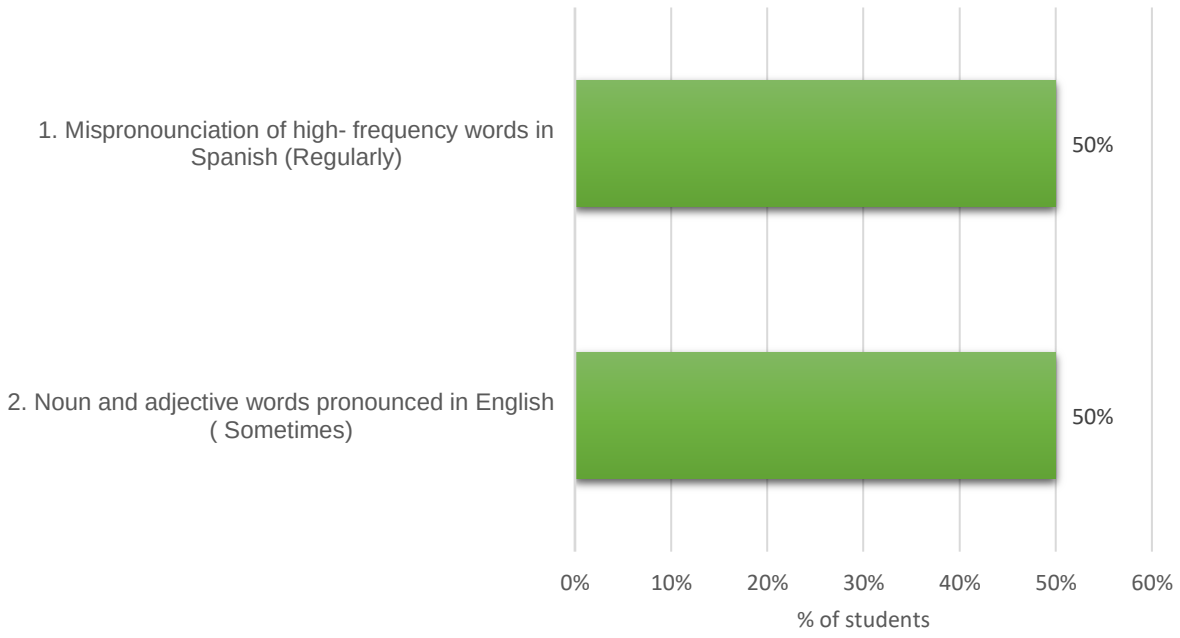
Graph 21. Creation of hybrid words from both languages



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

The last indicator to verify is the effects of phonological transfer of the mother tongue on oral and auditory skills observed during the English lesson. Particularly, it is vital to know if the student pronounces the words the same as the mother tongue although they are in English. Some students (around 50%) regularly pronounce high-frequency words (articles, prepositions, pronouns, etc.) as in Spanish. However, constantly- practiced vocabulary lists conformed mainly by nouns and adjectives are pronounced closer to English. Conversely, the other 50% of the pupils may sometimes mispronounce some words, but after teacher's correction, they eventually utter them correctly.

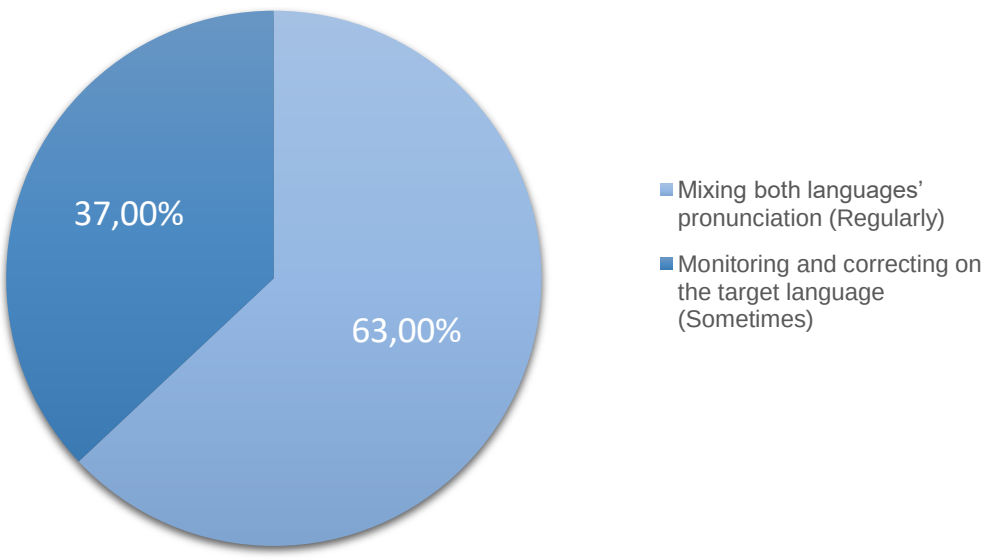
Graph 22. Effects of phonological transfer of the mother tongue on the oral and auditory skills observed during the English lesson



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

The following aspect related to phonological transfer from Spanish is regarding if the student mixes word pronunciation in the target language in both Spanish and English. Therefore, 63% of the students regularly tend to mix up both languages' pronunciation whenever they are encountering new words and sentence structures. Some common pronunciation errors are for instance, placing incorrectly main stress on words; silent *e* in words is pronounced; *h* sound at the beginning of a word is not pronounced; *b* and *v* sounds are pronounced the same way; diphthongs and vowels in English are mispronounced; among other interesting language combinations and omissions. On the other hand, mixing pronunciation of words sometimes occurs within 37% of the students, yet they monitor and correct themselves after teacher's instruction.

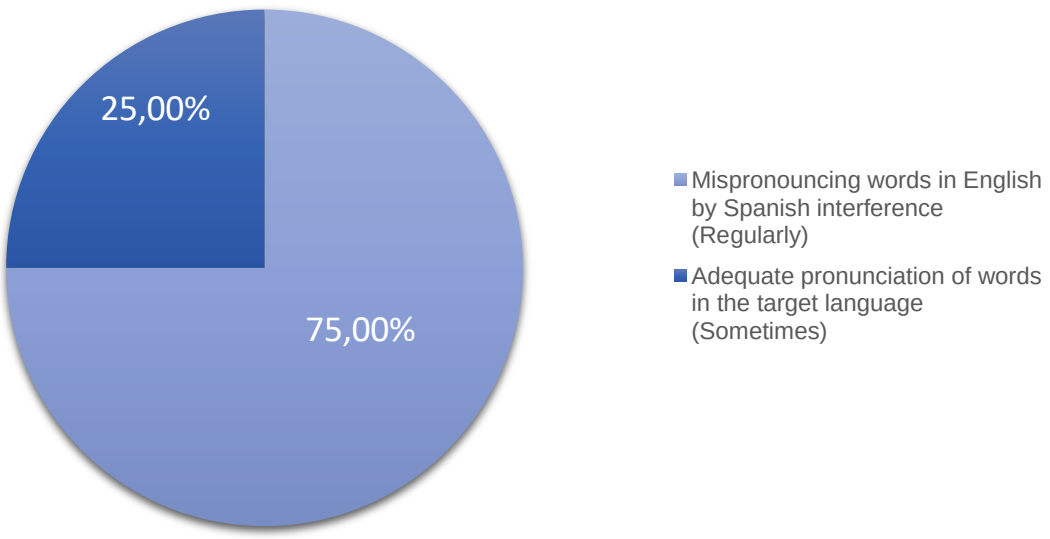
Graph 23. Mixing word pronunciation in the target language



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Another aspect to specify is if the student incorrectly pronounces the words in the target language by influence of the mother tongue. Around 75% of the students regularly mispronounce words in English by Spanish interference. It is more notorious in monosyllables and high- frequency words. It happens since Spanish pronunciation influence unconsciously tell the pupils to pronounce every word as it is written or read, which is clear it is not the case of English. However, it is less frequent in 25% of the students (it sometimes happens), but there is need of teacher's help to guide them according to the adequate pronunciation of words in the target language.

Graph 24. Incorrect pronunciation of words in the target language by influence of Spanish



Source: Observation checklist, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Having analyzed deeply the observation checklist, it is now turn to continue with the interview. This measuring instrument permits to obtain answers firsthand from an interviewee who is a professional certificated in teaching English and has experience with students in primary school at MEP. The following questions are designed to inquire about classroom context, student's and teacher's role in class, relationship between English subject and Spanish language, MEP's English curriculum, teacher's methodology and didactic material, among other equally important topics.

In the first place, to the inquiry about providing an opinion related to the didactic method of task resolution present in the current English syllabus for first cycle students, the teacher believes that it is an excellent opportunity to make English language relevant for students. Then, it is only possible by translating content to real scenarios where the main goal is to put into practice the target language. Additionally, this linguistic approach is seeking to emphasize on phonology, pronunciation, and active communication between students through collaborative team or pair work and technology available in the classroom.

Secondly, answering the question about what didactic and ludic techniques he has applied to develop the oral and auditory skills of first cycle students when applying the current English curriculum, the teacher replies that he has been applying didactic techniques in order to improve the students both oral and auditory skills. Strategies like choral repetition, role- plays, gap conversations, charades, singing songs, listening to video- clips, encouraging them to become volunteers, and say answers in English when checking an exercise are certainly ideal opportunities to boost up their communicative skills. Also, among the ludic activities, the English teacher reinforces knowledge by

completing worksheets, crosswords, word search puzzles, picture identification exercises, and handicrafts. In addition, the English teacher makes use of ICTs by playing interactive online games.

Thirdly, it is inquired what the challenges or difficulties have been encountered during the use of the didactic task resolution method present in the current English curriculum for first cycle students and the interviewee mentions that the students sometimes don't want to participate in class. There is some sort of resistance to the target language being taught. He has observed that it is a result of bad class experiences, scenic panic, shyness, and disinterest. Another challenge is regarding correcting students and implementing some recommendations. They do not like to be corrected and continue committing the same mistake repeatedly and then, communicative skills are affected (resulting on fossilization effect).

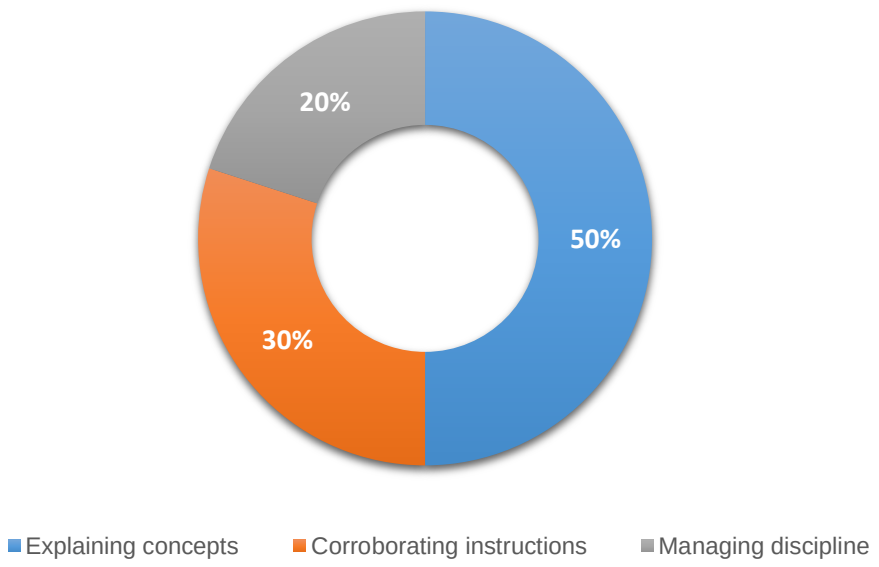
Next, to the question regarding what the performance (linguistic competences achieved) of first cycle students in oral and auditory skills has been showed when developing the different contents of the current English curriculum program, the teacher declares that their performance has been good; however, there is always chance for improvement. Regarding their level, they are able to answer short information questions, follow classroom commands, identify and mention orally words of vocabulary, remember phonetic patterns studied in class, and repeat adequately short phrases heard in English. On the other hand, the students still present some difficulty creating statements on their own. Their mother tongue influences their learning since they sometimes communicate in Spanish, even though they are requested not to do it.

Lastly, replying to the interrogation about what his opinion is, regarding the use of the mother tongue during learning English in the particular case of first cycle students, the teacher says that it should not be restricted completely, but controlled and monitored because Spanish is an integral part of the student's first school years. In his case, he uses Spanish language when students do not understand instructions and it is the last resource. Additionally, when there is a concept very abstract to explain and there is no other way to convey it (through gestures or visual aids), so it is more practical to say it in Spanish (facilitating scaffolding process in L2). Also, if there is need to discipline a student, it is better and more effective to do it in the mother tongue. Finally, Spanish is applied when an important non- English class- related message has to be communicated to students.

To proceed with the analysis and interpretation of data, it is pertinent to include the findings provided by the application of a survey taken by the English teacher in charge of the I cycle students at Cabo Blanco School. This instrument is flexible regarding possible answers since it allows the interviewee to choose between alternatives, indicate his own, and establish rank of relevance among them. However, these answers represent estimates from the interviewee since he does not always use accurately numbers regarding exact amount of students he has in charge. Likewise, percentages presented in this survey do not reflect the approximate quantity of lessons the teacher has definitely taught through the first semester of school year 2020 neither does it truly show the right frequency an activity is repeated and takes place. It is actually a way to order and differentiate data from more important to less important when considering and providing his answers.

Starting with the first question of the survey, it inquiries about when the teacher finds it is appropriate to use the mother tongue of the students in the English lesson, then the teacher replies that at least 50% of his lessons, he uses Spanish for explaining concepts. Another 30%, it is dedicated for corroborating instructions and the remaining 20% of his classes, he uses Spanish to manage discipline.

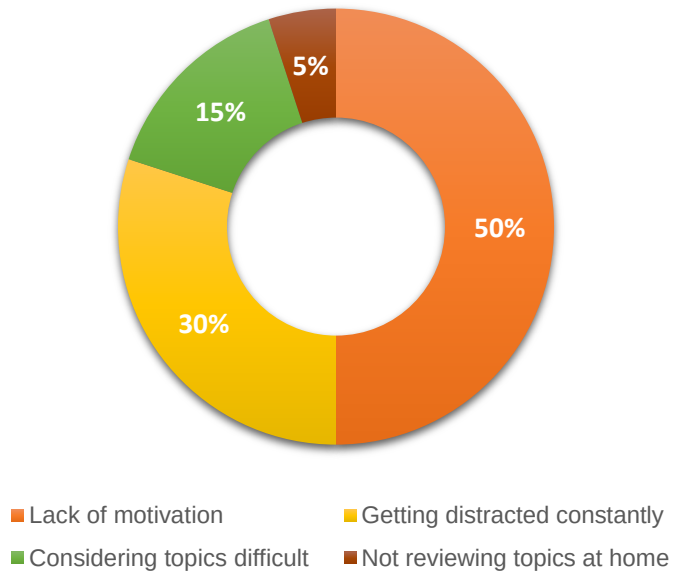
Graph 25. Teacher's use of mother tongue in the English lesson



Source: Survey, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

The next question discusses what inconveniences for students the teacher has noticed during English class, he responds that at least 50% of the students present lack of motivation. Therefore, 30% of the students get distracted constantly. Another 15% of students notifies him that the topics are difficult for them. Finally, the teacher states that 5% of the pupils do not review topics at home.

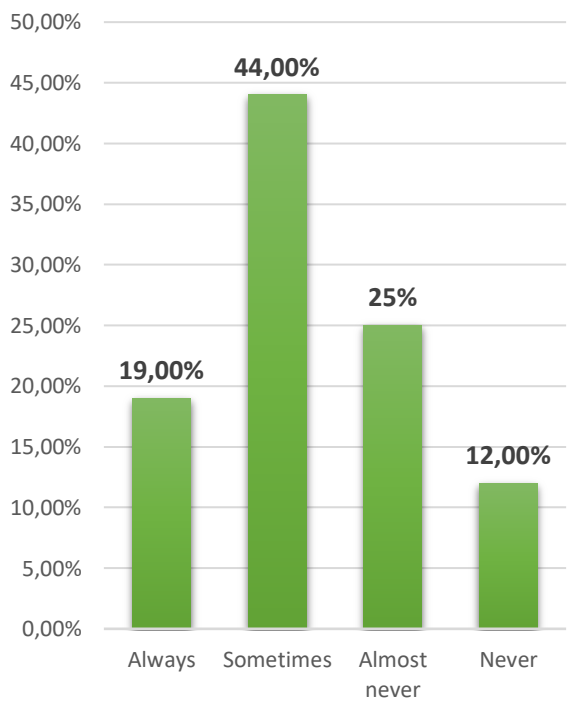
Graph 26. Inconveniences found from students during the English lesson



Source: Survey, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Related to how often he has noticed that students are able to reproduce what they hear in English through teacher's statements or audiovisual and digital aids, the teacher answers that at least 19% of his students always take advantage of audiovisual stimuli and learn better that way. Approximately, 44% of his pupils sometimes learn English through teacher´s utterances and audiovisual material, but it is still chosen visual aids. Unfortunately, 25% of his students almost never reinforce learning through these resources since they claim that being at home, it is not possible to replicate and practice what audiovisual and digital aids offer in class. Lastly, 12% of his pupils virtually never consider the importance of audiovisual aims because they are distracted or show disinterest to the subject.

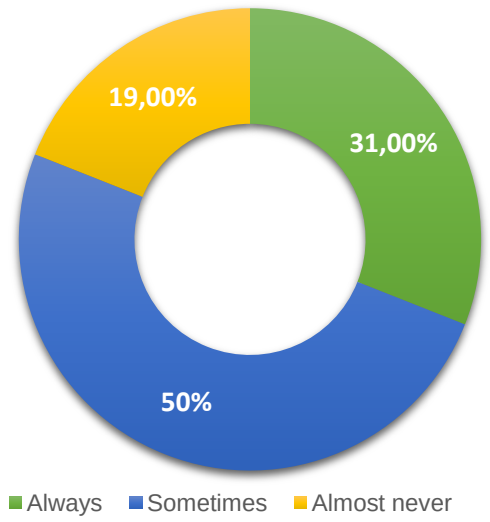
Graph 27. Student's level to reproduce orally from listening to teacher's statements and audiovisual information



Source: Survey, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

To the question about how often the teacher has noticed that students use their mother tongue to participate and communicate in class, he concludes that at least 31% of his students are always talking in Spanish and that make them switch into English, it is a very difficult task. Then, around 50% of his pupils sometimes use Spanish when they cannot formulate their idea in English and it is believed it is easier and less time-consuming to proceed in Spanish. There are only 19% of his students who almost never use Spanish and usually participate and try to use English as much as possible in each lesson.

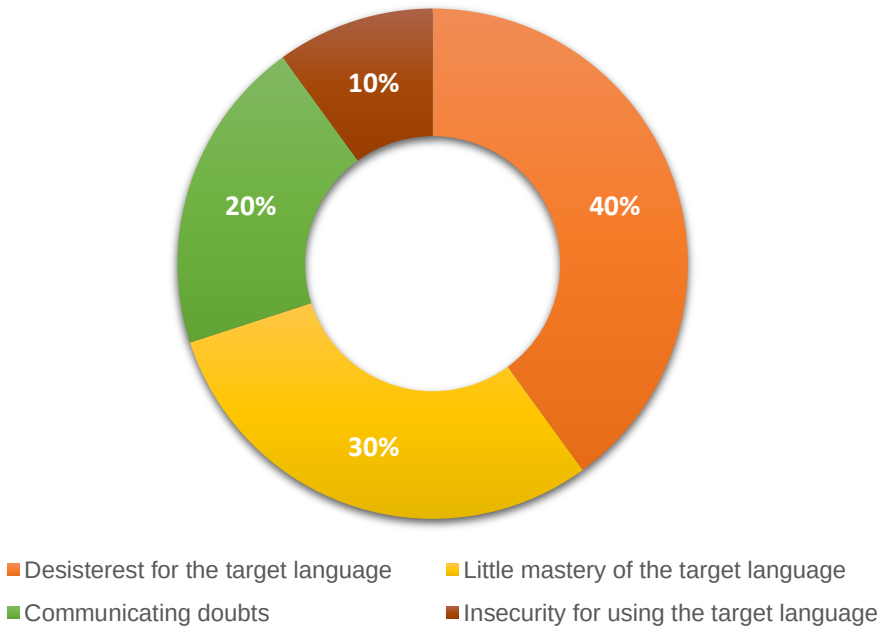
Graph 28. Student's use of mother tongue for participating and communicating in class



Source: Survey, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Another interrogation is based on what the teacher thinks that the reasons why students use the mother tongue in the English class. He indicates that at least 40% of the students have disinterest for the target language. It is stated for 30% of his pupils that one of the reasons for mother tongue use in the classroom is because they have little mastery of the target language. Also, the teacher confirms that 20% of the students use Spanish for communicating doubts. On the other hand, there is a 10% of his students who show insecurity on the use of the target language.

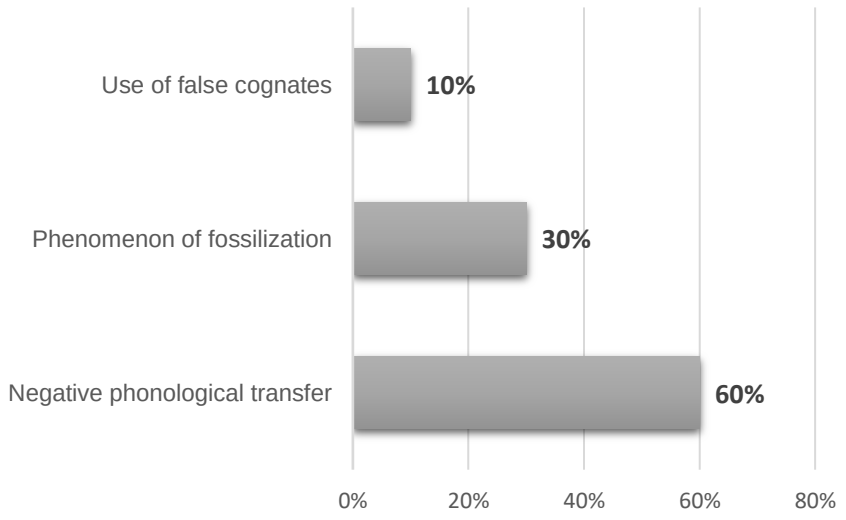
Graph 29. Reasons believed by teacher for students to use mother tongue in the English class



Source: Survey, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

The following question asks what problems the teacher thinks result from the influence of the mother tongue when learning English. He specifies that at least 60% of the affectation comes from negative phonological transfer, impacting severely the communicative skills of the students. A 30% of the impact can be attributed to phenomenon of fossilization that it is sometimes hard to eliminate from the student's linguistic repertoire if it has not been detected and corrected opportunely through the school years. Finally, 10% of the problem can be referred to continued use of false cognates, but at primary school level, it is mainly recognized and restricted to vocabulary usage, so it is easier to treat.

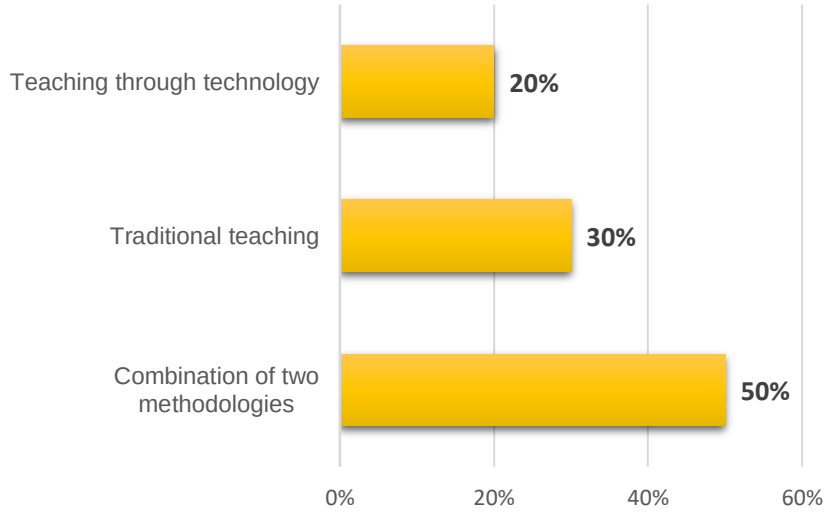
Graph 30. Problems resulting from the influence of the mother tongue when learning English



Source: Survey, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

To continue with, it is queried about what teaching methodologies the teacher has recently applied to instruct and improve the oral and auditory skills of students in the English subject. He replies that 50% of his lessons combine two methodologies, which are traditional and modern (applying technology) and this combination occurs more frequently during the warm-up, presentation, and practice stages of each English lesson. Another 30% of his classes are devoted entirely to traditional teaching (notebook, books, and whiteboard) since it is ideal for the consolidation stage, which requires something more specific and structured for students to work on. Additionally, 20% of his lessons are reserved to teaching through technology (computer, video beam, smart TV, etc.) and this small percentage reflects the sum-up stage that it is actually a quick learning closure of the contents studied in the classroom, so ICTs usage adapts perfectly.

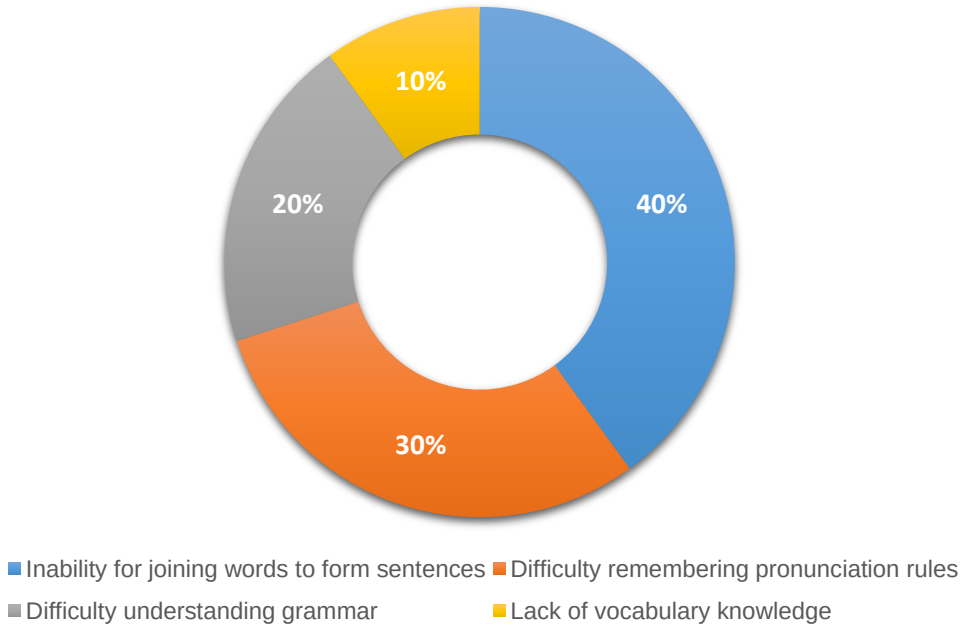
Graph 31. Teaching methodologies used for improving the oral and auditory skills of the students



Source: Survey, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

Based on the question indicating which language areas the teacher has noticed that students have the most trouble developing, referring to oral and hearing skills in English, he ratifies that around 40% of his pupils show inability to join English words and form sentences; although, reading and writing skills are well developed. In addition, 30% of the students' present target language difficulties remembering most pronunciation rules, even though these are reaffirmed in class. A small amount of students (20%) indicates to him that they have difficulty understanding grammar, but certainly it is not something to prioritize in class and it is learned inductively. Another 10% of pupils declare to him that their ineffectiveness regarding developing oral and hearing skills in English is due to lack of vocabulary knowledge that represents an obstacle to advance to more abstract and complex contents.

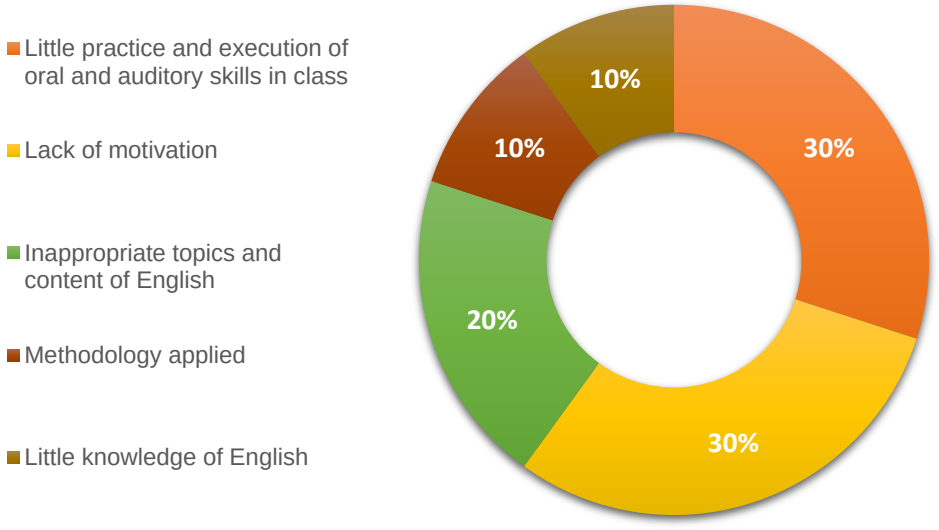
Graph 32. Student's language areas presenting trouble to develop oral and auditory skills in English



Source: Survey, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

The last question of this survey focuses on what the teacher thinks causes a problem for students to develop oral and auditory skills in English. He assures that 30% of his students are affected on such matter because of little practice and execution (active use) of oral and auditory skills during class since he believes that the amount of lessons per week it is not enough to strengthen these linguistic skills. Undoubtedly, at home, there is virtually no chance to practice and apply knowledge obtained in class. In addition, 30% of the pupils reveals lack of motivation on the part of the student (disinterest in the subject) and to solve this behavior, the teacher in charge motivates them continually with real life details about importance of English nowadays. There is another 20% of students that the teacher has noticed they argued that the topics and content of English subject are not appropriate for developing oral and auditory skills, but it seems it is more concerned to the fact that topics are not contextualized enough to student's lifestyle and community, producing presumably a curricular breach. Another 10% of the students, according to the teacher, have told him that the methodology applied (way of teaching and resources usage) is the reason why oral and auditory skills are not sufficiently developed; as a result, the teacher mentioned that he always listens to his students needs and likes and try to innovate whenever it is possible. To finish, 10% of the pupils indicate to him that little knowledge of English language has caused them trouble to communicate in English. In such cases, the teacher says he provides extra help, follow- up, and feedback to their participations and interactions in class in order to reduce any delay in their learning process.

Graph 33. Teacher's opinion about causing student's problems to develop oral and auditory skills in English



Source: Survey, Cabo Blanco School, 2020

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- According to variable #1 mentioning the frequency of Spanish use in the classroom during I cycle students' English-speaking skills development, it is concluded that it certainly exists Spanish influence over I cycle students at Cabo Blanco School when attempting to learn English. Such Spanish influence is persistent within the English lesson and even though the teacher ensures not to use the mother tongue rather than for clarifying instructions and correcting discipline (didactic and functional function), students still rely on speaking in Spanish regardless if they are told not to do it. In general terms, more than half of the students sometimes use Spanish either to interact and participate in class or to contribute somehow on disrupting the class.
- Regarding variable #2 about reasons that trigger the use of Spanish from I cycle students in the English classroom during the learning process of English speaking skills, it can be stated that each stage of the English lesson presents a different amount of Spanish interference. However, it is more evident during the practice and consolidation stages where mediation activities are evaluated and teacher asks some volunteers to participate. Few students actually use English to provide full statements. On the contrary, most of the pupils are only able to provide short answers or begin their statement in Spanish and finish with the specific answer (a word or short phrase) in English.
- On relation to the reasons that trigger the use of Spanish, it can be indicated that at least half of the I cycle students sometimes use their mother tongue because they feel more confident since English represents a struggling, stressful situation and it is more evident on those students who are shy and introvert. Additionally, Spanish is used

whenever the student encounters a term he/she does not know in the target language, so his/her solving mechanism is coming up with a new concept (interlanguage), which is basically a combination of both languages and has a marked Spanish resemblance regarding pronunciation and spelling. On the other hand, it can happen that the student does know the right term or phrase, but it is applied incorrectly (presence of false cognates or fossilization effect). There are reduced cases where a few students decide not to use English, although they are completely capable of communicating on this language. Apparently, they do not like the target language and feel that it is unnecessary and unrelated to the context they live.

- Referring to variable #3 about the pedagogical mechanisms that the English teacher can apply in order to reduce the use of Spanish during the learning process of I cycle students' English speaking skills, it can be concluded that it is vital to work on motivation. Students have to be convinced about the importance of English in Costa Rica and the world. The English teacher needs to be careful about the learning strategies he/she considers to use in the classroom. These strategies should reflect realistically student's needs and likes; respecting their attention span and social context. It is necessary that the English teacher provides significant opportunities for active oral production and interaction and enough input regarding listening practice, which is precisely what the task- problem solving approach demands at the current curriculum. It is achievable through well- planned mediation activities, ludic exercises, and use of technology. Additionally, the teacher requires monitoring and providing feedback regarding the student's progress in order to avoid deviations from Spanish influence, yet it does not mean that the mother tongue must be prohibited completely.

Actually, it can be of great help to redirect misunderstandings or solve quick questions about a concept that is difficult to explain in the target language.

- Finally, on regards of the hypothesis that declares that, the more adequate use of the mother tongue as a pedagogical, functional resource in the classroom, the greater development of the oral and aural skills in the English subject will result, is truly evident that it is possible to conduct an English lesson with controlled use of the mother tongue. It is up to the teacher to make students comfortable using English and even though mistakes appear along the way, the progressive L2 practice and exposure will ultimately facilitate on beginners (in this case, the I cycle students) from an initial English brushstroke during the first school years to an adequate target language competence and performance afterwards, involving oral and auditory skills.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is advised for future researchers to consider that although mother tongue is undeniable to be used for L2 students during their beginning stage at primary school, it is mandatory that people in charge of their learning like teachers, set the lesson to one oriented to appeal English language over Spanish. Such class setting is only possible if teachers compromise themselves to work as language facilitators where effective communication is present filled with speaking and listening input and they motivate students to repeat and try to incorporate English during class interaction.
- In the particular case of Cabo Blanco School, the influence of the use of Spanish in I cycle English classes is marked and according to the research, demotivation is a main cause, so it is indispensable that teaching methodology incorporates daily practices that induce English orally and aurally like greetings, checking student's list, writing data

on board, asking for student's day, and class dismissal. Teachers should be patient and willing to obtain results later on because students may still feel safer using Spanish, but it should not discourage teachers to continue applying this technique that only intends to normalize English use among students.

- It is recommended that teachers cope with any reasons that incite students to use Spanish in a thoughtful way. It requires monitoring from teacher's part and English introduction should be subtle, provided that Spanish use is reduced little by little and is never penalized in order to avoid a negative reaction on students like culpability. By determining if it is caused because of instructions to start practicing, didactic activities, or even topic explanation, teachers can readjust the lesson to address it as expected.
- Regarding the reasons that trigger the use of Spanish from I cycle students at Cabo Blanco School, it can be mentioned that are varied. The research shows that insecurity, fear, and student's personality (introvert cases) restrict their desire to use English. As a result, it is necessary that teachers get to know very well his/her student's strengths and limitations upon L2; therefore, the teacher may arrange the class to have teams or small groups that support each other as classmates and find all kind of ludic and didactic activities or ice- breakers to start the lesson differently and that foster speaking. For example, the teacher can encourage activities like charades, "Simon says", tongue twisters, riddles, proverbs, rhymes, flashcard games, and so on in order that the majority of students participate and feel incorporated in the class. Another reason observed that triggers Spanish use is I cycle student's interlanguage process (combination of both languages). It produces at the same time, other problems like fossilization (misuse of words and grammar rules), mispronunciation (negative

phonological transfer), and false cognate use. It is better for teachers to accept interlanguage influence on students as a normal and natural language process and take measures to reduce its impact. Audiovisual stimuli like posters, flashcards, songs, and video clips as well as choral repetition with teacher's aim is ideal to sharpen student's hearing to English and practice their oral skill while it is positively reinforced the fact that the student is following teacher's instruction and making little improvements.

- Regarding the pedagogical mechanisms that the English teacher can apply in order to diminish Spanish use, it can be stated the efforts MEP is incorporating when introducing the task- based approach for English teaching a few years ago. This methodology presents a fresh, innovative curricular program where there is emphasis on transforming content into context- basis for students. In other words, each unit of the syllabus offers contextualized topics for students to use English meaningfully and to become practical on real life. It is teacher´s responsibility to engage students on this new experience, which demands creativity, interaction, and language production.
- At Cabo Blanco School, it is observed that this methodology is being applied with good results and student's acceptance; consequently, teachers should firstly organize the class, so that it turns out to a specific scenario where students can pretend and imagine through visual aids like props, costumes, masks, and other artifacts how content is put into practice and English is applicable to give solution to everyday situations that students may encounter. Role- plays, pair dialogues, TPR activities, and choral repetition ease English learning through this methodology. Another crucial aspect is that this approach favors technology. That is why teachers needs to merge technology

in their teaching plans, making use of online interactive games, platforms or web applications suitable to practice English according to student's level and program's goals. At this point, Spanish use is only limited to collaborating instructions or translating difficult concepts.

CHAPTER VI: PROPOSAL

6.1 NAME OF THE PROPOSAL

This proposal is intended to validate what was observed, concluded, and advised throughout this research paper and thus, extend the recommendations provided before in order to give some solution to the problem formulated, the research objectives, and hypothesis presented. As a result, it is desirable with this proposal to minimize the first cycle student's mother tongue influence when learning a second language like English in the classroom context. It should be stated that such reliance on the mother tongue progressively diminishes provided that the student is not only motivated to use the target language he/she has been learning so far, but that the student is confident enough that his/her linguistic production has become significant for life far from a school-basis scenario. Therefore, this proposal looks for convincing the students of the importance of English nowadays in order that they devote themselves to take advantage of each piece of information obtained through lessons and its application, with the ultimate purpose that Spanish use disappears gradually. Consequently, the proposal is titled as: "Let's Motivate with English" and its main objective is to provide recommendations to both teacher and students in order to cope with stress, disinterest, fear, and rejection towards the target language that are reasons previously observed that trigger Spanish use on I cycle students at Cabo Blanco School.

6.2 PLACE TO BE DEVELOPED AND INVOLVED POPULATION

This proposal is going to be applied at Cabo Blanco School in order to help first cycle students with their progressive transition between their Spanish usage and English immersion. In the first place, the involved population turns out to be the same as the sample used during the research. It is crucial to help this specific population because they

are English beginners and these first school years are crucial to convince students that English (and other foreign languages) can possibly change positively their life styles and open new world perspectives thanks to learning a different language rather than just settled for mother tongue.

6.3 GENERAL OBJECTIVE AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The general objective for this proposal consists on providing suggestions for both teacher and I cycle students at Cabo Blanco School about how to cope with demotivation when learning English in the classroom causing sometimes Spanish use and then, restringing the development of oral and aural skills in English. On the other hand, the specific objectives deal directly with some components that may affect students' willingness and productivity (for example, student's stress, fear, and rejection to L2) when learning the target language. Therefore, one of the specific objectives refers to identify I cycle students' current communicative English development (oral and aural skills) in class while being affected by Spanish use since there is demotivation. Another specific objective is indicating some recommendations for I cycle students that English teacher can apply to minimize target language demotivation when learning at the classroom and there is still Spanish constant use. Finally, a third specific objective pretends to recognize I cycle student's weaknesses and strengths in English communicative skills through teamwork and teacher's assistant nomination while Spanish role in class is exclusively didactic and functional.

6.4 CRONOGRAM OF ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBLE

It is important to distribute the activities to apply this proposal in order to improve I cycle students' positive reception to English in the classroom context. The following mediation

activities that appear in the graph below are organized in a five-day basis, so that it sums up seven weeks in total. Gradually, each activity is designed to identify, analyze, and help any issue concerning student's motivation toward the target language. Among the graph's details, it is mentioned the starting date, ending date, and duration of each activity in order to specify length and coverage per each week. In addition, there is a chart to indicate the responsible people involved in the execution of each activity.

Regarding the first stage of the proposal, it is planned to determine student's development, concerning speaking and listening skills during the English class. The teacher's role will consist on becoming a meticulous observer who needs to identify specific situations within the lesson that foster on the students' feelings and behaviors of demotivation, stress or fear. Additionally, the teacher should discover which lesson phase is more affected in order to make the necessary adjustments and intervention. There should be also occasion for interviewing the students and listen to their recommendations for improving the English class. It can be carried out during school breaks preparing simple questions to students and choosing them randomly. Another option can be crafting a "suggestion box" in the classroom and convincing students to write on a piece of paper what they like the most and the least during the lesson, so that the teacher can benefit from their feedback and consider making changes the next time.

The second stage of the proposal is designed to prepare and present strategies for the classroom that reduce the use of the mother tongue (or at least incorporate it in a meaningful way) and motivate the students enough to use the target language. A time-out moment with the students when detecting demotivation can be implemented through reading a reflection to the whole group and commenting about it afterwards. It is also

possible to present video clips of same- age students using English and convince them how cool it would be if they can accomplish that task. It can be an excellent opportunity to rehearse and practice a small presentation about themselves and if there is chance, it can be recorded to watch in class their performances in English. Another alternative to increase student's motivation is creating a chart with all the students' names and each will have a square to make notes. This chart is pasted on a visible sport in the classroom. The teacher sets some "class missions" to be accomplished like participating in class, using vocabulary words, saying a sentence in English, completing a worksheet correctly, and so on. These assignments are announced at the beginning of the lesson and at the end, the teacher verifies who fulfills them in order to make notes on the chart and prize them with stickers.

On the other hand, some of the following mediation activities proposed have the intention to take advantage of each lesson stage, so that the student will be provided with sufficient stimuli to practice what it is learned in English and avoid the unnecessary use of Spanish. For instance, when starting the lesson, they can be voluntarily requested to come in front of the class and make a prayer while the rest of the students follow it and repeat it. During the warm- up stage, the teacher can play with the students "hangman" on the board in order to practice previous vocabulary words related to some topic. The students are asked to say letters using only English alphabet and utter the word if they have already guessed. This is ideal to develop their phonological awareness. Another activity is playing with flashcards that contain minimal pairs (two words with sounds that are very similar but have different meanings), in which the initial consonant is different but with same ending like "*rat*" and "*cat*." Students are given a separate set of word endings,

consonants, and corresponding picture, so they need to match and pair them. When they are ready, they are asked to say the consonant sound, the ending sound, and then utter all together.

During the presentation stage, the teacher can rely on technology to practice active listening, pronunciation, and diction. Choral repetition and singing along songs provide essential input and exposure of the target language. For instance, the teacher can study vocabulary through songs by playing and pausing the audiovisual material in order that the students interpret the information from lyrics and reproduce it. It helps them remember vocabulary by simply humming parts of the song. Also, the teacher can prepare a storybook (either printed or presenting a slide presentation through the computer) in which the content of the lesson is implicit. As he reads the story to the students, he stops to exaggerate his intonation and use gestures when important information appears and immediately after, the teacher requires students to confirm by repeating what was emphasized. Therefore, the students prepare an illustration of what they like from the story and with teacher's help, they utter a short sentence about it.

At the practice stage, several mediation activities can be included to reinforce what students have been studying within the lesson and make subtle comparisons between the mother tongue and the target language. For example, the students can prepare flashcards to play memory game including pictures and concepts. They are requested no only to match both term and picture but they need to utter the word in English too. A variation of this game can be, only using terms in Spanish and English and the students have to find the equivalent word on the other language. Another activity consists on unscrambling words to make up a phrase using paper scraps. The students need to pay

close attention as the teacher reads the phrase in English and thus, they have to put it in order. When they finish, the unscrambled phrase is checked and additionally, they are asked to translate the sentence into Spanish. Another example of a mediation activity involves the use of true cognates. The teacher separate the class in two teams and hands over paper craps with true cognates from both languages. Then, the students need to find his/her partner who has the word that matches and form a pair of true cognates. Additionally, the teacher can include a few examples of false cognates in order to make the students aware of both languages differences during this game; it is then intended that students comprehend that there are exceptions and they need to check if they can find the right term. A new activity for the practice stage is making students translate short sentences from Spanish to English, so that it can be analyzed subject- verb agreement, verb tense, adjective- noun order, word choice, spelling, and pronunciation. Also, the teacher can assign for homework that students search for a few popular sayings in English and ask them to find the equivalent form in Spanish.

To proceed with the consolidation stage, teacher and students can incorporate ludic games to have fun and review topics studied as well. Students can play “Simon says” to check vocabulary and phrases in English using body language, uttering answers or manipulating flashcards with information. Another possible activity is “charades”, where a participant mimics vocabulary items only using his/her gestures and the rest of the students need to guess what is being represented. Furthermore, a “jeopardize” contest game can be played by separating the class in three teams. Every turn, each team debates before giving a final respond. Aside from making questions only in English,

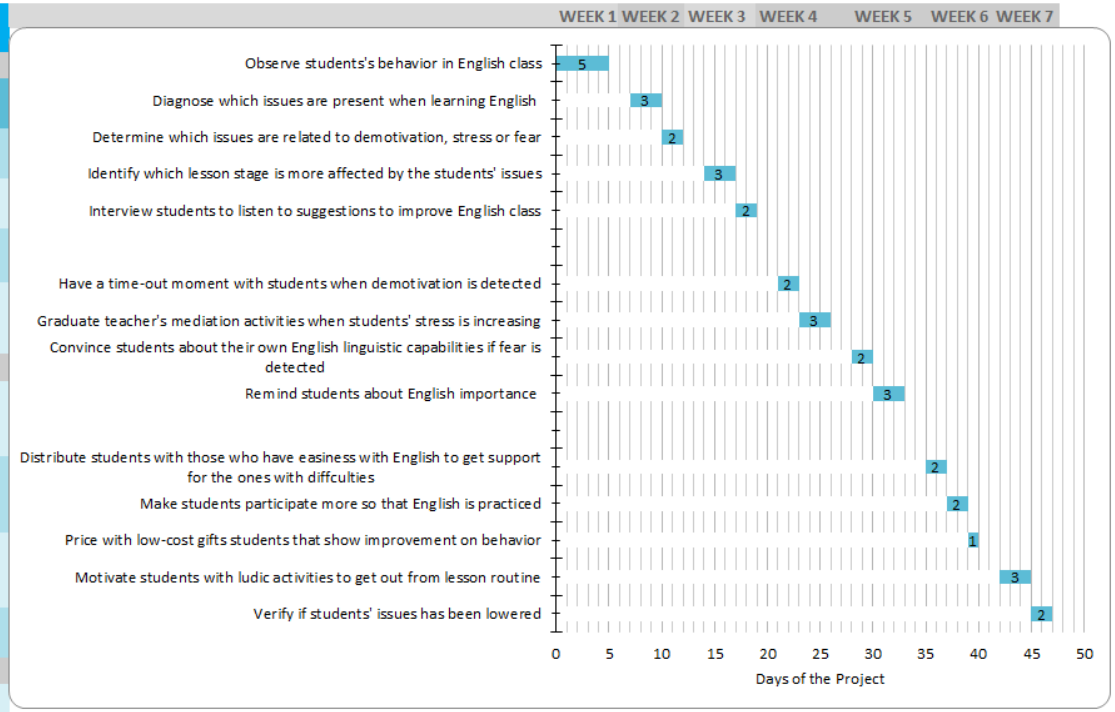
teacher can vary this activity and make a twist by incorporating questions in English but answers in Spanish or vice versa.

The last stage is the wrap up where students briefly check all contents from the lesson. Because it is a short period, the teacher can provide the students with feedback and look for volunteers to explain what has been covered during the class. Moreover, a mini- project can be assigned to work at home. It consists on making a Pictionary that should include illustration, vocabulary concept, and translation into Spanish of the most important terms or phrases learned within the lesson. Also, the teacher brings Internet links to access online interactive games to practice English contents.

The third stage of the proposal is intended to combine student's weaknesses and strengths in English through teamwork and by choosing assistants in the class. In the first place, pair work needs to be encouraged, so that mediation activities that involve two people can be included such as short conversations, surveys, and "show and tell" presentations. After a while, the teacher can decide on separating the group in teams. In such case, the teacher designates a tutor who will monitor and help his/ her classmates during classwork. In addition, distributing the class into teams permits a wide range of activities. For instance, students can participate in a role- play where scripts and roles are arranged. Spanish can be also included if they are acting, for example, as tourists or Costa Ricans who welcome the visitors. Another activity is preparing a group presentation. Each member of the team will provide his/her contribution. During this stage, the teacher is in charge of reinforcing good results and behavior from students in the class by praising their effort with compliments and stickers. Likewise, the teacher can occasionally name among the students, his particular "assistant", who will be in charge of

handing over worksheets, picking up homework, and bring important announcements. Equally important, at this point the teacher should consider if by implementing this proposal, it has been plausible to lower the incidence of student's cases related to demotivation, stress, and fear upon English subject and that Spanish use has been turned into another didactic, efficient tool among teacher's arsenal of teaching, existing resources.

TASK NAME	START DATE	END DATE	START ON DAY*	DURATION* (WORK DAYS)	RESPONSIBLES	PERCENT COMPLETE
Proposal: First Stage						
Observe students's behavior in English class	4/13	4/17	0	5	Teacher	100%
Diagnose which issues are present when learning English	4/20	4/22	7	3	Teacher	60%
Determine which issues are related to demotivation, stress or fear	4/23	4/24	10	2	Teacher	40%
Identify which lesson stage is more affected by the students' issues	4/27	4/29	14	3	Teacher	60%
Interview students to listen to suggestions to improve English class	4/30	5/1	17	2	Students	40%
Proposal: Second Stage						
Have a time-out moment with students when demotivation is detected	5/4	5/5	21	2	Teacher & students	40%
Graduate teacher's mediation activities when students' stress is increasing	5/6	5/8	23	3	Teacher	60%
Convince students about their own English linguistic capabilities if fear is detected	5/11	5/12	28	2	Teacher & students	40%
Remind students about English importance	5/13	5/15	30	3	Teacher	60%
Proposal: Third Stage						
Distribute students with those who have easiness with English to get support for the ones with diffculties	5/18	5/19	35	2	Teacher & students	40%
Make students participate more so that English is practiced	5/20	5/21	37	2	Teacher & students	40%
Price with low-cost gifts students that show improvement on behavior	5/22	5/22	39	1	Teacher	20%
Motivate students with ludic activities to get out from lesson routine	5/25	5/27	42	3	Teacher	60%
Verify if students' issues has been lowered	5/28	5/29	45	2	Teacher	40%



6.5 NECESSARY BUDGET FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION

Regarding this proposal implementation, it results economic to develop since it actually doesn't require much budget. As described in each task, most of the mediation activities are oriented to involve actively both teacher and students in order to make them practice the target language alike; therefore, each task is expected to focus on the improvement of linguistic, communicative skills and motivation. Additionally, didactic material and technology are usually available in any classroom, so it is taken for granted that a regular school provides all the necessary resources to fulfill the proposal accordingly. It is important to indicate that since this plan takes around seven weeks for its completion, it was adjusted to become a low- cost project.

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ANNEXES

Annex #1: Conceptual-theoretical framework design

Specific Objectives	Variable	Thematic Breakdown	Sources
1) Identify the frequency of Spanish use in the classroom during I cycle students' English-speaking skills development	The frequency of Spanish use in the classroom during I cycle students' English-speaking skills development	2.2.1 The role of mother tongue 2.2.1.1 Influence of mother tongue 2.2.1.2 The interlanguage 2.2.1.3 Practical applications of mother tongue 2.2.2 Basic skills of English language 2.2.2.1 Need of four linguistic skills integration of English language 2.2.2.2 Listening skill 2.2.2.3 Speaking skill	Manoj, K. (2014). Role of Mother Tongue in Second Language Learning Annabelle Hernández Herrero (2008). El Inglés en Costa Rica: requisito indispensable en un mundo globalizado. López-Argüeta Pinto, Santiago. (2010). Aplicación y desarrollo de las cuatro destrezas en la enseñanza del Inglés como lengua extranjera Sag Legrán, Petra. (2010). La competencia lingüística Mayora Pernía, Carlos Alberto. (2009). Fundamentos Teóricos y Pedagógicos del Enfoque de las Destrezas Integradas en la Enseñanza de Lenguas Extranjeras Sánchez Calvo, Arsenio. (1982). La enseñanza del Inglés y las cuatro destrezas: escuchar, hablar, leer y escribir

2) Establish which reasons trigger the use of Spanish from I cycle students in the English classroom during the learning process of English speaking skills	Reasons that trigger the use of Spanish from I cycle students in the English classroom during the learning process of English speaking skills	2.2.3 Brief review about evolution of didactic approaches upon English subject in Costa Rica 2.2.3.1 Current didactic approach: Task- based learning 2.2.3.2 Pedagogic mediation of Task-based approach 2.2.3.3 Importance of Task-based approach	Teacher's guide for the new English curriculum first grade 2016. Dirección de Desarrollo Curricular. Ministerio de Educación Pública (MEP)
3) Determine which pedagogical mechanisms the English teacher can apply in order to reduce the use of Spanish during the learning process of I cycle students' English speaking skills	The pedagogical mechanisms that the English teacher can apply in order to reduce the use of Spanish during the learning process of I cycle students' English speaking skills	2.2.4 Problems of using mother tongue 2.2.4.1 Fossilization 2.2.4.2 False cognates 2.2.4.3 Phonological transfer	Manoj, K. (2014). Role of Mother Tongue in Second Language Learning Mejías, A. (2016). El Uso de la Lengua Materna en la Clase de Inglés de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria Quintana, J. (2017). Influencia de la Lengua Materna (Español) en el Aprendizaje de la Pando, A. (2014).Lengua Extranjera (Inglés) La Influencia de la Lengua Materna en la Enseñanza y Aprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras

Annex #2: Operating of Variables

Topic: The influence of use of Spanish in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year				
General Obj.: Analyze the influence of use of Spanish in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year				
Specific Obj.	**Variable**	**Conceptual Definition**	**Instrumental Definition**	**Operational Definition**
Identify the frequency of Spanish use in the classroom during I cycle students' English-speaking skills development	The frequency of Spanish use in the classroom during I cycle students' English-speaking skills development	As *Definición.DE* dictionary points out, the mother tongue (in this particular case Spanish) is a common expression that is also often presented as a popular language, mother tongue, native language or first language. It is defined, as it is apparent from the meaning of the two words that form it, the first language that manages to dominate an individual or, in other words, the language spoken in a given nation with respect to the citizens of it (2020). In addition, the term mother tongue connects with first-cycle students, who represent the research study population. These subjects range in age from six to nine years and are in primary school and the group (sample) is made up of eleven boys and five girls. In addition, the influence of the mother tongue on the oral skills of these students is analyzed. According to Cervantes Virtual Center dictionary, oral skill is the linguistic skill related to the production of oral discourse. It is a communicative capacity that encompasses not only a mastery of	From the instrument called "observation", first five indicators are used to measure the oral and auditory competence of the target language from the first-cycle students of Cabo Blanco School, annex number 3, and the results will be recorded on a checkpoint.	If around 90% to 100% of first-cycle students manage to develop the required oral and auditory skills according to the current MEP's English curriculum, despite the influence of the mother tongue, it is considered positive for this research. Whether around 89% to 80% of first-cycle students develop oral and auditory skills required according to the current MEP's curricular program, despite the influence of the mother tongue, is relatively positive for the research. If less than 79% of first-cycle students develop the required oral and auditory skills according to the current MEP's curricular program, despite the influence of the mother

		pronunciation, lexicon and meta- language grammar, but also sociocultural and pragmatic knowledge. It consists of a number of micro-skills, such as knowing how to provide information and opinions, show agreement or disagreement, resolve conversational failures, or know under what circumstances it is relevant to speak and in which circumstances it is better not (2020). Also, the research paper focuses on the influence of first-cycle students' mother tongue on their aural skills. According to Cervantes Virtual Center dictionary, listening skill is one of the linguistic skills, which refers to the interpretation of the oral discourse. In addition, it intervenes not only a linguistic component, but also cognitive, perceptual, attitudinal, and sociological factors are involved as well. It is a communicative capacity that encompasses the entire process of interpretation of discourse, from the mere decoding and linguistic understanding of the phonic chain (phonemes, syllables, words, etc.) to interpretation and personal assessment; so that, despite its receptive nature, it requires active participation of the listener (2020). Such influence of the mother tongue on previous linguistic skills occurs precisely in English subject, which is a mandatory subject and is part of the group of complementary subjects of Costa Rican national educational curriculum.		tongue, it is concluded that it is negative for this research.

		In addition, the role of English curriculum program is taken into account. Regarding the definition posed by the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, a curriculum program is the set of studies and practices aimed to the student for fully developing his/her possibilities (2020). Finally, this curricular program is sponsored by MEP, which are the acronyms represented by the Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica.		
Establish which reasons trigger the use of Spanish from I cycle students in the English classroom during the learning process of English speaking skills	Reasons that trigger the use of Spanish from I cycle students in the English classroom during the learning process of English speaking skills	Within the research and one of the possible reasons that causes the use of Spanish in class is mentioned is the didactic approach of English curricular program and its generalities. According to Cervantes Virtual Center Dictionary, the didactic approaches to the English subject are based on theoretical principles derived from certain theories on language and its learning. Linguistic theories try to define a model of linguistic competence, as well as basic elements of the linguistic organization and the use of language (2020).	From the instrument known as “interview”, questions number one, two, three, four and five were applied to the English teacher in charge of the groups of first-cycle students at Cabo Blanco School, in Annex #4, in order to gather information regarding his opinion about current MEP's English curriculum, his classroom work, the linguistic development of the students, and the causal relationship of English curriculum in the use of the mother	If the English teacher in charge of first-cycle students manages to apply 85% to 100% of the current MEP's English curriculum to develop the oral and auditory skills required for his students, despite the influence of the mother tongue, it is considered positive for the research. If the English teacher in charge of the first-cycle students manages to apply from 84% to 75% the current MEP's English curriculum to develop the oral and auditory skills required for his students, despite the influence of the mother tongue, it is said to be relatively positive for this research. If the English teacher in charge of first-cycle

			tongue instead of the target language.	students manages to apply less than 74% of the current MEP's English curriculum to develop oral skills required for his students, despite the influence of the mother tongue, it is concluded that it is negative for the research.
Determine which pedagogical mechanisms the English teacher can apply in order to reduce the use of Spanish during the learning process of I cycle students' English speaking skills	The pedagogical mechanisms that the English teacher can apply in order to reduce the use of Spanish during the learning process of I cycle students' English speaking skills	To begin with, this research mentions the problems of the mother tongue in the learning process of English subject. The dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, defines the term problem as the set of facts or circumstances that hinder the achievement of some end (2020). In this particular case, it refers to problems related to the influence of the mother tongue on learning English. In addition, this research extends within a period of one semester. According to the RAE dictionary, one semester is six month space (2020). Additionally, it is the time that corresponds to two periods of school cycle. Finally, it is mentioned that the research takes place in the context of the teaching course. The RAE dictionary defines the teaching course as a time period officially devoted to teaching (2020).	From the instrument known as "observation", indicators from six to eight are used to measure the interference of the mother tongue on the oral and auditory competence of the first-cycle students of Cabo Blanco school, annex number #3, and then record the results on the checklist. From the instrument defined as "survey", annex #5, questions number one to nine were used to gather information on the development of oral and auditory skills, based on the recent MEP English	If 90% to 100% of first-cycle students do not demonstrate that the mother tongue has a negative impact on the development of the oral and auditory skills required according to the current MEP's English curricular program, it is considered positive for the research. If from 89% to 70% of first-cycle students do not demonstrate that the mother tongue has a negative influence on the development of the oral and auditory skills required according to the current MEP's English curriculum, is accepted to be relatively positive for this research. If 69% of first-cycle students demonstrate that the mother tongue has a negative influence on the development of oral and auditory skills

			curricular plan and the resulting interference from the students' mother tongue. This instrument is taken by the English teacher in charge of the first-cycle students at Cabo Blanco School.	required according to the current MEP's English curriculum, it is concluded that it is negative for the research.

Annex # 3: Observation checklist for I cycle students at Cabo Blanco School

General Objective: Analyze the influence of use of Spanish in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year

Specific Objectives: Identify the frequency of Spanish use in the classroom during I cycle students' English-speaking skills development

Establish which reasons trigger the use of Spanish from I cycle students in the English classroom during the learning process of English speaking skills

Determine which pedagogical mechanisms the English teacher can apply in order to reduce the use of Spanish during the learning process of I cycle students' English speaking skills

Instructions: This observation is for researching purposes and the identity of the selected subjects is respected and the information obtained as well.

Evaluation Criteria

Abbreviation:

N.A. Not applicable	**1.** Never
2. Sometimes	**3.** Regularly
4. Always	
5. Yes	**6**. No

Presence of mother tongue in class	
Item number	1) Indicator: Identify the use of the mother tongue within the English lesson

Rubrics	***Classification***	***Observations***
1) Warm-up stage	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
2) Presentation stage	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
3) Practice stage	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
4) Consolidation stage	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
5) Wrap-up stage	**1 2 3 4 NA**	

Item number	2) Indicator: Determine who is the subject of the research that makes use of the mother tongue during the English lesson

Rubrics	***Classification***	***Observations***
1) By the teacher	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
2) By the student	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
3) Both	**1 2 3 4 NA**	

Item number	3) <u>Indicator:</u> Point out the type of reaction from the student during the application of oral and auditory skills within the English class

Rubrics	***Classification***	***Observations***
1) It is observed that the student is motivated throughout the class	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
2) The student is willing to use oral and auditory skills in class	**5 6**	
3) The student actively participates when applying for volunteers for any activity in the target language	**5 6**	
4) The student understands the instructions and the activity in English	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
5) The student acts positively during the activity in English	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
6) The student completes the activity in English	**5 6**	
7) Results are favorable at the end of the activity in English	**1 2 3 4 NA**	

Diagnosis of oral and auditory skills evidenced during the English lesson	
Item number	4) Indicator: Identify the practical application of oral and auditory skills in class

Rubrics	***Classification***	***Observations***
1) The student uses words of vocabulary studied in class to be employed and to complete activities proposed by the teacher.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
2) The student repeats and reproduces statements initially heard or read during the English lesson.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
3) The student participates and completes exercises with phrases or sentences previously studied in class or formulated by the student.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	

Item number	5) Indicator: Mention the linguistic aspects of oral and auditory skills observed during the English lesson

Rubrics	***Classification***	***Observations***
1) The pronunciation is appropriate for words and sentences in English.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
2) The intonation is correct for effective communication in English language.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
3) The fluidity is optimal and similar to that used by an English native speaker.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	

Problems observed by the influence of the mother tongue on oral and auditory skills during the English lesson	
Item number	6) Indicator: Verify the effect of fossilization on the English learning of the student

Rubrics	***Classification***	***Observations***
1) The meaning of a word or phrase in English is over-used during communication in the target language.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
2) The syntactic structure of a sentence is incorrectly employed by the student	**1 2 3 4 NA**	

during communication in the target language.		
3) The pronunciation of the pattern of a word or phrase in English is over-used and extended to other examples during communication in the target language.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	

Item number	7) <u>Indicator:</u> Mention the frequency of language exchange (interlanguage process) indifferently in the oral and auditory skills observed during the English lesson

Rubrics	***Classification***	***Observations***
1) The student randomly exchanges words in both English and Spanish during the communication in the target language.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
2) The student incorrectly employs words that morphologically resemble in Spanish but have a different meaning in English.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
3) The student creates hybrid words from both languages by	**1 2 3 4 NA**	

not knowing the precise term in the target language.		

Item number	8) Indicator: List the effects of phonological transfer of the mother tongue on the oral and auditory skills observed during the English lesson

Rubrics	***Classification***	***Observations***
1) The student pronounces the words exactly the same as the mother tongue although they are in English.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
2) The student mixes word pronunciation in the target language in both Spanish and English.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	
3) The student incorrectly pronounces the words in the target language by influence of the mother tongue.	**1 2 3 4 NA**	

Annex # 4: Interview for the English teacher in charge of the first cycle students at Cabo Blanco School

Universidad Hispanoamericana

Programa de Licenciatura en la enseñanza del inglés para I y II ciclos de la educación general básica

Topic: The influence of use of Spanish in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year

School: Cabo Blanco **Interviewer**: Gabriel Segura Villalta

Universidad Hispanoamericana **Site**: Puntarenas

Date of interview applied: _____

General Objective: Analyze the influence of use of Spanish in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year

Directions: You will be asked several questions about the topic. Please answer only what is required. Be as honest as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. This interview is for research purposes and the identity of the respondent is respected and the information provided is maintained confidential. In advance, thanks for your cooperation and help.

Questions:

1. What is your opinion about the didactic method of task resolution present in the current English curriculum for first cycle students?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. What didactic and ludic techniques have you applied to develop the oral and auditory skills of first cycle students when applying the current English curriculum?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. What have been the challenges or difficulties encountered during the use of the didactic task resolution method present in the current English curriculum for first cycle students?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. What has been the performance (linguistic competences achieved) of first cycle students in oral and auditory skills when developing the different contents of the current English curriculum program?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. What is your opinion regarding the use of the mother tongue during learning English in the particular case of first cycle students?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Annex # 5: Survey for the English teacher in charge of the first cycle students at Cabo Blanco School

Universidad Hispanoamericana

Programa de Licenciatura en la enseñanza del inglés para I y II ciclos de la educación general básica

Topic: The influence of use of Spanish in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year

School: Cabo Blanco **Interviewer**: Gabriel Segura Villalta

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Date of interview applied: _____

General Objective: Analyze the influence of use of Spanish in I cycle English classes at Cabo Blanco School in Lepanto, Puntarenas during the first semester of 2020 school year

Directions: You will be asked several questions about the topic. Please answer only what is required. Be as honest as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. This survey is for research purposes and the identity of the respondent is respected and the information provided is maintained confidential. In advance, thanks for your cooperation and help.

Questions:

1) When do you find it appropriate to use the mother tongue of the students in the English lesson? (* It is possible to choose more than one option)

a) For corroborating instructions b) For managing discipline

c) For feedback d) For explaining concepts

e) At no time

f) Others: _____

2) What inconveniences for students have you noticed during English class? (*It is possible to choose more than one option)

a) Lack of motivation b) Getting distracted constantly

c) The topics are difficult for them d) They are shy and introverted

e) Any f) Others: _____

3) How often have you noticed that students are able to reproduce what they hear in English through teacher's statements or audiovisual/digital aids?

a) Always b) Sometimes c) Almost never d) Never

4) How often have you noticed that students use their mother tongue to participate and communicate in class?

a) Always b) Sometimes c) Almost never d) Never

5) What do you think is the reason(s) why students use the mother tongue in the English class? (*It is possible to choose more than one option)

a) For communicating doubts b) Insecurity on the use of the target language

c) Disinterest for the target language d) Little mastery of the target language

e) Others (Explain): _____

6) What problem(s) do you think results from the influence of the mother tongue when learning English? (*It is possible to choose more than one option)

a) Phenomenon of fossilization b) Continued use of false cognates

c) Negative phonological transfer

d) Combination of the two language systems indiscriminately

e) Others (Explain): _____

7) What teaching methodology(s) have you recently used to teach and improve the oral and auditory skills of students in the English subject? (*It is possible to choose more than one option)

a) Traditional teaching (notebook, books and whiteboard)

b) Teaching through technology (computer, video beam, smart TV, etc.)

c) Combination of the two methodologies

d) Others (Explain): _____

8) Which language area(s) have you noticed that students have the most trouble developing oral and hearing skills in English? (*It is possible to choose more than one option)

a) Lack of vocabulary knowledge

b) Inability to join English words and form sentences

c) Difficulty understanding grammar

d) Difficulty remembering most pronunciation rules

e) Others (Explain): _____

9) What do you think causes a problem for students to develop oral and auditory skills in English? (*It is possible to choose more than one option)

a) The methodology applied (way of teaching and resources usage)

b) Lack of motivation on the part of the student (disinterest in the subject)

c) Little knowledge of English language by the student

d) Little practice and execution (active use) of oral and auditory skills during class

e) The topics and content of English subject are not appropriate for developing oral and auditory skills

f) The influence of the student's mother tongue

g) Others (Explain): _____