



‘Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla’

Facultad de Lenguas

**USE OF CODE-SWITCHING IN ELEMENTARY AND UPPER  
INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH CLASSES: A CASE OF STUDY  
AT MAJOR IN ELT**

“Tesis presentada para obtener el título Licenciatura en  
enseñanza del Inglés”

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Agosto, 2018.

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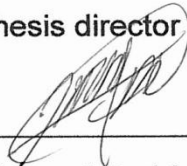
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requirement for the degree of

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

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Agosto, 2018.

## *ACKNOWLEDGMENT*

*First of all I want to thank God, for giving me the opportunity to live and for being with me in every step I take, for strengthening my heart and illuminating my mind and for having put in my way those people who have been my support and company throughout the study period.*

*To my father Edmundo Reyes Guerrero for supporting me at every moment and above all for never leaving me alone.*

*To my mother Silvia Macías Vázquez, for giving me life, loving me, believing in me and for always support me.*

*Thanks to both for being the fundamental pillar in everything I am, in all my education, both academic and life, for its unconditional support perfectly maintained over time. For that and many other things; THANK YOU.*

*To my sisters Jessica and Rosario and my brother Oscar for giving me their unconditional support, for helping me in those difficult times for me. For being the best brothers in the world.*

*To Armando Olivares Rolón for all the support she gave me, for not leaving me alone and for being my life partner.*

*To my son for being the engine of my life, because thanks to him I am a better person and be a source of strength for me and continue with this... I love you Armandito.*

*Finally, I want to thank to my thesis director Miguel Ángel Rodríguez Vega for his unconditional support throughout this process, for his patience and understanding. THANK YOU, teacher.!*

## *AGRADECIMIENTOS:*

*Primero que nada quiero dar gracias A Dios, por darme la oportunidad de vivir y por estar conmigo en cada paso que doy, por fortalecer mi corazón e iluminar mi mente y por haber puesto en mi camino a aquellas personas que han sido mi soporte y compañía durante todo el periodo de estudio.*

*A mi padre Edmundo Reyes Guerrero por apoyarme en cada momento y sobre todo por jamás dejarme sola.*

*A Mi madre Silvia Macías Vázquez, por darme la vida, quererme mucho, creer en mí y por siempre apoyarme.*

*Gracias a ambos por ser el pilar fundamental en todo lo que soy, en toda mi educación, tanto académica, como de la vida, por su incondicional apoyo perfectamente mantenido a través del tiempo. Por eso y muchas cosas más; GRACIAS.*

*A mis hermanas Jessica y Rosario y a mi hermano Oscar por brindarme todo su apoyo incondicional, por ayudarme en aquellos momentos difíciles para mí. Por ser las mejores hermanas del mundo.*

*A Armando Olivares Rolón por todo el apoyo que me brindó, por no dejarme sola y por ser mi compañero de vida.*

*A mi hijo, por ser el motor de mi vida, y por ser una fuente de fortaleza para mí y poder seguir adelante...TE AMO Armandito.*

*Finalmente, quiero agradecer a mi asesor de tesis al maestro Miguel Ángel Rodríguez Vega por su apoyo incondicional durante todo este proceso, por su paciencia y comprensión. Muchas gracias maestro.!*

## ABSTRACT

The priority of this research is to explore what are the main factors of the code-switching usage and what might cause that the teacher use C.S in English classes and when do teachers use C.S.

This study will be carried out to know in which moments during the classes the teachers and students use code-switching and which are the main factors that influence this. Furthermore, as a teacher is important to know when it is necessary to change from one language to another during an English class, and also know the main factor that propitiates this issue.

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# **USE OF CODE-SWITCHING IN ELEMENTARY AND UPPER INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH CLASSES: A CASE OF STUDY AT MAJOR IN ELT**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

All people make the activity of exchanging information between two or more participants in order to transmit information through a system or code. A bilingual person has the opportunity to communicate with people using a mix code; it could be using their mother tongue and their foreign language. This process of alternation between two languages during the speech is known as code-switching (C.S).

This type of alternation or code switching, between languages occurs commonly amongst bilinguals and may take a number of different forms, for example, there can be the alternation of sentences, It happens when somebody is talking in the second language but suddenly begins to talk in their mother tongue, they combine the two languages to express their ideas, they change of one language to another in the middle of their conversations. Carol Myers-Scotton and William Ury (1997) identified code-switching as the "use of two or more linguistic varieties in the same conversations or interaction".

## **1.1 RATIONALE**

Was decided to choose this topic because during all my career I have seen that teachers sometimes especially in target language classes change from English to Spanish. This issue happens because occasionally the students do not understand the topic or they cannot express themselves and they need that the teacher uses the students' mother tongue.

Sometime ago, I was in the university taking one class (meta 2) and the teacher was explaining a new topic in English, he was talking about the topic and giving

some examples, when suddenly, one student raised his hand and told the teacher if he could explain the topic again but now in Spanish because he did not understand, he had understand some ideas but not all. The teacher code-switched from one language to another during the class, this issue occurred because most of my classmates did not understand the topic in the target language and also, I did not understand the topic.

So, that is one of the reasons of my research to know more about the use of Code switching during the target language classes and why is that the students need that the teachers change from one language to another during the class.

## **1.2 LOCATION OF RESEARCH**

This study was carried at a Public University located in Central Mexico, the university offers 2 majors LEF (Licenciatura en la enseñanza del Frances) and LEI (Licenciatura en la enseñanza del Ingles), in the major of LEI there are 1500 students, also has different types of study: attendance class and open degree, the distance mode also was incorporate as well as several courses and diplomas in different areas. Inside the university there are some departments such as the office of certification which help students to certificate the exam of TOEFL or another language certification. There also is CELE (centro de lenguas) which helps students to learn a new language.

## **1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The priority of this research is to explore what are the main factors of the code-switching usage and what might cause the teacher use C.S in English classes and when do teachers use C.S.

## **1.4 RESEARCH AIMS**

The principal aims of this research study are:

- General Objective: Investigate what are the main factors of the use of C.S during target languages classes and what might cause that the teacher uses it.
- Specific Objectives: To identify which are the main factors that influence the teacher's code-switching in the English classes.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The principal research questions of this research study are;

1. What might cause the use of code-switching in English classes at ELT?
2. When do teachers use code-switching and why?

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Code-switching is the practice of moving between variations of languages in different contexts. Everyone who speaks has learned to code-switch depending on the situation and setting. Educational context Code switching is defined as the practice of switching between a primary and secondary language or discourse.

This study is important because it will be carried out to know in which moments during the classes the teachers and students use code-switching and which are the main factors that influence this. As a future teacher this study could help me to understand and know when it is necessary to change from one language to another during an English class, and also know the main factor that propitiates his issue.

## **1.7 CONTEXT OF RESEARCH**

In my study were included some areas of research, were included the next areas because I think they are the most important which will help me to support my study, and the following areas are Bilingualism, Language Acquisition and Code-switching.

Bilingualism is the ability to speak in two languages, language acquisition is the process by which humans acquire the capacity to perceive and comprehend the language as well to produce and use words or sentences to communicate, and code-switching is the use of two or more linguistic varieties in the same conversation or interaction.

## **1.8 CHAPTER CONCLUSION**

This chapter talked about the introduction of the topic, the rationale, the place where my research will be carried out, the purpose of my study, the research aims, the main research questions, the significance of the study, the areas related with my study and finally the conclusion.

In the following chapter I will explore and explain the main literature areas which are related with my research, in chapter III will be explain the methodology and the reason for using it, also will talk about the collecting data which will answer the research questions and objectives. In chapter IV, data and findings of the research study will be shown, and finally in chapter V, the significance of the research and the general conclusion will be delivered.

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

Language is the capacity that people have to express their own ideas through words. When somebody speaks more than one language he or she is called bilingual, it means that he or she learns another language different from their mother tongue. During the speech act sometimes most of the bilingual people make a change of code, it could be consciously or unconsciously. They alternate the language with their mother tongue and their target language, this issue is known as code switching. The concept of code is defined as a system that is used for communication purpose in human beings; this system can be a language or dialect.

## **2.1 DEFINITION OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

All normal humans acquire a language in the first few years of life. Yule (1996) states that “acquisition, refers to the gradual development of ability in a language by using it naturally in communicative situations.”

### **2.1.1 SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Young children whose parents speak different languages can acquire a second language in different circumstances. It has been demonstrated that students in their early teens are quicker and more effective L2 learners than, for example, seventeen-year-olds. It may be, of course, that the acquisition of a L2 requires a combination of factors. The optimum age may be during the years from ten to sixteen when the flexibility of the language acquisition faculty has not been completely lost, and maturation of cognitive skills allows a more effective ‘working out’ of the regular features of the L2 encountered.

There are several factors which combine in a profile of the successful L2 learner, obviously, the motivation to learn is important. However, it has been noted that those who experience some success are among the most motivated to learn.

According to Selinker and Gass (2001), second language acquisition (SLA) is the common term used for the name of the discipline. In general, SLA refers to the process of learning another language after the native language has been learned. Sometimes the term refers also to the learning of a third or fourth language. An important factor is that SLA refers to the learning of a nonnative language after the learning of the native language. The phrase "second language," L2 can refer to any language learned after learning the L1.

Selinker and Gass (2008) mention that "SLA is the study of the acquisition of a non-primary language; that is, the acquisition of a language beyond the native language" (p.1). It is the study of how learners create a new language system with only limited exposure to a second language. The end result of second language acquisition is a bilingual speaker.

## **2.2 BILINGUALISM**

According to Haugen (1953, cited in Romaine, 1995) bilingualism begins when the speakers of one language can produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language. A person might have, for example, no productive control over a language, but be able to understand utterances in it.

Mackey (cited in Romaine, 1995) suggests that there are four questions which a description of bilingualism must address: degree, function, alternation and interference. The questions of degree of bilingualism concerns proficiency. According to Bachman and Palmer (1996) cited in Jalili, associates language proficiency as the level of learners to their knowledge of the foreign language skill domains (grammar and vocabulary) which are subcomponents of general language ability. In this regard, the term language proficiency can be used to refer to the

degree of skill which language learners are able to use a language, such as how well a learner speaks, listens, reads, writes, or understands the language.

Function focuses on the uses a bilingual speaker has for the languages and the different roles they have in the individual alternation between repertoire. Alternations treat the extent to which the individual alternates the languages. Interference has to do with the extent to which the individual manages to keep the languages separate, or whether they are fused.

Selinker and Gass (2008) mentions that a common phenomenon among bilingual speakers is code-switching which basically refers to the use of more than one language in the course of a conversation. Sometimes this might happen because of the lack of a concept in one language and its presence in the other; also it might be for humor or it might happen simply because of the social context.

### **2.2.1 BILINGUALISM IN YOUNG CHILDREN.**

According to Datta (2000), young children need what all language learners need: many, many opportunities to hear and speak the new language in shared contexts. Children develop an understanding of the social and linguistic contexts and learn the language attached to different people and situation. Childhood bilingualism may be simultaneous or consecutive. Hermes and Blanc (1989) cited in Datta, (2000) states that when a child develops two mother tongues from the onset of the language (p.15) he can, for example, develop two types of bilingualism, consecutive and simultaneous bilingually.

The category of consecutive bilingualism occurs, for example, in homes where the first language is the major language in the family, but communication between siblings tends to switch between their two languages here the child is acquiring the second language after acquiring the first, On the other hand, simultaneous bilingually a child grow up in a family where the parents speak two different first languages and aspire to bring up their child bilingually.

## 2.3 CODE- SWITCHING

Code-switching is the practice of moving between variations of languages in different contexts. Everyone who speaks has learned to code-switch depending on the situation and setting. In an educational context, code-switching is defined as the practice of switching between a primary and a secondary language or discourse. (Coffey n.d, par 2).

On the other hand, Gumperz (1982: 59) defined code switching as “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems. Most frequently the alternation takes the form of two subsequent sentences, as when a speaker uses a second language either to reiterate his message or to reply to someone else’s statement”.

Code switching is perhaps most frequently found in the informal speech of those people who speak the native tongue at home and only use the target language at work or school, when they are speaking a second language will often use a term of their first language because they do not know the appropriate word in their second language.

Gumperz (1982, p.60) describes code-switching as discourse exchanges which form a single unitary interactional whole:

Speakers communicate fluently, maintaining an even flow of talk. No hesitation pauses, changes in sentence rhythm, pitch level or intonation contour mark the shift in code. There is nothing in the exchange as a whole to indicate that speakers don't understand each other. Apart from the alternation itself, the passages have all the earmarks of ordinary conversation in a single language.

There are a number of possible reasons for the switching from one language to another and these will now be considered, as presented by Crystal (cited in Skiba, 1997).

The first of these is the notion that a speaker may not be able to express him/herself in one language so switches to the other to compensate for the deficiency. As a result, the speaker may be triggered into speaking in the other language for a while. This type of code switching tends to occur when the speaker is upset, tired or distracted in some manner. Secondly, switching commonly occurs when an individual wishes to express solidarity with a particular social group. Rapport is established between the speaker and the listener when the listener responds with a similar switch. This type of switching may also be used to exclude others from a conversation who does not speak the second language. An example of such a situation may be two people in an elevator in a language other than English. Others in the elevator who do not speak the same language would be excluded from the conversation and a degree of comfort would exist amongst the speakers in the knowledge that not all those present in the elevator are listening to their conversation. (par 3)

### **2.3.1 TYPES OF CODE-SWITCHING**

According to Poklack (cited in Romaine, 1995) identified: tag-switching, inter-sentential and intra-sentential. Tag switching involves the insertion of a tag in one language into an utterance which is otherwise entirely in the other language, *e.g. you know, I mean, etc...* to take some English examples. Since tags are subject to minimal syntactic restrictions, they may be easily inserted at a number of points in a monolingual utterance without violating syntactic rules.

Inter-sentential switching involves a switch at a clause or sentence boundary, where each clause or sentence is in one language or another. It may also occur between speaker turns. Inter-sentential switching can be thought of as requiring greater fluency in both languages than tag switching since major portions of the utterance must conform to the rules of both languages.

Intra-sentential switching involves, arguably, the greatest syntactic risk, and may be avoided by all but the most fluent bilinguals. (p. 122-123)

Woolford (cited in Schmidt, 2015: p.4) states that a lot of “languages switches occurs at sentence boundaries, but others occurs in mid- sentence within a smooth stream of speech”, i.e. she points out that code switching can be inter-sentential as well as intra-sentential. Inter-sentential code-switching is used for switches between sentences and occurs at sentences boundaries, i.e. when each sentence is either in one language or the other. Intra-sentential code switching is the term for switches within a sentence which is sometimes also called code-mixing by some linguistics.

Ritchie & Bhatia (cited in Schmidt, 2015: 24), for example, make a distinction between code-mixing and code-switching with respect to intra and inter-sentential features and define the term code- mixing as intra-sentential and code-switching as inter-sentential. Intra-sentential switches occur in the middle of a sentence.

Schmidt (2015) points out the different types of code-switching are not only linked to syntactic risk but also to bilingual competence or ability. Intra- sentential code-switching shows the greatest because bilinguals have to obey the syntactic rules of both languages while uttering intra-sentential switches. Tag- switching is the easiest code-switching type. There is a minor probability that the syntactic rules will be violated because the switching type only involves exclamations. The characteristic of this code-switching type is that the switched elements are not much integrated into the sentences. Inter-sentential code-switching is situated in between since it requires a greater competence in both languages than tag-switching but not as much as intra-sentential code-switching. Inter-sentential switching, however, requires the ability to keep the grammatical systems of languages apart and to follow the respective grammatical rules of the appropriate language.

### **2.3.2 FUNCTIONS OF CODE-SWITCHING IN ELT CLASSROOMS.**

According to Cook (cited in Skiba, 1997: pa.12-13) asserts that code switching may be integrated into the activities used for the teaching of a second language.

Cook describes the Institute of Linguistics' examinations in Languages for International Communication test as one which utilizes code switching. At beginner's level, students may use the second language for obtaining information from material such as a travel brochure or a phone message to answer comprehension questions in the first language. At advanced stages, the student may be required to research a topic and provide a report in the first language. This approach is one which uses code switching as a foundation for the development of a second language learner who can stand between the two languages and use whichever is most appropriate to the situation rather than becoming an imitation native speaker.

Cook (1989) provides another method of using code switching as a second language teaching tool in which the students switch the language at determinates time of the language teaching, the students alternates between the two languages and exchange the roles of teacher and student. Another way can be used when the teacher start the lesson in the first language and then moving into the second language and back. This makes the lesson as communicative as possible and is similar to the 'New Concurrent Approach' presented by Rudolph Jacobson outlined in Cook (1991). The approach gets teachers to balance the use of languages within each lesson with the teacher allowed to switch languages at certain key points, such as during important concepts, when students are getting distracted, during revisions or when students are praised and told off.

### **2.3.3 TEACHERS' CODE-SWITCHING**

According to Sert (2005, par 8) "the teachers' use of code switching is not always performed consciously; which means that the teachers are not aware of the functions and outcome of the code switching process". Nevertheless, either conscious or not, it necessary serves some basic functions which may be beneficial in language learning environments, these functions are listed as topic switch, affective functions and repetitive functions according to Mattson and Burenhult (cited in Sert, 2005)

In topic switch cases the teacher alters his or her language according to the topic which is in discussion, this is mostly observed in grammar instructions, the teacher shifts his language to the mother tongue of his students in particular grammar points, in this cases the students' attention is focused to the new knowledge through the use of code switching and use of the mother tongue. (pa 9)

Affective functions serve for expression of emotions, in this respect; code switching is used by the teacher in order to build solidarity and intimate relations with the students. Also one may speak off the contribution of code switching for creating a supportive language environment in the classroom.

For repetitive functions the teacher uses code switching in order to clarify meaning in target language, the teacher code switches to native language in order to clarify meaning, and in this way stresses importance on the foreign language content for the efficient comprehension. However, the tendency to repeat the instruction in native language may lead to some undesired student behaviors, a learner who is sure that the instructions that the teacher gives are follow for the translation in the native language is exposed to loss the interest in listening the instructions.

### **2.3.4 STUDENTS' CODE SWITCHING**

As it is the case for teachers' code switching, the students are not always aware of the reasons for code switching as well as its functions and outcomes. According to Eldridge (cited in Sert, 2005: pa.13-14) names some functions for the reasons that the students use code switching, the functions are equivalence, floor-holding, reiteration, and conflict control.

The first function of student code switch is equivalence. In this case, the student makes use of the native equivalent of a certain lexical item in target language and therefore code switches to his/her native tongue. This process may be correlated with the deficiency in linguistic competence of target language, because they do not have a lot of knowledge of the foreign language which makes that the students use the native lexical item when he does not have the competence using the target language explanation. This gives to the students the opportunity to continue with the conversation.

The next function is floor-holding, during a conversation in the target language; the students fill the stopgap with native language use. It may be suggested that this is a mechanism used by the students in order to avoid gaps in communication, which may result from the lack of fluency in target language. The learners have the same mistake when they are performing the target language; they do not remember the structure or lexicon of that language, in this function may have negative effects in the learning foreign language process since it may result in loss of fluency.

The third consideration in students' code switching is reiteration, which is pointed by Eldridge (cited in Sert 2005: pa.15-16) as: "messages are reinforced, emphasized, or clarified where the message has already been transmitted in one code, but not understood". In this case, the message in target language is repeated by the student in native tongue through which the learner tries to give the meaning by making use of a repetition technique. The reason for this specific language alternation case may be two-folds: first, he/she may not have transferred the meaning exactly in target language. Second, the student may think that it is more

appropriate to code switch in order to indicate the teacher that the content is clearly understood by him/her.

The last function of students' code switching is conflict control, for the potentially conflictive language use of a student (meaning that the student tends to avoid a misunderstanding or tends to utter words indirectly for specific purposes). The underlying reasons for the tendency to use this type of code switching may vary according to students' needs, intentions or purposes.

### **3.0 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

This research was about the use of code switching in classes of elementary and upper intermediate level. The main intention of this research was to know if during the classes of upper intermediate level the teacher and students still use code switching and what might cause that the students and teachers of elementary level switch from a particular language to another during the English classes. In this chapter I will describe the participants and the instruments that helped me to carry out my research. Also, I will provide a description of how I collected the data which will give answer to my research questions.

### **3.1 PARTICIPANTS**

The main participants of this research were students and teachers of a public school in Mexico, Puebla. The reason for me to choose that school to carry out my research was because the language is taught there, so students and teachers are involved in a bilingual environment and the students take classes in English and the majority of them talk the same mother tongue.

### 3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data of this research was collected through a classroom observation and one questionnaire. First of all, was chose to use a mixed method as my research methodology because it involves the using of a questionnaire and a class observation. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007, cited in Creswell, 2009) define mix method as the combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a research study. Mixing the data consists in that qualitative data involves text and images and quantitative data; numbers.

One of my instruments that I used was a questionnaire since the goal of my research was about the students' opinion about the using of Spanish during the English classes and what might cause they make use of code switching, so a questionnaire was the most appropriate to collect that kind of information. According to Taylor "a questionnaire can help you to obtain information about what people do, what they have, what they think, how they feel or want". The two types of questionnaires most used are open format questions that do not give a predetermined set of responses and closed format questions that take the form of a multiple choice question. Therefore, were included both types of questions.

In contrast, I used a classroom observation as my second instrument; because an observation is a direct way to observe what happens in a classroom. Allwright (1988), states that the use of the instrument requires that an observer record a time sample of classroom observation. Also, Allwright (1988) mentions, that a classroom observation must not only be focused in the student's behavior but also in the aspects related to the learner achievement during the class.

### **3.3 INSTRUMENTS**

As it was already mentioned the main instruments of this research were a classroom observations and a questionnaire. . My questionnaires were applied to students of elementary level classes because I think is the typical level where students have more problems when they express themselves or when they want to give an idea in English and they can do it. Thus, the students make use of their mother tongue. Therefore, the level I considered to observe were classes of upper intermediate level because in this classes the students have a better English level and they probably do not make use of Spanish.

#### **3.3.1 QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire was aimed to answer my first and second research questions that were focused on finding out what might cause that students of elementary level use code switching during the English class and when is that they use it. As the questionnaire was for elementary level it was done in Spanish. The questionnaire was divided in three different variables, the first one, was the first part of the questionnaire which were from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> close ended questions, it was about when the students use Spanish in their English classes, the next variable was the second part of the questionnaire, the variable was about why the students ask to the teacher to talk in Spanish during the English classes, and finally, the last variable, was from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> open ended questions, here the students gave their own opinion about the use of Spanish during the English classes.

### **3.3.2 CLASSROOM OBSERVATION**

On the other hand, the classroom observation was designed to answer my second research question which were focused on knowing when the teacher use code switching and why it is used. The observation format included a part that was filled with information from the class observed as the subject, the level, number of students and the date, after that, I included a table with predetermined categories according to Sert (2005) and Eldridge (2005) that state that are some factors for which the teachers and students change from one language to another. Finally, I left a part for extra observations.

### **3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

Once my instruments were designed and pilot, the final version of the questionnaire and the classroom observation were applied. First of all, the questionnaires were carried out; the permission to two teachers from elementary courses was carried out to apply the questionnaires, the questionnaire was applied to 26 students of those courses. After that, the observations were applied, the two classes of upper intermediate level were done, while the classes were observed a format observation was used and some notes about an important information were taken, and also, the class was recorded for extra important points that probably could be forgot.

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

In chapter III, I described the participants and instruments that used to carry out my research, also, I described the data collection procedure where I describe the steps that I followed to apply my instruments. In the next chapter, chapter IV, I will explain and describe the data in graphics.

## **4.0 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

As I mention in the former chapter I talked about my participants, the two instruments that I was going to use to answer my research questions. And in this chapter I will explain the findings of the research; I will explain the results of each instrument that I applied. I will give the main reasons why students of elementary and upper intermediate level use Spanish in their English classes and why the teachers make use of code switching. Also I will present what might cause that students and teachers change from one particular language to another.

## **4.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions that guide this work are the following:

3. What might cause the use of code-switching in elementary English classes at ELT?
4. When do teachers use code-switching?

The results are directly related to the research questions, the questionnaires and observation that I applied helped me to obtain the results of my research questions.

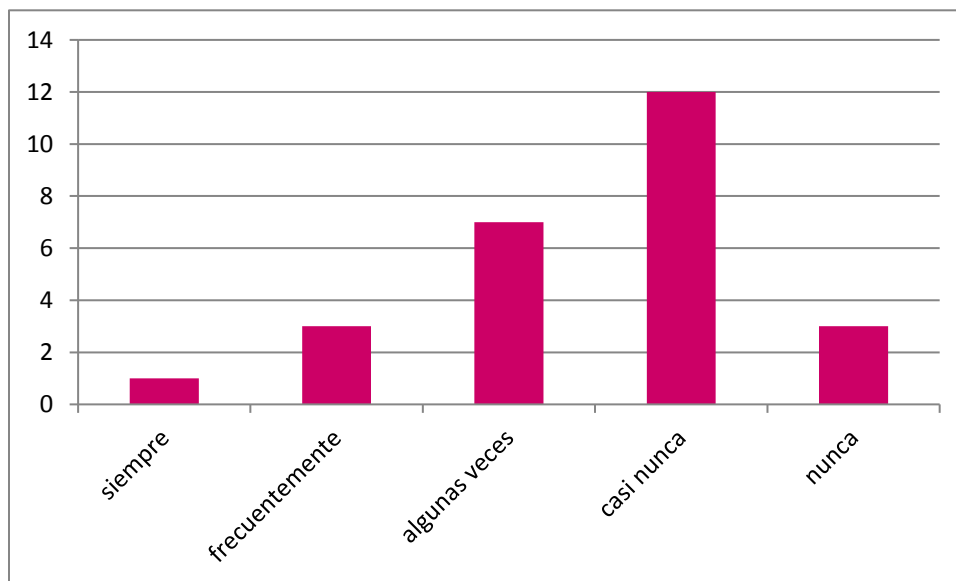
## **4.2 FINDINGS**

The following part talks about the first finding about my questionnaire instrument. It will show the answers about the frequency scale, also, show the answers of the close ended questions and finally the results of the open ended questions.

#### 4.2.1 FINDINGS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The following three graphs show the results of three first frequency scale questions. Represents the number of students that said when they use Spanish in their English classes.

**Si tu maestro está explicando un tema en Inglés y tú no entiendes ¿Pides que lo explique nuevamente en Español?**



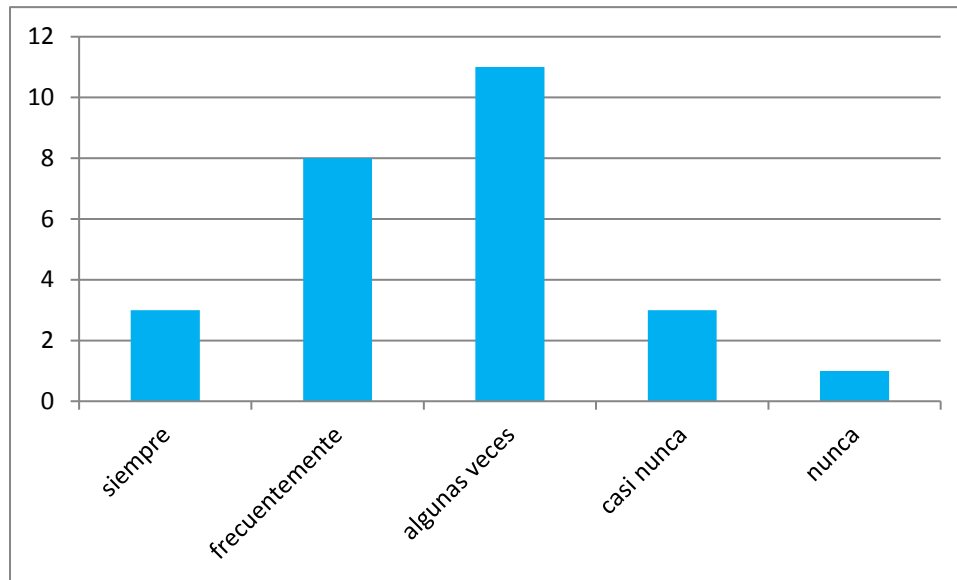
4.2.1

Figure 4.2.1 above shows the results of the responses where 26 students were interviewed, the maximum range in this graphic is 12 and the minimum is 1. According to the results, 1 student said that he always asks the teacher to explain the topic again in Spanish, 3 said that frequently, 7 said sometimes, 12 said that almost never and only three students said that they never ask the teacher to talk in Spanish.

The graph shows the results about if students asking their teacher to speak Spanish during the English classes and it represents that the students almost

never ask the teacher to talk in Spanish it could be because they have a good level of English or simply because they can understand the topic very well. However, it can be concluded that the rest of the students also aks the teacher to talk in Spanish probably not all the time but some times at week they do it.

### ¿Con qué frecuencia usas Español en tu clase de Inglés?



4.2.2

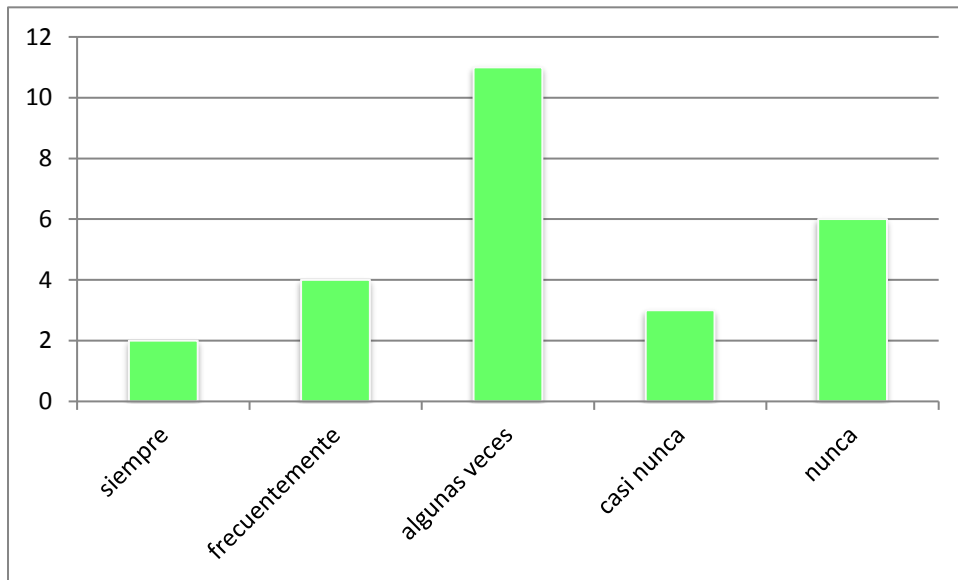
The figure 4.2.2 represents the results of the second question, 26 students were interviewed, the maximum range is 11 and the minimum is 1. The first 3 students said that they always use Spanish in their English classes, 8 students said that they frequently use Spanish in their class, 11 out of 26 chose sometimes, 3 of them almost never talk in Spanish during the class and only 1 said that he never used Spanish.

According to the graph most of the students of elementary level use their mother tongue, in this case, Spanish, during the English classes, the main factor that can provide this is that the students feel more comfortable when they are taking the classes in Spanish they have more ideas and can give a better opinion about the topic, and also, they can express themselves better.

However, there is a contrast with the previous graph and with this graph, since in the first graph it shows that the majority of the students almost never ask the teacher to speak in Spanish and in this graph shows that most of the students sometimes They use Spanish in their classes, So, it can be concluded that the

students may do not use Spanish all the time in their classes, but their mother tongue will always be present in the English classes.

### ¿Te sientes más cómodo cuando el maestro imparte la clase en Español?



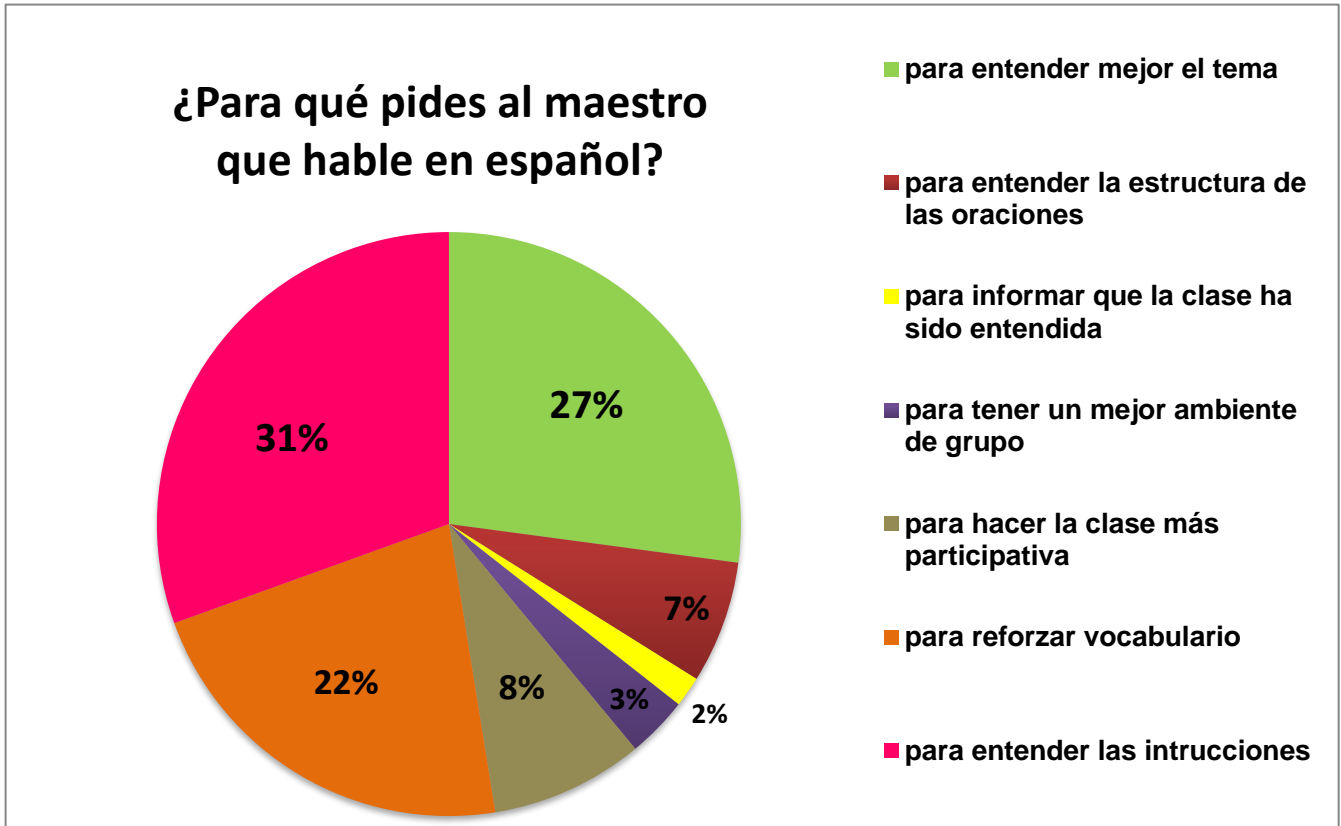
4.2.3

The figure above 4.2.3 shows the results of the third close ended question, here the maximum range is 11 and the minimum is 2. Two students said that they always feel comfortable when they take the class in Spanish, 4 said that frequently, 11 said that sometimes, 3 almost never and 6 said that they never feel comfortable with the class in Spanish.

According to the results of the third ended question, it can be observed that most of the elementary students feel much more comfortable when the teacher gives them the class in their mother tongue; this could happen because the students can better understand the subject and they can give their point of view.

However, the more you are in contact with the target language, the acquisition will be better.

The second section of the questionnaire is represented by a pie graphic which represents why the students ask the teacher to talk in Spanish during the English



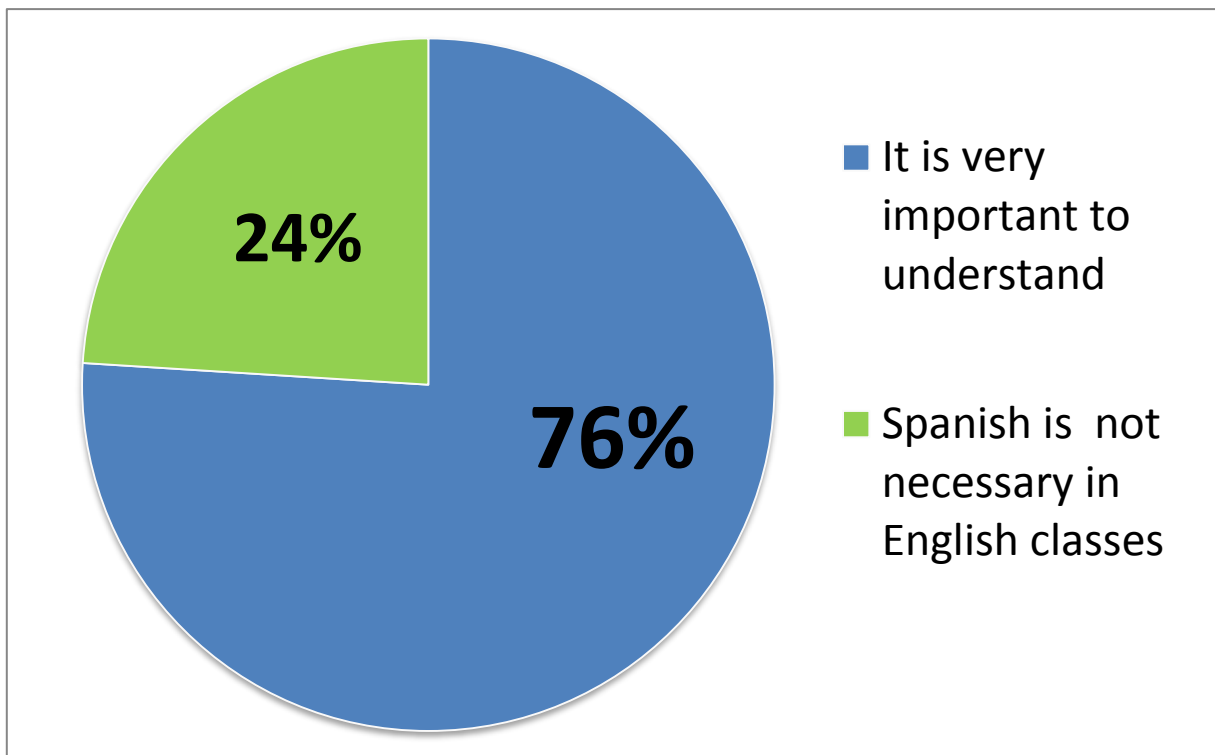
class.

In this section the three principal reasons the students ask the teacher to talk in Spanish are firstly, to understand better the instructions of the class, secondly to understand better when the teacher explains the topic, and finally, to reinforce vocabulary.

During classes of elementary level, when the teacher is giving the class in English the students ask him to switch the language because they feel more comfortable, they need that the teacher change the language to understand the topic or instructions better and also, they can express themselves or give an idea about the topic.

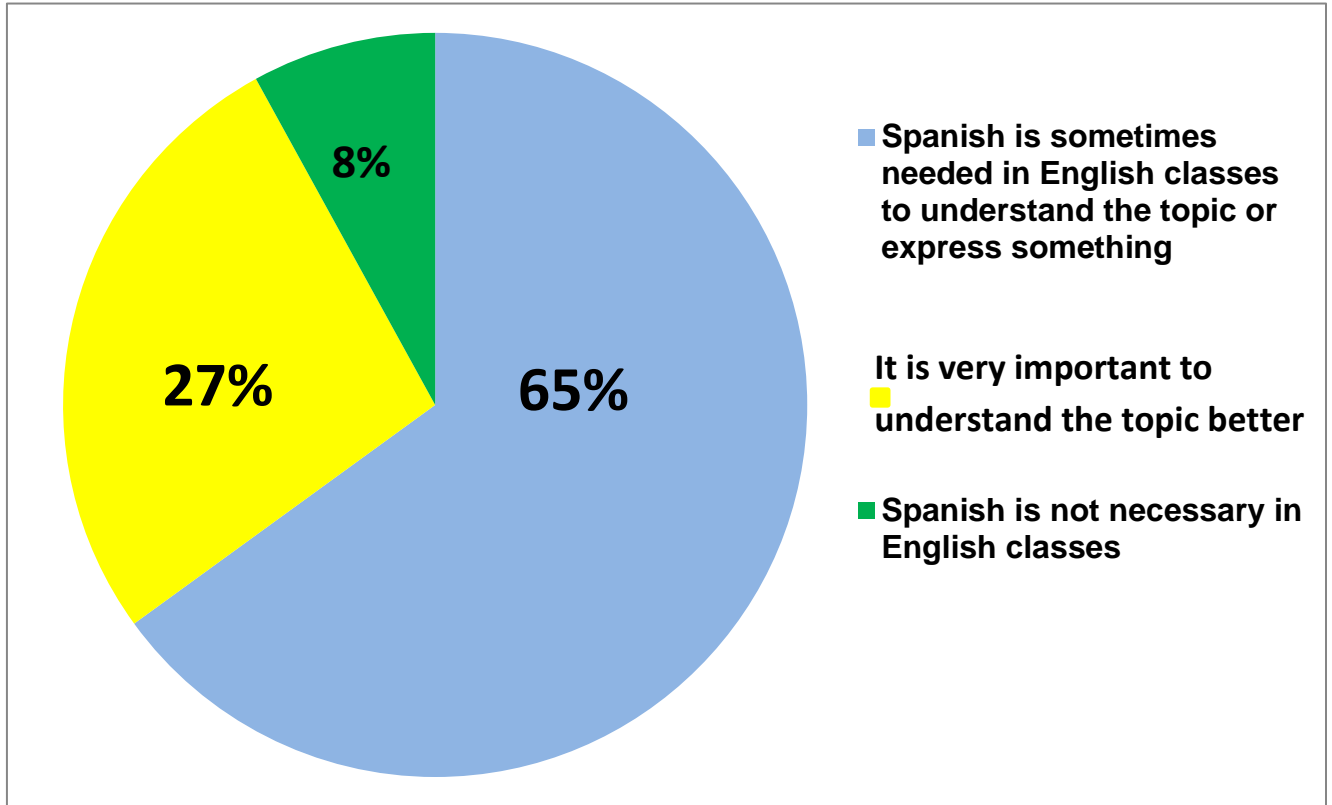
The last part of the questionnaire was three open ended questions, and the results of this question were separate in different categories according with to the students' answers.

### ¿Qué piensas del uso del español en las clases de inglés?



This graphic represents the students' percentage of who answered about what they think of the use of Spanish during the English classes in elementary level. The 76% said that "The language should only be used to understand better the topic" and the 24% said that "Spanish must not be used in the English classrooms"

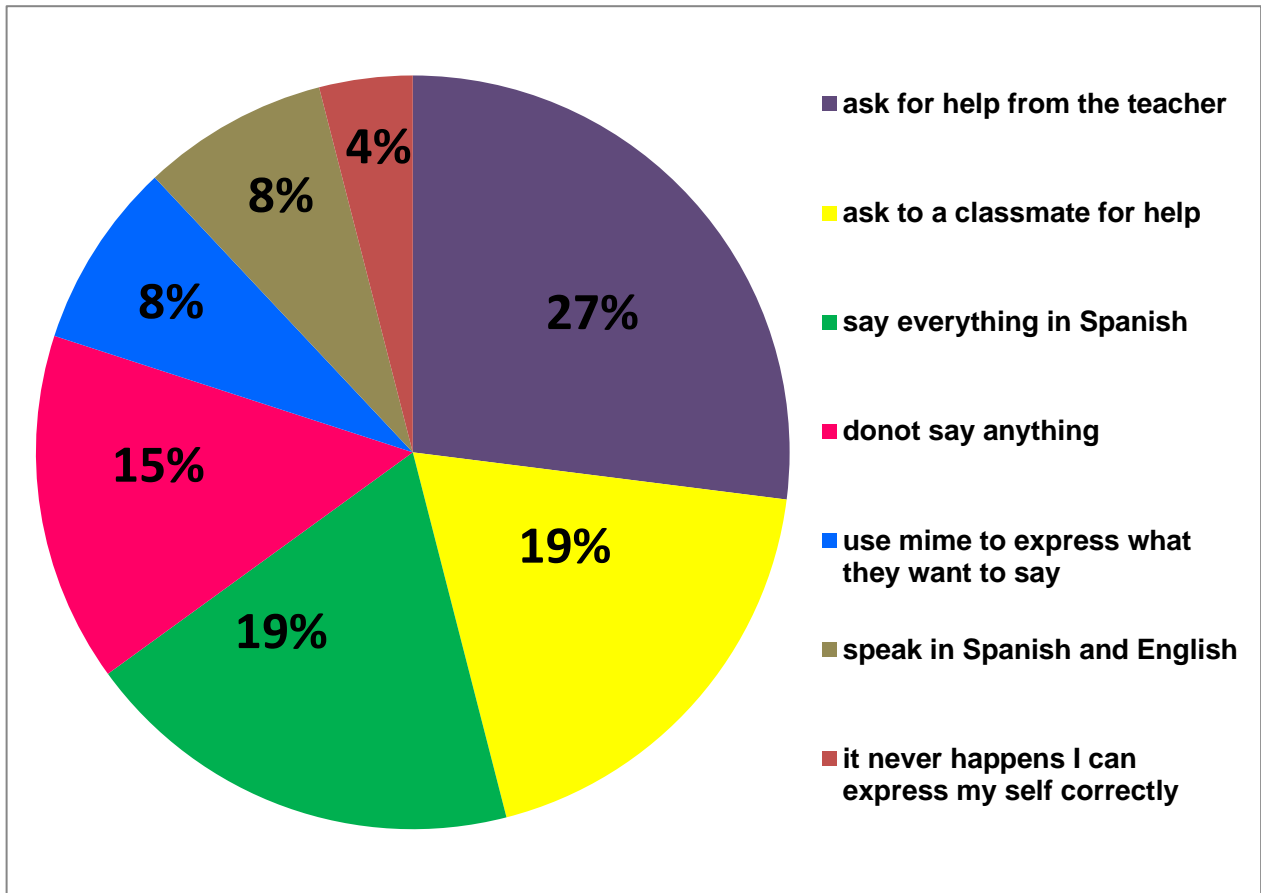
**¿Crees que es necesario el uso del español en la clase de inglés?  
¿Por qué?**



The graphic above represents the students' percentage of who answered to the question; Do you think it is necessary the use of Spanish in English classes and why?. According to the results the 65% of students interviewed said that "Spanish is sometimes needed in English classes to understand the topic or express something", 27% said that it is very important because you can understand the topic better", and the 8% said that "Spanish is not necessary during the English classes", all the students who answered were from the elementary level.

On the other hand, in the last questions there was more than one category, the question was the following;

**¿Qué haces si no puedes expresar una idea complete en inglés?**



In this question; what do you do if you cannot express an idea in English? The students of elementary level said the following; 27% said that they "ask for help from the teacher", 19% said that they "ask to a classmate for help", other 19% said that "they say everything in Spanish", 15% said that they "do not say nothing", 8% said "I use mime to express what they want to say", other 8% of students said that they "speak in Spanish and English" and the last 4% said "it never happens because the student can express himself correctly"

## **4.2.2 FINDINGS FROM THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATION.**

I will explain the results of my two classroom observations, this were applied to two classes of upper intermediate level, this classrooms observation helped me to know if during this level of English the teacher and students still make use of code switching during the class.

### **4.2.2.1 TEACHER CODE-SWITCHING IN THE CLASSROOM.**

In the first classroom during the observation the teacher talked all time in English she never used Spanish, she gave all the class in the target language, there was a case in which a student did not understand what the teacher said and the teacher tried to use other way, easy vocabulary to be understood by the student.

On the contrary, in the second classroom observation the teacher used Spanish during his class, in order to clarify meaning and to explain grammatical rules, one student gave an idea about the topic but she though in Spanish and said all the sentence literally translated from Spanish to English, so the teacher explain in Spanish the grammatical rules of that sentence.

I consider that the use of Spanish in the classroom depends on the lack of the language and in the level of each student have because when a student do not have a good level of the language they cannot express themselves better, they maybe have the idea but cannot express it. Also, I think that it depends on the teacher, because if there are teachers who do not allow the use of Spanish in English classes they force students to be more familiar with the language or when they do not understand something the teacher explains in an easy way according to the level of the student but without doing the code switching in this way students learn more vocabulary and reinforce it.

#### 4.2.2.2 STUDENT CODE-SWITCHING IN THE CLASSROOM.

During the first classroom observation the students talked all time in English, they did not use Spanish. It was once when they used Spanish and was when the students made teams and they talked in Spanish to bring the teams together, they used Spanish to said "quien es cinco, quien es tres . . .".

On the other hand, in the second observation with the other group, the students used Spanish for:

**Vocabulary:** a girl was talking and she did not know how to say a word in English so she asked to the teacher how she could say the word, but she talked all in Spanish.

**Grammatical points:** a girl said a sentence but she translated the entire sentence from Spanish to English, so she said the sentence mistakenly and the teacher explain her the grammatical points of the sentence.

**Express themselves:** a girl gave an idea about the topic but she talked all in Spanish.

## 5.0 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

The following chapter intends to present the use of code switching during the English classes; also I will describe the limitations founded during this process, suggestions for further researches and the answers to my research questions and finally a personal reflexion.

## 5.1 FINDINGS

My two instruments used in the project helped me to answer my two research questions. With the questionnaire applied to 26 students of elementary level I could answer the first research question that were; *What might cause the use of code switching in elementary English classes at ELT?* and with this instrument I found that in elementary English level the main factor that might cause the use of code switching is that the students do not understood the topic, also when the teacher explained a topic they preferred the teacher explained again on their mother tongue to reinforce vocabulary.

On the other hand, with the classroom observations the second research question was answered, *when do the teachers use code switching.* By observing the two classes I noticed that during the English class some students still make use of code switching and it occurs because they cannot express themselves or when they want to give an idea about the topic, to which the teacher responds to this act in the same way.

## **5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

As good things, there were also bad things during this project, when I applied my second instrument; the classroom observation, I had a big problem, I had to record the whole class to have a better recompilation of the use of code switching during the class, I was in the first class for the observation, the class started and I was going to start recording when I realized that I did not have enough memory on my cell phone so I could not record the class and I had to take a lot of notes on my notebook, of course I also used my evaluation format that according to Sert (2005), states some important factors for that students and teachers switch of language and I designed it for the observation class, this will be shown later in the appendix. I thing would have been better that the class was recorded and after was easier to watch the video and check when the code switching was used during the class.

The same happened with the other class I observed, I could record the class because the observations were the same day, was first an observation and when the class finished I went with the other group.

## **5.3 FURTHER RESEARCH**

This research studies the use of code switching in elementary and upper intermediate level. What might cause the use of code switching in students of elementary level and if it is still used during the classes of upper elementary courses.

What can I say about this research? Only that it was a very good topic to investigate, the next people who are going to investigate on this topic I would recommend them that if they are going to make observations that do more than I did, the two observations that I did helped me a lot to answer my research questions, but I think that when doing more observations people can observe more thing about the use of code switching during the class.

Also, I would like recommend that can be analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of the use of code switching during the English classes and what the teachers think about the use of code switching if this is a good tool that can be used in the learning of a second language. I think that it would also be important to investigate if the change of code for teachers is a good tool to be used in the classroom.

#### **5.4 PERSONAL REFLEXION**

As a personal reflexion I can say that this research project was a wonderful experience for me, I really liked to know more about this topic. It was hard, but at the end, I think I did a good job. As a student of languages I had heard about code switching and reading some books and articles I learned more about it. As we know the principal reason for students to make use of code switching is because they cannot express themselves, but there are a lot of other reasons that cause the use of this, something interesting that I found is that code switching can be used by that persons who want to exclude to somebody also from a conversation.

During all my career I had problems expressing myself in English, I think that not only happens to me but to all those who study languages, at some point in our student life we find ourselves having problems when we want to express some idea in the target language. There are endless reasons why the code switching is made and this was one of the main reasons that led me to investigate this topic. The code switching is not only done by the student but is also done by the teacher.

**Observation Format class:**



Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla  
Facultad de Lenguas.

**“The use of code-switching in elementary and upper intermediate English classes: A case study at major in ELT”**

**Subject:**

**Level:**

**Number of students:**

**Date:**

**The teacher and students use code switching for:**

- Supporting language environment in the classroom
- In order to clarify meaning
- Make students to understand better
- To explain a grammatical rules
- For discipline


**Comments/ observation:**

**Questionnaire Format:**



Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla  
Facultad de Lenguas.



**“The use of code-switching in elementary and upper intermediate English classes: A case study at major in ELT”**

El presente cuestionario tiene como objetivo principal saber cuáles son los principales factores por los que se hace uso del español en las clases de inglés. Por favor contesta las siguientes preguntas de acuerdo a tu experiencia personal como estudiante de lenguas.

Sexo \_\_\_\_\_ Nivel de meta \_\_\_\_\_ Edad \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Instrucciones: Lee las siguientes preguntas y marca con una X la respuesta que mejor exprese tu punto de vista.**

	Siempre	Frecuente-mente	Algunas veces	Casi nunca	Nunca
1. Si tú maestro está explicando un tema en inglés y tú no entiendes, le pides que lo explique nuevamente en español.					
2. Con que frecuencia usas español en tu clase de inglés.					
3. Te sientes más cómodo cuando el maestro imparte la clase en español.					

**II. Instrucciones: De las opciones de abajo selecciona aquellas por las cuales le pides al maestro que hable en español**

- Para entender mejor el tema
- Para entender la estructura de las oraciones
- Para informarle al profesor que el contenido de la clase ha sido entendido
- Para tener un mejor ambiente de grupo
- Para hacer la clase más participativa
- Para reforzar vocabulario
- Para entender las instrucciones


Otras:



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