



**BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA  
FACULTAD DE LENGUAS**

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***THE USE OF MOTHER TONGUE IN A EFL CLASSROOM***

**A thesis submitted to the school of languages for the degree of**

**LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS**

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## Abstract

The principal aim of this study is try to show the general overview about the use of mother tongue inside the classroom of second language and the main reasons and motivations to do it, besides to discover the causes to refuse to talk in second language (English), another aim that is try to discover is how the use of Spanish in the classroom affects the interaction in a positive or negative ways.

The research data was collected by via questionnaire: in which students found closed and opened questions in order to know the opinions of pupils about the use of Spanish in a classroom of second language. The questionnaire was applied in a classroom of Lengua Meta IV in LEMO School where 14 pupils answered the proper questionnaire.

It was found in the research that students disagree with the idea of use Spanish inside the classroom as the main language, but they agree with the idea to use Spanish to clarify or explain difficult concepts in English.

Finally, it was found that the use of Spanish in the classroom seems like and obstacle to any students, especially those that have a higher level inside the classroom, the students that have problems with English language agree with the idea to use Spanish to clarify or explain certain activities, problems or situations in order to have a understanding and a good class. More details and implication are show in this thesis.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction to the Problem

In the field of teaching English as Foreign language students and teachers face a lot of problems, also, teachers and students need to find a way to overcome those difficulties. Moreover, this process is inseparably and close related with the process of learning. (Ur, 1996). Indeed, teaching a second or foreign language is not an easy field because students face many changes and moves. In contrast with other fields as physics or chemistry where the changes that affect this disciplines are almost invisible, besides in language teaching the methods are in constantly transformation with the changes that occur with young people (Kuhn, 1970).

In a classroom of a Foreign Language (FL) the use of the mother tongue has been constantly unnecessary, forbidden and not tolerated. (Larsen & Long, 1991). Inside the classroom, a good interaction among participants seems to be necessary, the environment should be “exact”, tolerated and good enough with the intention of facilitated the learning of students. Moreover, classroom management is essential inside the classroom and here is where the teacher starts with the control of the students in the class. Later the students react to the teacher`s activities. Finally, feedback comes and it is usually given by the teacher to his pupils at the end of an activity or a class.

### 1.1 Research Purpose

The purpose of this project is to explore how the use of the mother tongue affects positive or negatives the interaction between teacher-students and students-students in the EFL in intermediate level classroom at university levels.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This research addresses the following research questions.

1. How often do students use the mother tongue (Spanish) in the EFL classroom?
2. How are interaction teacher-students and students-students developed in the EFL classroom?
3. How does the use of mother tongue affect positively or negatively the interaction in the EFL classroom?

## **1.3 Significance of the Study**

The intention of developing this research is because the interaction of students in a classroom of foreign language is very important to their learning. In a confident environment the students could interact and develop their abilities, skills and socialization easily, but many times this interaction is broken when students refuse to talk in a foreign language (English), by using their mother tongue.

The significance of this research is that it may contribute in teaching English because it may raise the awareness among teachers about the problems that occur in the classroom when students use their first language and refuse to use the second language.

## 1.4 Key Terms

**Age** – According to Krashen, L. & Scarcella (1979, p. 155), “The SL age results look chaotic, some studies appearing to show child superiority, some favoring adults...some fairly clear patterns emerge once short-term and long-term studies”.

**Assessment** –According to Brindley, G. (cited in Carter & Nunan, 2001, p.137) “Assessment refers to a variety of ways of collecting information on a learner’s ability or achievement [...] the two key requirements for assessment are that it should be valid and reliable”.

**Classroom Management.**–“It refers to skill in the organization and presentation of lessons in such a way that all pupils are actively engaged in learning. This requires an ability to analyze the different elements and phrases of a lesson, to select and deliver appropriate material and to reduce source of friction”. (Colin & Laslett, 1993, p. viii)

**Discipline**– According to Ur (1996, p.259), discipline is “The underlying responsibility for the control of any disciplined classroom has to be, surely, in the hands of the teacher: how authoritarian or liberal, rigid or flexible he or she is in the operation of this control in another question.”

**Feedback**–According to Ur (1996, p.242), “Feedback is information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task usually with the objective of improving this performance”.

**Foreign language**–According to Larsen & Long (1991, p.6), “Outside of an environment where the second language is spoken emotively, he or she would be acquiring it as a foreign language”.

**Grouping** –Ur (1996, p.232) said, “In group work, learners perform a learning task through small-group interaction. It’s a form of learners activation that is of particular value in the practice of oral fluency”.

**Instructions**–According to Ur (1996, p.16), “Instructions are the directions that are given to introduce a learning task which entails some measure of independent activity”.

**Interaction** – According to Sinclair & Coulthard (1975, p.227), “The most common type of classroom management interaction is that known as interaction-response- feedback: the teacher initiates and exchanges”.

**Learning** –According to Gass (1997, p.235), “Learning may take place during the interaction, or negotiation may be an initial step in learning; it may serve as a priming device”.

**Monitoring** –According to Colin & Laslett (1993, p. ix), “Monitoring refers to checking the effectiveness of school policies on discipline and pastoral care and how senior management can help colleagues avoid stress and cope with problems in classroom management”.

**Motivation** –“It is defined as the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates and evaluates the cognitive and motor process whereby initial wishes and desires are selected and prioritized (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out”. (Dorneyi & Otto, 1998, p.9)

**Questioning** –According to Ur (1996, p.228), “Questioning is a universally used activation technique in teaching, mainly within the interaction- response-feedback pattern”.

**Second language** –According to Larsen & Long (1991, p. 6), “A second language is one being acquired in an environment in which the language is spoken natively”.

**Teaching** –According to Ur (1996, p.4), “Teaching is understood here as a process that is intrinsically and inseparably bound up with learning”.

## **CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction.**

The present chapter offers a general overview of the theoretical framework of topics about research. As the investigator mentioned in the previous chapter, the purpose of this work is to obtain the opinions of students about the use of Spanish inside the classroom and how the use of it affects their interaction.

### **2.1 Classroom Management and the Role of the Teacher**

Classroom management is one of the most powerful tools to the teachers. It is very important that teachers keep up the order inside the classroom, in order to have a good environment where students can have a good class. According to Bertie & Geoffrey (1990, p.4) “All teachers jobs at least contain some elements of ‘management’ in this sense one can argue that every teacher is a manager.” As Bertie and Geoffrey commented classroom management has vital influence in the roles that students and teachers take in every class; teacher is a powerful person and is the head of all this process of learning a second language.

#### **2.1.1 Defining Teacher Education & Classroom Management**

Nowadays, a teacher is a “jack of all trades”; in other words, he is more than a simply teacher, is a psychology, a listener, a therapeutic, a doctor, a surgeon, a translator, a manager, a motivator, an actor, etc. In addition, a teacher has a big influence in students’

life; a good or bad teacher could mark the academic life of a person. According to Bertie and Geoffrey (1990, p.8) “As teachers we already play an important and influential role in the lives of our pupils. As managers we become additionally one of the most important influences on the working lives of the staff who report directly or indirectly to us.” As the author says the role of a teacher in front a group is very important because a teacher not only teaches math, chemistry, etc., besides teachers educate to live, in other words, all the things that students learn in a classroom, may influence students’ life.

It is very important inside the classroom that teachers manage the work; in this way, students are open to receive the instructions of a teacher, and it is the work of a teacher to keep the motivation of students in the foreign language. According to Wright (1991, p.53) “A” primary function of teacher management role is to motivate the learners who are unmotivated and to nurture those who are already well motivated to the task of learning a foreign language.” In this light, it is highlight the importance of teacher’s role as motivator.

### **2.1.2 Dimensions of Classroom Management**

The way in which teacher manages the classroom is a very essential part in education; the good management of a class depends on a big manner the success or failure of a teacher’s activities. Stevick (1980, p.4) says, “Success [in learning a language] depends less on materials, techniques, and linguistic analysis, and more on what goes on inside and between people in the classroom”. As Stevick says, the success or failing of a SL class falls more in the manner of control students and less in techniques, methods of teachings, etc.

### **2.2 Lesson Planning**

In a class of a second language a teacher has to follow a lesson plan where he has to manage a series of activities to use in a classroom; the lesson plan has to be clear and easy



to follow to the teacher with the intention to have a successful class. According to Ur (1996, p. 213) “Lesson in different places may vary in topic, time, place, atmosphere, methodology and materials, but they all, essentially, are concerned with learning as their main objective, involve the participation of learners and teachers and are limited and pre-scheduled as regards time, place and membership.”

Teachers have a special way to build a lesson plan, but in this concept we need to take account many things that are in classroom management, as the age, social environment, arrangement, material, activities, the equipment, as mention ones.

### **2.2.1 Managing Activities & Materials**

Activities and materials in a second language have to be clear, understandable, easy to follow and have to motivate at all the students inside the class, teacher has to take into account many things to build and organize the materials and the activities; a bad management of both could derivate in a bad English experience to the learners. According to Cunningsworth (1984, p.6-7) “Learning activities will not be of much to help to learner of English unless they present and practice English in a systematic and comprehensive way so that new language items can be assimilated by the learner.” As Cunningsworth mentioned an activity needs to be concrete, understandable, and simple in order to have a good assimilation of English.

Activities have to be coherent and have to excite the students to acquire a second language; the activities and materials need to be clear, short and easy in order to students assimilate the language in a good way. Tomlinson (2001, p.66) says, “Materials include anything which can be used to facilitate the learning of a language. They can be linguistic, visual, auditory or display, or on cassette, CD ROM, DVD.” Considering all these elements teachers have a lot of elements to enrich their lesson plans /classes.

Material and activities have to be perfect in their order and organization; that means, that teacher need to control the use, time, and the way in which these two elements function; if teacher has doubts or cannot organize the material and activities, the learning of a second language can be damage in the assimilation.

According to Candlin & Edelhoff (1982, p. 102) “Material should have twin aims: on the one hand they offer information and data about the language being studied, and in particular about the social context and the culture within which communication takes place and derives much of its meaning and value”.

### **2.3 Questioning Techniques**

Students have to face the questions to show their understanding in the classroom; besides, they have to inspire students to participate and pay attention in teacher activities and follow their instruction; on the other hand, students have to prove to the teacher if they are learning a second language because a good question is the beginning of a good class. According to Gebhard (2000, p.71) “Knowledge about questioning behaviors can benefit teachers who want to provide chances for students to interact in English in meaningful ways.” Questions inside the classroom should have a purpose, clarify or resolve doubts in the process of learning, questions in their different ways have only one purpose, resolve the problems of learning a second language. Doff (1998, p.22) mentioned, “The use of questions for particular activities is dealt with more fully in other units: presenting vocabulary (questions to check comprehension of new words), using a reading text (questions on a text), practicing structures (questions as part of language practice) and eliciting (questions to encourage students to guess).”

Teachers have to take into account many factors to formulate the questions inside the classroom, to mention one, the age and level of students in order to manage the interaction in the class. As Doff (1998, p.22) and Gebhard (2000, p.71) mentioned, “Questions inside the classroom are crucial in the interaction of students and teachers, but it could be considered like a weapon because it could be damage to students, if the teacher don’t take account the level and the purpose of questions this could confuse them and the students won’t learn in a correct way”.

#### **2.4 Error Correction & Feedback**

Error correction and Feedback seem to be very important in the language learning process; teachers need to dedicate some time for correcting students; oral or written production. According to Doff (1998, p.188) “Most teachers would agree that we need to correct some errors, to help students learn the correct forms of the language.” Teacher has to correct the errors of the students, but in a good way; teachers have to be careful, sensitive and not rude, in a English Foreign Language classroom is very important that students feel confident in order to participate, and show the errors that students have; in this way teacher will know where to work more on. Doff (1998, p.187) said: “Students’ errors are very useful way of showing what they have and have not learnt. So instead of seeing errors negatively, as a sign of failure (by students or the teacher), we can see them positively as an indication of what we still need to teach.”, Feedback seems to be the most common tool inside the classroom; it could be given oral or written and students seem to be motivated when receiving feedback. According to London (1997, p.1) “Feedback is central to performance management. Feedback guides, motivates, and reinforces effective behaviors and reduces or stops ineffective behaviors.”

Not all the teachers apply feedback like a tool of learning; feedback is essential to discover if the pupils assimilate, understand, or comprehend the lesson given by the teacher, in this manner is important to use feedback in a classroom of second language. Ur (1996, p. 242) said, “Feedback is information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task usually with the objective of improving this performance.”

## **2.5 Monitoring Students**

It is common that students sometimes need monitoring for developing some tasks inside the classroom; for that reason, teachers need to find a way and time to give students few minutes to check and manage elements such as discipline. According to Colin & Laslett (1993, p. IX) “Monitoring refers to checking the effectiveness of school policies on discipline and particular care and how senior management can help colleagues avoid stress and cope with problems in classroom management.”

Students nowadays need a teacher that take care of them; in this sense, teacher is the person that controls students, is very common that pupils lose the attention; in addition, students need to be monitored almost all the time in all the activities. According to Everard & Morris (1996, p. 263) “It is necessary to assign responsibility to named individuals for monitoring the critical factors that measure success and for managing the process needed to take corrective action in case of a short fall.”

## **2.6 Managing Discipline**

One common problem in all teaching classroom is discipline; the good and correct learning in a classroom depends on many ways in how discipline is performed by the teacher and how students assimilate that discipline. Ur (1996, p.261) says, “Discipline classes may or

may not be quiet; undisciplined ones are usually noisy. There is, therefore, arguably some positive correlation between quietness and the level of discipline.”Managing discipline is an issue for all teachers even the most experienced, for that reason it is necessary to consider class characteristics before designing a class. Some teachers consider discipline as a fundamental element in the success of a class (the most strict); however, some others consider that discipline is subjective.

It is true that children and adolescents are the most active pupils because they have a lot of energy; it is the job of teacher to focus that energy in the activities and material that teacher made for them and to achieve the assimilation of the class. According to Davies & Pearse (2000, p.127) “Discipline is the main preoccupation of some teachers, especially teachers of group of children and adolescents.”

In fact, teachers not always have the complete attention on a class, and in this sense, discipline is not present and students get lose, teacher needs to manage the class and takes the control of it. According to Ur (1996, p.261) “The fact that a teacher is in control of proceedings does not necessarily mean that he or she is standing in front of the class telling everyone what to do.”

One way to control the discipline inside the classroom is to manage the activities and materials, the teacher is the main person to control discipline and that is why teacher has to set rules to govern the classroom. As Ur (1996, p.261), Davies & Pearse (2000, p.127) said, “Discipline in classroom is vital in the teaching of foreign language, in addition, discipline is very difficult to achieve, especially in a group with only young students, but the job of the teacher is found the correct way to maintain at a class with discipline “.

## **2.7 Seating Arrangements, Student Groupings & Classroom Dynamics**

The way in which students sit or organize had a crucial influence in the development of a class of second language, in addition, more circumstances have an influence too, as the number of students and the social environment like mention ones. Collin & Laslett (1993, p.4) said, "Seating arrangement will vary according to the type of lesson, age of pupils and nature of activity it is important that teachers decide where children should sit."The setting arrangement varies according to the number of pupils, the age of students, according to the dimensions of classroom, the different type of learning of the students, etc.

Group work is a very delicate part in teaching because not all the students work inside the group like the majority of members, these have to be managing with special attention in order to have the mayor benefits of it. According to McDough & Shaw (1993, p.227) "Pair and group work are not synonyms terms: just as they obviously reflect different social patterns"

Work in groups is better than try to manage the whole class, inside a group the elements or pupils can delegate responsibilities in equal parts according to the number of members and the huge of work. As Harmer (1998, p.21) mentioned, "In groups, students tend to participate more equally and they are also more able to experiment and use the language than they are in a whole-class arrangement."Teacher use group work to exhort at all the students to participate inside the classroom, to integrate at all pupils to participate in the activities that teacher made, group work is used by the teacher like a tool in order to students learn something about each other.

## 2.8 The Role of the Teacher

The role of a teacher nowadays is not very clear, because a teacher needs to develop many professions not only is a teacher. In the past, a teacher just talked and talked and the students only listened and teacher did not worry about the problems of the students in their houses or with friends, etc.; now the teacher has to be involved in all the situations that surround the students. Hedge (2000, p. 29) said, “It seems that a large number of teachers perceived a need to fulfill the general roles of instructor, organizer, counselor, and helper; indeed, these are common to a range of classroom methods.”

Nowadays, the role of the teacher has changed considerably; new methods and new teaching styles are used; the roles that teacher has to cover are many, a good teacher not only teach at the pupils, he guides, corrects, controls, etc., the ways of teach inside the classroom. Harmer (1991) (cited in Hedge, 2000, p.30 ) said, “It is possible to identify the teacher in a number of roles in this lesson: as controller in eliciting nationality words; as assessor of accuracy as students try to pronounce the words; as corrector of pronunciation; as organizer in giving instructions for the pair work, initiating it, monitoring it, an organizing feedback; as prompter while students are working together; and as resource if students need help with words and structures during the pair work.”

The role of the teacher in front of the class has to be exemplar; teacher has to plan the class according to the necessities of the students. As Hedge (2000, p.29) mentioned, “The way in which teacher gives his or her class to students is essential because of the methodology that teacher has in language teaching. The teacher’s role complements the teacher methodology and the teacher has a very important place in this point”.

## **2.9 The Role of the Students**

Students need to be receptive and active in their education; they need to be participative and need to contribute to classroom discussion, and students need to feel free to ask or express their ideas. According to Hedge (2000, p.33) “Four perspectives on learning centered teaching suggest a far wide range of roles for the learner than those performed in a traditional, teacher dominated the classroom. In contributing to course design, learners can research their needs, negotiate, content and help to monitor the progress of the course.”

Students have different likes, different styles of learning have diverse opinions, believes, they come from different environments of their houses, etc., in this sense teacher has to plan the class taking these considerations. Brown (1994, p.49) said, “Learners roles (styles, individual preferences for group or individual learning, student input in determine curricular content, etc.) are important consideration in your teaching”.

## **2.10 The Nature and Role of Instructional Materials**

Instructional material is a good tool in the teaching foreign language. Students in all ages need to understand the use of materials in classroom; it is essential that teachers can also manage the material, in this sense students feel comfortable using materials. Azikiwe (1998)(cited in Doublegist,2013) defines instructional materials like “All the five senses of sight learning, touch, smell and taste while presenting his lesson and are very important in languages teaching especially in foreign language because they facilitate the direct association between the sound and their symbol and also words and the objects they represent”.

The effective and correct management of the material use in classroom is important to help the teacher to develop a good class in a teaching a foreign language, because a bad



or incorrect use of material could cause more doubts. Key (1999)(cited in Doubleglist,2013) argues that “ Those things that are intended to help the teacher to teach more effectively or better, still enable the pupils learn. Instructional materials help the teacher in his work if they are not used properly; they can do more harm than good”.

### **2.11 The Role of the Teacher and Student in the Most Common Teaching Methods**

Teacher and students have to work together; the success of a method depends on both, students and teacher, they are responsible of it. Davies & Pearse (2000, p.127) said, “Both teachers and learners need to play varying roles. You should be consciously aware of this. These different roles require skill, confidence and sensitivity. It is, of course, your responsibility to make sure that you behave in the right way at the right time.”

The variety of behavior of the teacher inside the classroom is crucial in the mood of students. These changes of mood can affect positive or negative on the students. According to John Fanselow (cited in Harmer, 1998, p.5), “Both for the teacher’s sanity and the students continuing involvement, teacher needs to violate their own behavior patterns. If teacher normally teaches in casual clothes, he should turn up one day wearing a suit. If a teacher normally sits down, she should stand up. If he or she is normally noisy and energetic as a teacher, he or she should spend a class behaving calming and slowly.”

The roles inside the classroom are delimited by the teacher, it is crucial that teacher and students take their role inside the classroom, in order to have a good classes and good environment in a class of second language. Hedge (2000, p.26) commented, “The concept of ‘role’ has become very popular in ELT and is a term in common usage to denote the functions that teachers and learners perform during the course of a lesson. In social setting of the classroom, teachers and learners expectations about what are appropriate functions

in various learning task will determine the roles that each performs, and these will be culturally influenced.”

## **2.12 Code-Switching**

Code-switching is a very common process that occurs to all the students that learn a second or foreign language, because is unavoidable to separate the native language when a second language is studying. Johnson (2000, p. 184) defines Code-switching as “functions to announce specific identities, create certain meanings, and facilitate particular interpersonal relationships”.

The process that a learner of a second language faces when learns a new language could be a trouble, because some students first translate phrases in their native language, later in the language that a pupil feel more comfortable and finally in the new language. Garner (1991, p. i) said, “It is quite commonplace for bilingual speakers to use two or more languages, dialects or varieties in the same conversation, without any apparent effort”.

Students use the code switching in more advance levels than in down levels, code switching in many levels obstacle the learning of pupils. As Nilep (2006, p.1) said, Code switching “Is defined as the practice of selecting or altering linguistic elements so as to contextualize talk in interaction. This contextualization may relate to local discourse practices, such as turn selection or various forms of bracketing, or it may make relevant information beyond the current exchange, including knowledge of society and diverse identities”.

### **2.13 Language Interference**

It is almost impossible to separate the native language when is teaching a second language, the language interference is presented in the process of learning a second language and it is a challenge to the teacher to avoid interference. Berthold, Mangubhai & Batorowicz (1997, p.1) said, “Interference may be viewed as the transference of elements of one language to another at various levels including phonological, grammatical, lexical and orthographical”.

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY.**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This methodology chapter describes three aspects that were considered in this thesis: participants, the instruments and the procedure used. The survey method was a “questionnaire” in order to collect the opinions of the participants. Through the questionnaire participants were asked about how they think the mother tongue (Spanish) affected their studies in a classroom of foreign language, with the purpose to acquire information related to this thesis.

### **3.1 Participants**

The numbers of participants of this study were 14, all LEMO (Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas) students. The former students were all in the intermediate level. All participants belong to the middle social class, and the range of ages varies between 17 and 25 years old. The majority of them were single, with the exception of one female that was 57 years old and was marriage; 12 participants were female in this study and 2 were male.

### **3.2 Instruments**

The instrument used was a questionnaire adapted by the author of this thesis, from the English Teaching Forum, (Jinlan, 2002, p.42). The questionnaire contains 17 questions in which is expected to know the opinion of the students about the use of the mother tongue in the classroom and how L1 affected their interaction among them; besides to know which

students refused to talk in English inside their classroom, and the possible reasons of this situation.

There were 17 close questions, where the researcher tried to explore the opinion of students about the use of Spanish in classroom. In contrast, at the end of this instrument just one question requests the opinion of students, which means, that the questionnaire contains one open or direct question where students needed to write their general opinion about the use of Spanish in the class.

The 17 questions were in a Likert scale, all the questions contained five possible answers to each one; this questionnaire was elaborated to be answered in 15 or 20 minutes, no more than that. Thus, it did not seem to be complicated for the students to answer it.

### **3.3 Procedure**

First, the instrument was adapted and evaluated in a one-on-one basis for reliability. Second, it was piloted with 3 students of LEMO faculty with the same level of target language, in order to find errors in the instrument; after that, errors and wrong questions were corrected.

Third, the researcher proceeds to apply the questionnaire that was modified previously to the students of Target Language four in the LEMO faculty. During the application of the questionnaire the students did not show any problem and they filled it up in the time estimated; after than step, it came the revision of the answered questionnaires and the obtaining of results, the next step was the gathered of results, followed by the entered, organized and processed of it on the computer.

Finally, the information was compiled, captured in a computer by their importance according to this thesis, and was transformed in graphs in order to illustrate the main findings; these results are shown and analyzed in the next chapter, the chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the obtained results from the questionnaire applied to students in the intermediate level. The results are presented and analyzed in a way of relationship between the questions with similitude in importance. This means, two or more questions will be analyzed in one graph; therefore, after the results were analyzed and commented, the figures were introduced to chapter four, and the results were discussed according to the students' answers.

### 4.1 Spanish Importance.

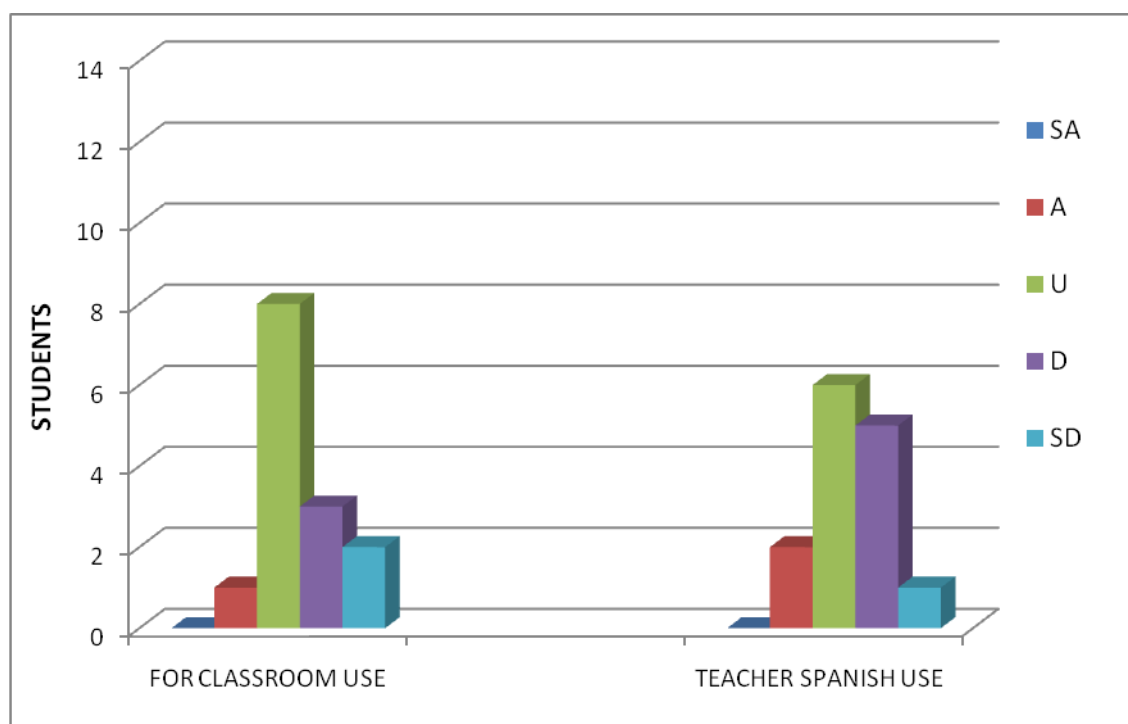
In the first question of the instrument, the majority of students could not give a reasonable answer to the question; *“Is it important the use of Spanish in the classroom?”*, according to the scale about the agreement or disagreement written in the questionnaire, the results for these questions are indicated in figure 4.1, which shows that 8 students answered “undecided” (U), 0 students in the option “strongly agree” (SA), 1 of them marked the option “agree” (A), 3 selected “disagree” (D), and in the last choice 2 students choose “strongly disagree” (SD). See figure 4.1

In the second question; *“Is it important that your teacher uses Spanish in the classroom?”*, the majority of students, 6 in this issue, choose the “U” as option in this question, 0 students in option “SA”, but in the option “A” 2 students selected it as the best

for them, 5 students selected “Disagree” and just one of them marked the option “SD” as the option that they considered adequate. See figure 4.1

The information obtained in both questions; “*Is it important the use of Spanish in the classroom?*” and “*Is it important that your teacher uses Spanish in the classroom?*” that are marked with the number one and number two in the questionnaire are shown below in figure 4.1.

**Figure 4.1 Spanish Importance**



These results showed different points of view in both questions, in the first figure “for classroom use”, it is showed the importance that students gave at the use of Spanish

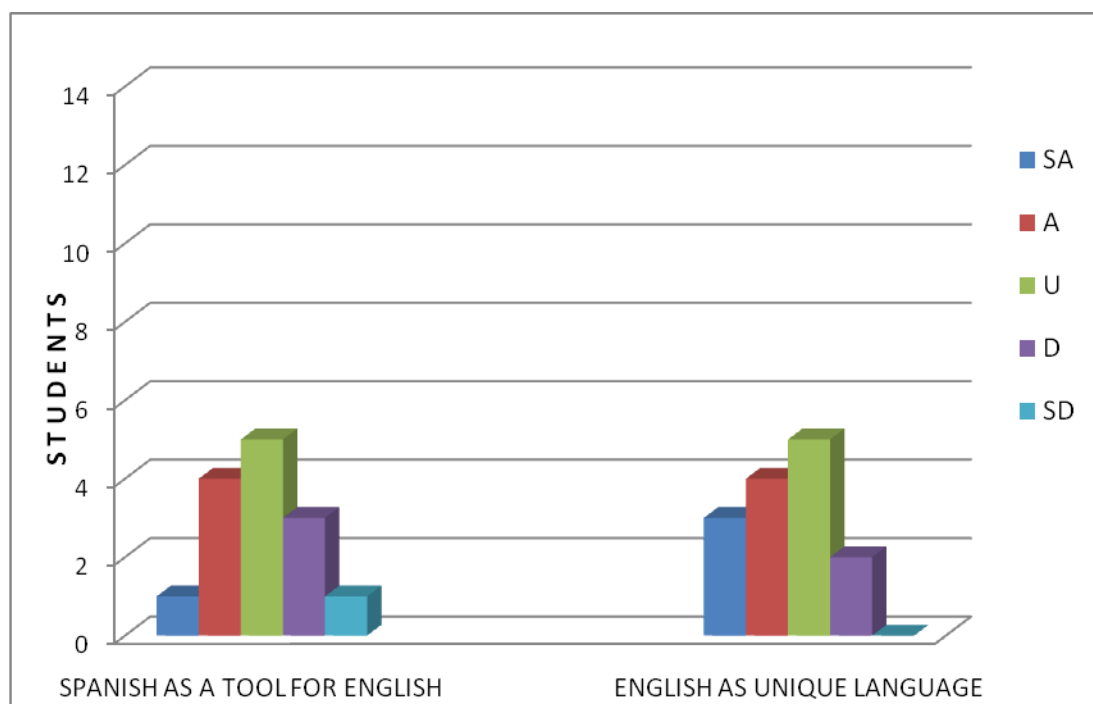


inside their classroom of a Second Language, and demonstrated that students are undecided in this aspect. The majority chose the option “U”, they could not decide if they support or reject the use of Spanish inside the class. Students selected the option “D” disagree, and option “SD” strongly disagree. The second graphic shows the importance that the students gave at the second question, “Teacher Spanish Use”, *is it important that their teacher spoke Spanish in the classroom?*; however, these questions had almost the same meaning according to the results; even when many students chose the option “U” undecided, both figures showed us that Spanish has an important part in their learning at this level.

#### **4.2 The Process of Learn a Second Language.**

In this question (the third one), just one of the students selected the option marked as “Strongly Agree” (SA), so 5 students marked the option “Agree” (A), the idea about that Spanish helping them in the process of learning English, but the same number of them said that were “Undecided” (U) in their answers, 3 students “Disagree” (D) with that idea, and just one was “Strongly Disagree” (SD). In contrast, in the question 17 *“I can understand everything and do a better work in the classroom if I or my teacher uses only English”*, students mentioned that they felt better when they used only English in the classroom, the results were the following; in “Strongly Agree” (SA) just 3 students selected this option, 4 students “Agree”(A) with the use of English in the classroom as a language, 6 were “Undecided” (U), 2 “Disagree” (D) and any one answered in the option “Strongly Disagree” (SD). See figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.2 The Process of Learn a Second Language.**



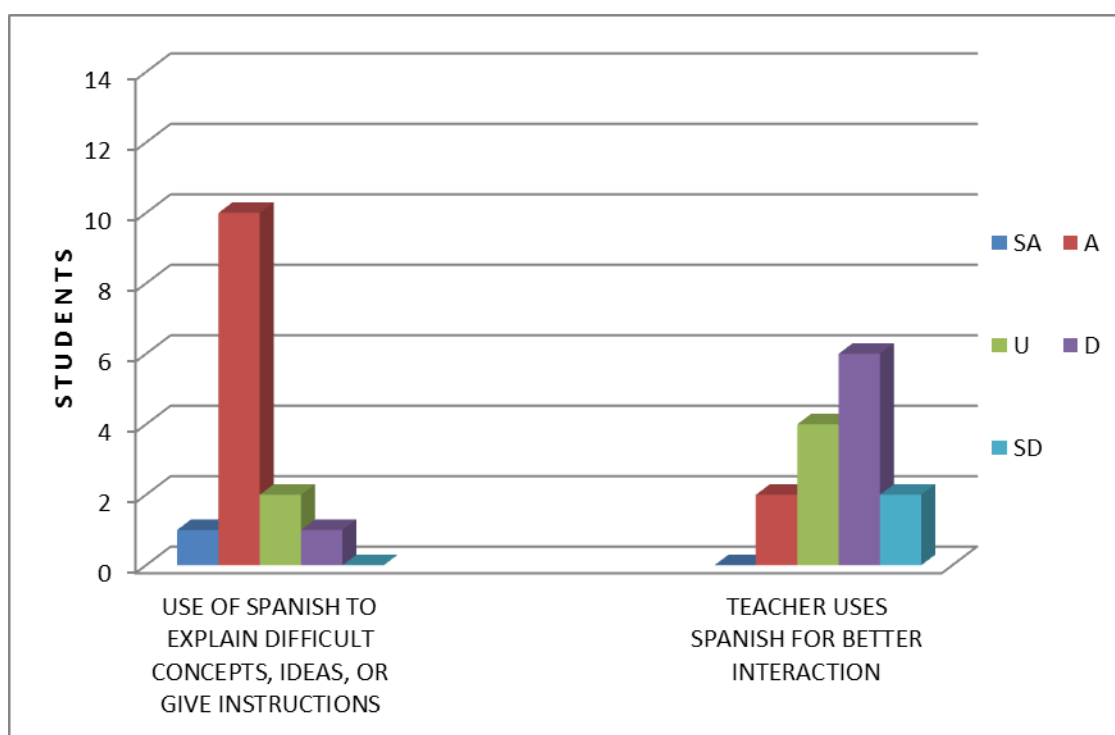
The results shown in this graphic are very important because in the column one, marked as a “*Spanish as a tool for English*”, gave us the students opinions about the importance of the Spanish (L1) in the process of learning a second language (L2), it has almost the same impact that the question seventeen, that is about the use of the English in classroom, the results do not show a great difference among the two columns.

### 4.3 Use of Spanish as Manager of Interaction.

In the question 7 the majority of students marked the option “Agree”, to be more specific 11 students said that “it’s important to use Spanish in the classroom in order to explain difficult concepts, ideas or give instructions” to them when they were confused.

In the option “Strongly Agree” just one of the 15 students chose this as an answer, in the other side, 2 students selected “Undecided” as a better answer for them, and in the option “Disagree”, just one student. In contrast, in question 14 “*I understand better the teacher instructions and feel free to ask new things when he or she use Spanish*”, 2 students marked “Agree” as an option, 4 were “Undecided”, and 7 choose the option “Disagree” and just 2 the option “Strongly Disagree”. See figure 4.3

**Figure 4.3 Use of Spanish as Manager of Interaction.**



The results in this figure showed the level of agreement or disagreement of the students in the question 7 and 14, the first column show the question 7 and the second

contain the results of the 14 question, so the graphic is clear and said that the students preferred that the teacher spoke in English inside the classroom. However, students preferred that teacher used Spanish when they had troubles to understand any instruction or activities.

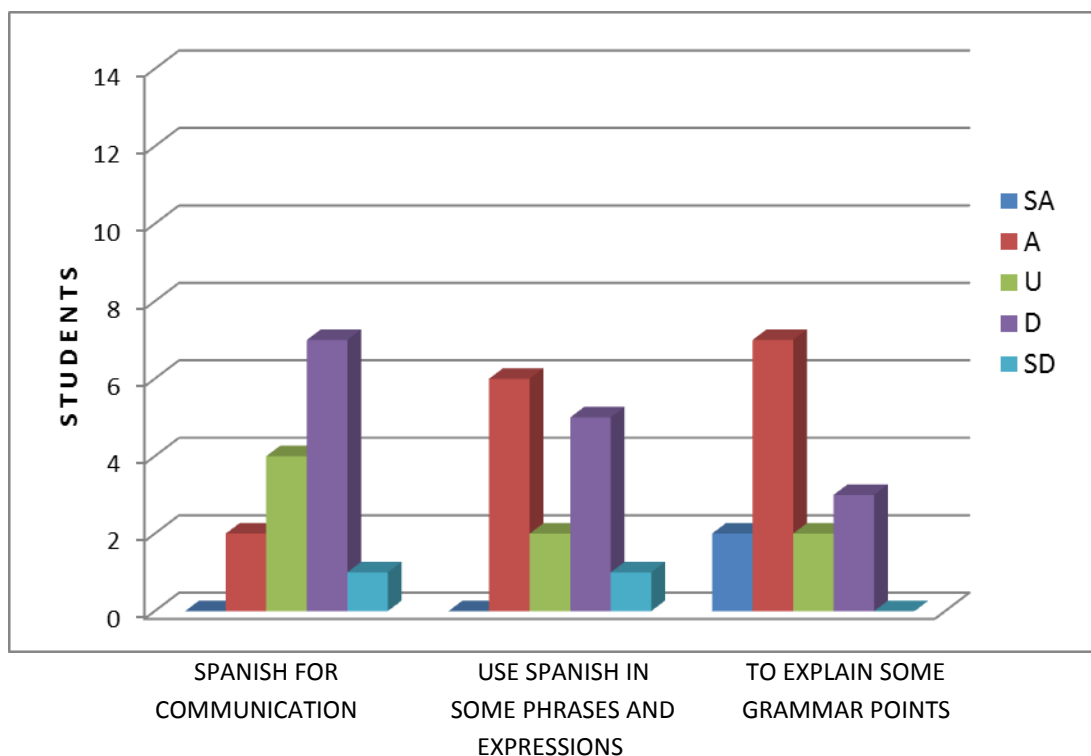
#### **4.4 Spanish as Explanation and Communication.**

In the questions 4, 5, and 6 that are related among them, provided the opinions of the students, in the question number 4 *“Is it important to use Spanish to communicate because you make a better work or you interact better with your classmates or professor?”*, 7 students marked the option “Disagree” like the best for them, 2 chose the option “Agree” as answer, in the option “Undecided” 5 students selected this in the questionnaire, meanwhile any of students marked the option “Strongly Agree”, only 1 of them marked the option “Strongly Disagree”.

The results in the question 5 that is about *“The use of Spanish in the classroom because you practice the use of some phrases and expressions”* showed that 6 students selected the option “Agree”, even though the same number of students marked the option “Disagree”, on the other hand, 2 students preferred the option “Undecided” and only one selected “Strongly Disagree” as answer.

In the question 6 that is about *“The use of Spanish to explain some grammar points in a class of English”* the minority of students only 2 selected the option “Strongly Agree” as the correct answer, but 8 of them marked the option “Agree” as the best for them, 2 circle the option “Undecided” and the last 3 students elected “Disagree” as answer, finally no one elected the “Strongly Disagree”. See figure 4.4.

**Figure 4.4 Spanish as Explanation and Communication**

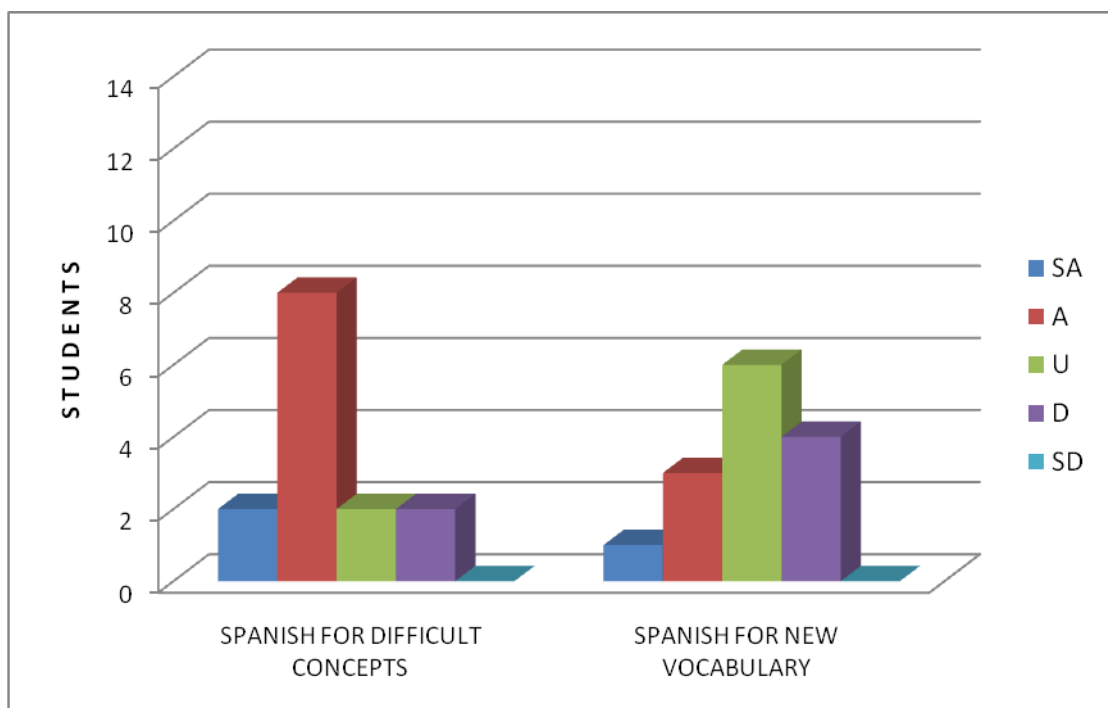


The columns represent the information about the answers that were obtained from the questionnaire applied at the target language four in LEMO faculty. In sum, the three columns in the figure represented the result of opinions in the questions 4, 5 and 6, the question number four is about “*the use of Spanish for communication and interaction*”, and question 5 mention “*the use of Spanish for some phrases and expressions*”, and the question number 6 stated “*the use of Spanish for grammar points*”. Results were very contrasting because students refuse the idea that teacher use Spanish as a L1, but they agreed when teacher used Spanish to clarify or explain some grammar points or expressions in English.

#### 4.5 Understand Difficult Concepts and New Vocabulary Using Spanish.

In this section the question 9 “*is it important to use Spanish in the classroom because it helps me to understand the difficult concepts better?*”, and in question 10, “*is it important to use Spanish in the classroom because it helps me to understand the new vocabulary better?*” The results show that in the question 9, 8 students marked the option “Agree” as the most convenient answer for this issue, just 3 selected “Undecided”, 2 of them chose the option “Strongly Agree” as the best answer, but the same number marked the option “Disagree” for this question. While, on the question number 10 just one student selected “Strongly Agree” as the correct option, the option “Agree” was marked just by 3 students, 7 selected the option “Undecided” and “Disagree” was selected by 4 pupils. See figure 4.5.

**Figure 4.5 Understand Difficult Concepts and New Vocabulary Using Spanish**



In this case, the figure shows that some participants preferred to use Spanish in order to facilitate the understanding of difficult concepts in the English languages, but at the same time showed that the same number of students elected “Disagree” and “Undecided”, with 2 students each one, in the other graphic that correspond to the question 10 the students could not decide if Spanish helps them to understand new words in English.

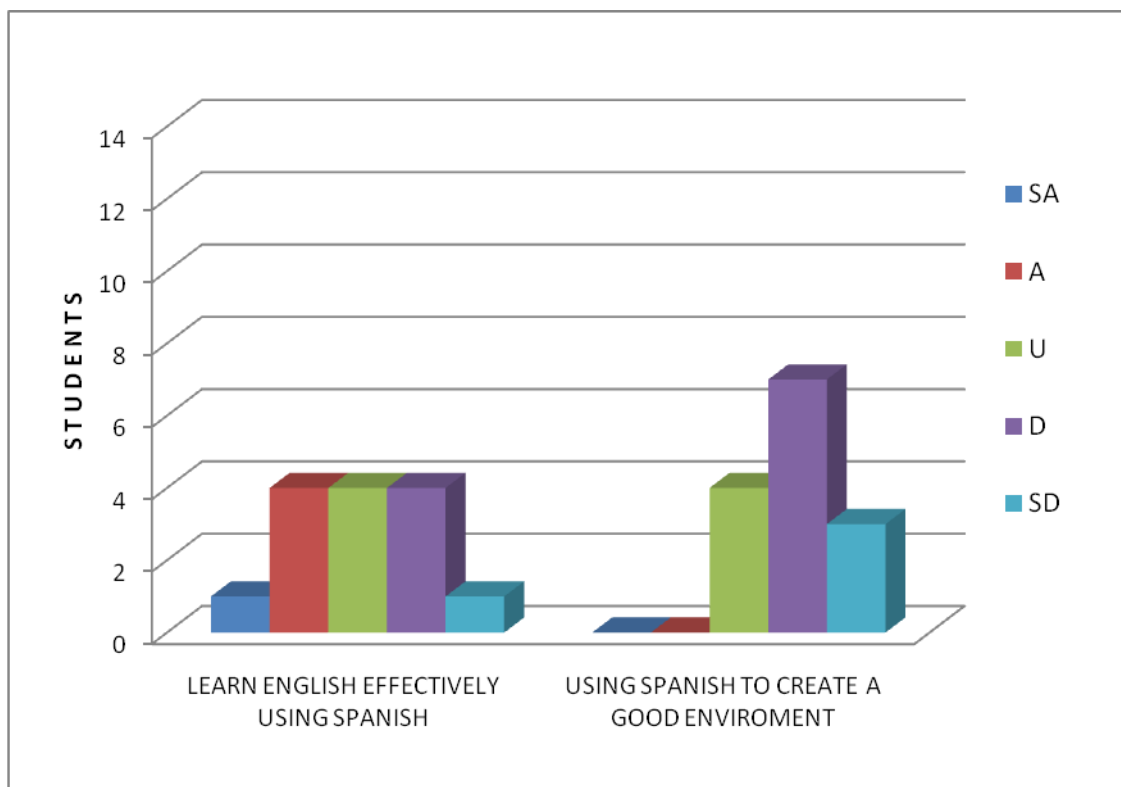
#### **4.6 Use of Spanish to Create a Good Environment and Learn More.**

The results showed that some participants in the questions 8 that is about “*learn English effectively using Spanish*”, and in the question 11 that is related to the idea about the “*use of Spanish to create a good environment*”, in sum, students selected the correct option according to their criteria.

However, in the question 8, just 1 student circle “Strongly Agree”, so 4 of them selected “Agree”, and the same number of students chose “Undecided” like the best option to them, the option “Disagree” was marked by 5, and only 1 picked “Strongly Disagree”.

On the other hand, in question 11 the option “Disagree” was selected by 8 students like the best option, 4 pupils circle “Undecided”, and the last 3 students elected the “Strongly Disagree” option as the correct answer to them. See figure 4.6.

**Figure 4.6 Use of Spanish to Create a Good Environment and Learn More**



As the figure 4.6 shows, the results presented and graphed were taken from the questions 8 and 11, but in question 8 the graph shows a divided opinion between students because the same number elected three different options among “Agree”, “Disagree” and “Undecided”.

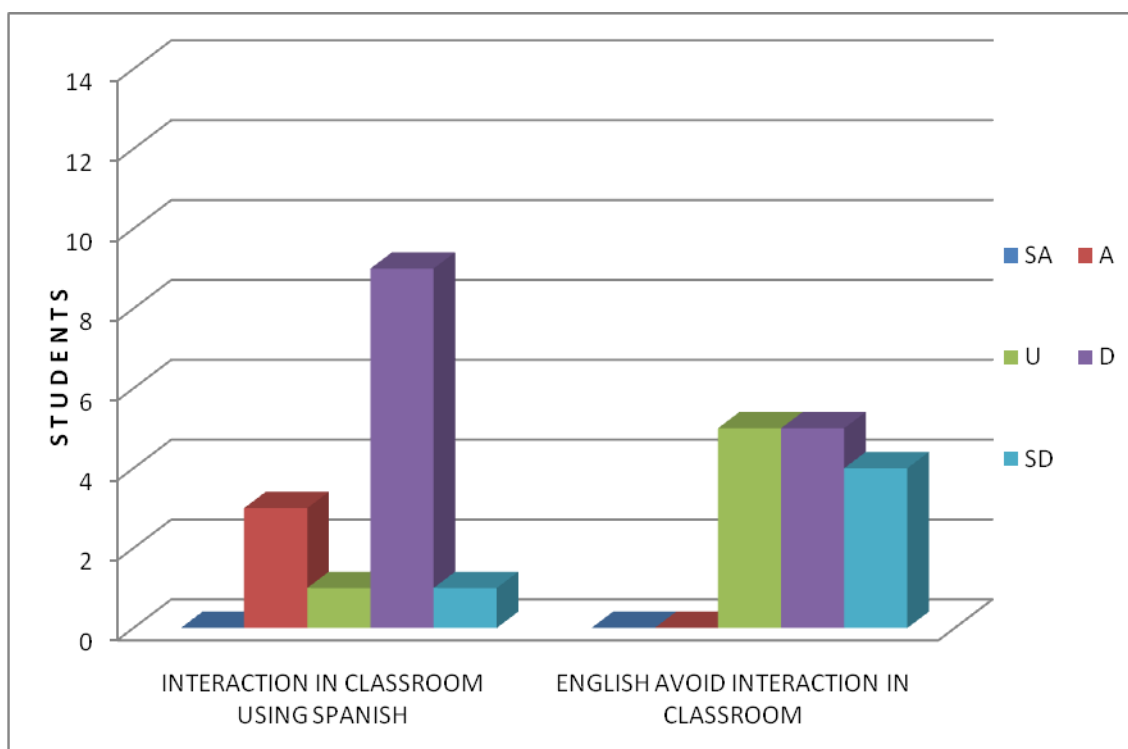
On the 11 question students marked without any doubt the letter “D” according to the results students refuse to use Spanish and all the answers were negative, pupils preferred to use English inside the class to create a good environment.



#### 4.7 Spanish and Interaction in the Classroom.

The results showed in questions 13 and 15 were very clear, as in the question 13 students selected the option “Disagree” as the best for this question with 9 answers, the option “Agree” was circled by 3 pupils, 2 marked the option “Strongly Disagree”, and just one selected “Undecided”. On the other hand, the question 15 was more balanced because just 3 options were selected, so the options “Undecided”, “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree” were marked just by the students. See figure 4.7

**Figure 4.7 Spanish and Interaction in the Classroom**



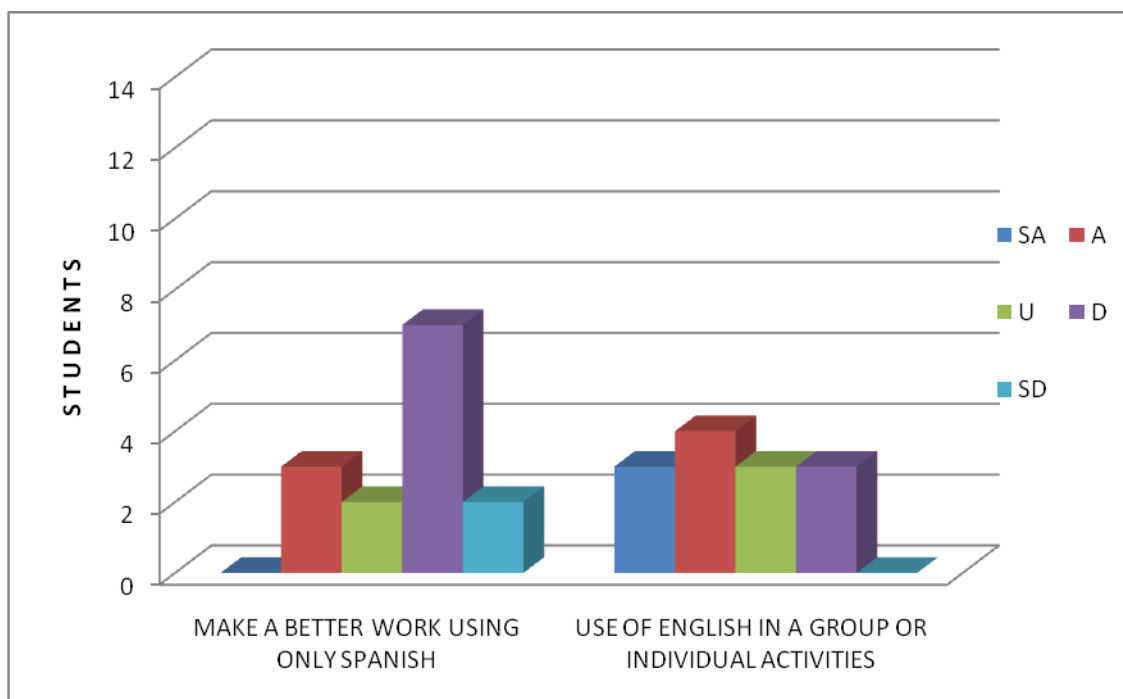
The results showed in the figure 4.7 were obtained from the opinion of the students to the questionnaire applied and it showed the level of agreement and disagreement of the use of Spanish to interact in classroom, and the use of English and the development of interaction, this results explain with which language the students interact better.

#### **4.8 Spanish in Grouping and Individual Activities.**

In the figure presented, the results were obtained and analyzed from the questions 12 and 16, in the question 12, *“Can I make the exercises in a better way when I use Spanish?”*, the students selected the option “Disagree” as the most common answer for them, with 7 pupils that chose it, the option “Agree” marked by 3 students, the same number of them marked the option “Strongly Disagree”.

In the last question, question 16, *“Is it easy for me to make the activities or work in groups or individually when I use only English?”*, students elected “Strongly Agree” as the correct answer, but the same number of students marked the options “Undecided” and “Disagree” with the same number of pupils that thought that this answer was the correct for them, only the option “Agree” was selected more by students. See figure 4.8

**Figure 4.8 Spanish in Grouping and Individual Activities.**



The analysis shows that the students preferred to talk and interact better if they used only the second language in the classroom, it was the opinion of the students in the target language level, this level is the middle of the BA studies and when they start with all their subjects in English.

#### **4.9 General Opinion about the Use of Spanish.**

In the last part of the questionnaire applied at the pupils of target language four, it was the section where they needed to give their opinion about the use of Spanish in their classroom. The results were a little contradictory because even when they said that they preferred to talk in English they used the Spanish in certain moments in the classroom; for example,

one of them wrote *“I think that it stops the learning of English but it is necessary to clear some grammar points”*. This showed that they disagreed but they used Spanish inside the classroom. Student 2, a woman of 57 years old and she wrote *“In the first grades (1, 2, and 3) is necessary that teacher uses Spanish in order to explain the grammar and difficult concepts.”* Student 3, a female, mentioned that *“When I don’t understand the rules or grammar classes is more important that teacher explain in English, but if I do not understand I would like that teacher explain in Spanish.”* Student 3, wrote *“Well I think that Spanish should be use when students cannot understand the difficult concepts.”* Student 4, wrote *“It is sometimes necessary when the class really request, or when is so difficult to understand the meaning, but in general all the time we must use English.”* Student 5, a male, wrote *“I think, hardly anybody likes speak in English, but it is their career, so I do not understand why they always want to speak in Spanish, so it is better if we interact each other in English to improve our skills.”* Student 6, a male too, wrote *“Spanish is not necessary, it is better if we try to talk English to notice what kind of mistakes we have at the moment of speaking or writing.”* Student 7 wrote *“It is not necessary use or talk in Spanish because we study a new language, but sometimes it is difficult, maybe I need to learn more vocabulary.”* Student 8 mentioned *“we have to use English all the time, but sometimes, it is necessary that we use Spanish.”*

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

### 5.0 Introduction

As a conclusion, it could be said that Spanish has an important influence in students' second language class, especially in the first levels of the acquisition. However, in the intermediate and advance levels it is more important that students and teachers are conscious of the use of Spanish in the classroom. Students in intermediate level frequently use Spanish when they cannot communicate their ideas or feelings, and here is where the teacher has a very vital role as a provider or guider in the classroom. Teacher should know when and where use Spanish in order that students do not over use their mother tongue. On the other hand, the interaction is essential in the class and if teacher and students disagree in which language use the interaction could be broken or could be busted.

### 5.1 Summary

This thesis was developed by the necessity to explore why the students used the Spanish in the classroom in the intermediate levels in the LEMO faculty, and why they seemed to refuse to speak in English in some cases. The methodology used in this research was the survey method; it was used to explore students' opinions about the use of the Spanish at the intermediate level. In fact, the results drawn from this research were the expected because students said that they refuse to use Spanish in classroom but they used it frequently especially when the teacher does not correct them or when teacher was absent.

When the questionnaire was applied the writer of this thesis requested that they were the most honest possible in their answers in order to have a reliable results, and

according to it, the results showed that they preferred that teacher used the second language in class because this helped them to learn, on the other hand, they agreed that teacher use Spanish to explain difficult concepts, ideas, or expressions in English when they really did not understand the meaning of it.

## **5.2 Implications**

The results were clearly marked by the students, they wanted to learn English using English in the classroom, but they agreed with the idea to speak in Spanish (in extreme cases), or when they did not understand, these results could help students and teachers to know their necessities in the language, and to be conscious of the use of one and other language, and when is necessary or useful the use of Spanish in classroom.

## **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

In general students and teachers were very participative and cooperative, but at the beginning of the observations, the students were a little uncomfortable or intimidated in the classroom, it could be one limitation because they did not interact in the same way, any of them were shy and just scared when teacher asked them and not because they wanted it, with the pass of time they acted in a normal way, like the observer was another student taking classes.

Teacher was very accessible and cooperative too, and the observations of her class were at 8 a.m. but later she told at the observer that the observations should be at 7 a.m. when the class started because the class was interrupted at 8 o'clock and students could not pay attention with a lot of interruptions.

The number of students was another limitation because the attendance was very variable. Around 20 or 22 students were enrolled in the class but just 18 students arrived, however, the number of students that were in almost all the observations were 14 students that were the number of students that could answered the questionnaire, the students were not the same in the observations because one student arrived one day but was missing the next day, and this happened with all the students. Another limitation was that results can be generalized.

#### **5.4 Direction for Further Research**

In this research was applied the survey method to obtain the opinion of students, but this research could be apply with a different method, for example, with the ethnographic method where the observer and the students could interact, moreover, this can be valid not only with the students also with the teacher and the results will be completely different, probably in this research a replica could be suggested and checked how the results differ in the different methods applied.

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## APPENDIX A: Questionnaire

(Adapted from English Teaching Forum, Jinlan, 2002, p.42) the purpose of this questionnaire is to analyze how Spanish affects the interaction in students of a second language, in this case English, in an intermediate level.

**Instructions:** Please indicate the level of agreement or disagreement with the questions below. Circling each statement according to your opinion

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>SA= Strongly Agree.</b>	<b>A= Agree.</b>	<b>U= Undecided.</b>	<b>D= Disagree.</b>	<b>SD= Strongly Disagree.</b>
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- |   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. It is important the use of Spanish in the classroom.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 2. It is important that your teacher use Spanish in the classroom   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 3. In the classroom Spanish helps you in the process to learn English.  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 4. It is important to use Spanish to communicate because you make a better work or you interact better with your classmates or professor. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 5. It is necessary the use of Spanish in the classroom because you practice the use of some phrases and expressions                       | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 6. It is necessary the use of Spanish to explain some grammar points in a class of English.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 7. It is important to use Spanish in the classroom to explain some difficult concepts, ideas or give instructions.                        | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 8. It is necessary to use Spanish in English classroom to give suggestions on how learn more effectively.                                 | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 9. It is important to use Spanish in the classroom because it helps me to understand the difficult concepts better.                       | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 10. It is important to use Spanish in the classroom because it helps me to understand the new vocabulary items.                           | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 11. It is necessary the use of Spanish because it makes me feel at ease, comfortable, less stressed and less lost.                        | SA | A | U | D | SD |

- |  |    |   |   |   |    |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 12. I can make the exercises in a better way when I use Spanish.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 13. The use of Spanish helps me to interact better with my classmates.   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 14. I understand better the teacher instructions, and feel me free to ask new things when he or she use the Spanish. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 15. I cannot understand anything or interact with my classmates or teacher when I use only English                   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 16. It is easy for me to make the activities or work in groups or individually when I use only English.              | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 17. I can understand everything and make a better work in the classroom if I or my teacher uses only English.        | SA | A | U | D | SD |

In general, what do you think about the use of Spanish in the English classroom? \_\_\_\_\_

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.Thank you 😊