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Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés

**A teacher's and her students' perceptions about implementing translation-related activities in an English as a foreign language classroom at the University of Guanajuato**

TESIS

Que Para Obtener el Grado de Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés

PRESENTA

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**Resumen**

La tendencia actual en la enseñanza de segundas lenguas o lenguas extranjeras ha tomado como eje central el enfoque comunicativo para el desarrollo e implementación del currículum tanto en la educación pública como en la privada. Uno de los principios de este enfoque consiste en disminuir, y en lo posible evitar, el uso de la lengua materna de los estudiantes. Esto ha derivado en una constante resistencia a incorporar la traducción como recurso pedagógico en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera. En los últimos años, un enfoque renovado de la traducción ha llamado la atención de investigadores y docentes que reconocen a la traducción como una actividad comunicativa y valiosa, sin embargo, son pocos los estudios que se han llevado a cabo sobre las percepciones que tienen los docentes y estudiantes sobre la implementación de actividades relacionadas con la traducción en México.

El presente estudio constituye un análisis sobre el impacto del uso didáctico de la traducción (Vermes, 2010) en clases de inglés en el Área de Educación Continua de la División de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades de la Universidad de Guanajuato. El objetivo principal fue describir las percepciones de la profesora y sus estudiantes cuyas percepciones se recopilaron mediante técnicas de investigación cualitativa. El análisis de datos se realizó a través de un estudio de caso descriptivo, lo que permitió la categorización de percepciones mediante un análisis temático. Los resultados sugieren que la traducción pedagógica tuvo un impacto positivo en la profesora y alumnos debido a que se percibió como una forma aceptada de hacer uso de la lengua materna en el aula de inglés.

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## Chapter One

## Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

One of the current dilemmas in second or foreign language education is whether or not translation should be used in language teaching. This controversy arises from the association with the grammar translation method (GTM), which has been negatively criticized. In pursuit of monolingual methods or approaches that have resembled the acquisition of the L1, the use of the native language and translation were banned from the foreign language classroom. Only two decades ago, has the reintroduction of translation in the teaching-learning process resulted in thorough theoretical and empirical research studies (Pintado-Gutiérrez, 2018). The use of pedagogical translation has gradually regained ground as a communicative teaching tool and as a learning resource in the educational field despite the prevailing objections against its use.

This thesis is concerned with the perceptions that a teacher and her students hold about the implementation of pedagogical translation in an EFL classroom at the language center in the University of Guanajuato. The purpose of this chapter is first to provide the personal reasons that motivated me to become interested in this research topic. Then, an overview of previous studies, as well as the identification of the problem is presented. After signaling the gaps that this thesis aims to bridge, the objective of the study and research question are provided. A brief description of the context and the methodological foundation follows. Finally, the structure of the thesis is outlined in the last section of this chapter.

### 1.2 Motivation

Being an English language teacher has given me the opportunity to reflect on my experience as a student in bilingual and language schools. English was my favorite subject from elementary to high school. The positive learning experiences that I had motivated me to keep looking for ways to improve my language skills and finally led me to study a BA in languages with a focus on translation. I was given the opportunity to become an English language teacher and I saw a possibility to share my enthusiasm to learn a foreign language.

Most of the classes I taught were between A1 and B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Despite the students' high or low

level of language proficiency, they were constantly asking me to translate words or phrases into Spanish so they could understand the meaning. I occasionally translated for them but most of the time I encouraged them to use their phones or dictionaries and look for the information they needed. I also asked them to guess meaning by analyzing the context, but I noticed that the students were not satisfied with my answer and sometimes they got mad. The reasons why I did not want to translate for them was because I thought they needed to develop this competence by themselves to encourage their critical thinking and autonomy. In addition, the syllabus that the language school followed was based on CLT which states that "The target language is a vehicle for classroom communication, not just the object of study" (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p. 158) and as a result, in every meeting we were encouraged by the academic director to avoid using Spanish.

At that stage of my teaching practice, I was one of the teachers who believed that using translation in language teaching meant following the grammar translation methodology. Later on, I became a teacher trainer. As part of the job, I had to observe microteachings designed by pre-service language teachers. I noticed that many of them resorted to literal translation, especially at the first stage of their lesson plan where they presented the topic and vocabulary they were going to use throughout the class. After observing these presentations, I reflected upon my academic background in translation and my job as an English teacher. I became aware that whether we acknowledge it or not, translation is part of the learning process. So, instead of preventing learners from translating, I considered that somehow, I could integrate translation into language education which appear to be linked by the same objective: to communicate in an additional language.

## 1.3 Background of the study

The current study follows in the footsteps of recent research into pedagogical translation, that is "the didactic use of translation in language teaching" (Lavault, 1985, as cited in Pintado-Gutiérrez, 2018, p. 4). This increase of interest in the subject has generated some controversy among the teaching community, due to the negative reputation translation has acquired in language teaching in the second half of the last century. Historically, translation was widely used during the early days of foreign language teaching as the main characteristic of the GMT, which had been applied since the Middle Ages (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

After the Second World War, with the emergence of the direct method and natural approaches, verbal communication became the goal of second/foreign language teaching and learning. The use of the students' native language was discouraged at this point, and translation also fell out of favor as a consequence (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). From the 1970s the CLT approach, "a generalized 'umbrella' term to describe learning sequences which aim to improve the students' ability to communicate" (Harmer, 2007, p. 70) in the L2 language, has spread around the world and became the most popular approach to language teaching and learning. As CLT promotes the exclusive use of the L2, Leonardi (2011) observes that translation has continued to be overlooked as a possible pedagogical tool and, in more extreme cases, has been banned from the classroom.

Educators and researchers responded to this situation and began to examine the forgotten connections between translation and language teaching. Just at the end of the 20th century the first works on this relationship were published (Duff, 1989; Malmkjaer, 1998). However, it was not until the early 2000s that authors (Carreres 2006; Colina, 2002; Cook, 2010; González-Davies, 2004; House, 2016; Widdowson, 2003) called for the consideration of pedagogical translation as a communicative activity, as well as an aid to both teachers and students. A number of research projects on pedagogical translation have also been conducted in the Mexican context (Contreras López, 2018; D'Amore, 2015; Gasca Jiménez, 2018; Soto Almela, 2016; Zimányi, 2017). These studies have explored a variety of interesting and helpful uses of pedagogical translation, for example strengthening metalinguistic knowledge and developing language skills to implementing translation as a resource in ESP courses or as a means of motivating language learners. However, there is still room for further inquiry, as will be addressed in the following section.

## 1.4 Identifications of existing gaps and possible contributions

Despite the increasing number of studies concerning pedagogical translation, two areas of opportunity have been identified. First, more research is needed about the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the implementation of pedagogical translation in an English as a foreign language classroom in Mexico. Stressing the importance of considering the teachers' and students' perceptions lies in the necessity to uncover their insights and improve the language teaching and learning experience.

Second, the definition of pedagogical translation and its integration into CLT could also be explored. It appears that a deeper understanding of pedagogical translation could be gained through this exercise. A clearer comprehension of the similarities and differences between translation and other bilingual cognitive activities could help accept translation back into the L2 classroom. It is relevant to mention that the use of pedagogical translation through activities that are focused on either of the four language skills along with different patterns of interaction, can help to ease the incorporation of translation into CLT. It is hoped that this research provides a reasoning for the processes involved in pedagogical translation. In addition, this study will seek to support the claim that the didactic use of translation involves the continuous interaction between two languages rather the operation of one (Raymond, 2013) as it is commonly assumed. Having identified the gaps, in the next section the purpose of this study will be stated along with the research question.

## 1.5 Research question

Based on the above, this qualitative research study proposes to describe and analyze the teacher's and students' perceptions that emerge from the implementation of translation-related activities in an EFL classroom at the University of Guanajuato. This objective was expected to be accomplished by answering the following research question:

> *What are the teacher's and students' perceptions in upper-intermediate EFL classes at the University of Guanajuato regarding the implementation of translation-related activities?*

In order to provide an understanding and discussion of results, the research question and objective were approached through a descriptive case study and qualitative research techniques that sought to ensure the validity of this research.

## 1.6 Organization of the thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter presented the motivation behind conducting this study, then the problem was described by including previous research studies conducted inside Mexico. Following the background of the study, the gaps in previous research were subsequently identified and the research question and objective were stated.

Chapter Two reviews the existing literature on results from previous and recent studies as well as the theory about the status of pedagogical translation in language education which guided the research question of this study.

Chapter Three presents the process followed to conduct this study, including a description of the research paradigm, method and techniques. A general profile of the participants is given as well as an overview of the translation-related activities that were implemented in the classroom is offered. The research setting, and ethical concerns are also addressed in this chapter.

Chapter Four provides a discussion of the data obtained from the techniques. The perceptual information is organized in three themes each of them including subthemes. This chapter comprises the participants' perceptions about five translation-related activities', a discussion about translation as an activity, and finally, their perceptions about translation in the language classroom.

In Chapter Five a summary of the key findings is presented and their significance in terms of applied linguistics and second/foreign language education is explained. Additionally, the limitations encountered in this research and possible future research ideas will be stated.

# Chapter Two

## Literature review

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature about themes relevant to the study of pedagogical translation in language education. Due to a lack of understanding about what translation entails, the origins of translation and its recognition as a field of study are presented in the first part of this chapter. Following the definition of translation, concepts such as equivalence, process, and communication are explored. In addition, one of the main arguments in this thesis is that translation is a natural cognitive process. This phenomenon is reviewed through the lens of translation studies (TS) and second language acquisition (SLA). Moreover, a clarification between the difference between translation and other bilingual cognitive activities is provided. After reviewing concepts to understand what translation implies, its role in language education and its current status in the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach will be analyzed to make room to present translation as a didactic resource. In the last part of this chapter, the concept of pedagogic translation will be addressed by highlighting its different contributions to language education as a proposal to reconcile the conflict generated by traditional conceptualizations of translation as a static activity and its application in CLT.

### 2.2 The evolution of the definition of translation

The origins of translation as a recognized concept can be traced back to the year 106 B.C.E where Cicero reflected on the difference between translating word for word versus sense for sense (Soler Pardo, 2013) a debate that still prevails nowadays. Cook (2010) explains the etymological origins of translation and indicates that it comes from the "Latin root *translatum*" which means "to carry across" (p. 55). By the 19th century translation was conceived "as a creative force in which specific translation strategies might serve a variety of cultural and social functions, building languages, literatures, and nations" (Venuti, 2000, p. 11), although its formal study did not begin until the 20th century where translation "was a focus of theoretical speculation and formal innovation" (p. 11). According to Baker and Pérez-González (2011), the emergence of theories around translation was especially fruitful from the 1950s to the 1970s, first intending to expand on TS through the lens of linguistic theory.

The birth of TS paved the way for scholars to provide a proper definition for translation. Among the first authors, Catford (1967) defines it as "an operation performed on languages: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another" (p. 1). He further states that translating has a specific starting point and a clear end. The author acknowledges that translation is a "uni-directional process" (p. 20) that includes the replacement of "textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" (p. 20). By emphasizing the written form of the language, he refers to translation as producing an equivalence between the SL into the TL, a concept described in the following section.

For Nida and Taber (1982), translation "consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (p. 12). It should be noted that the authors distinguish between an old and a new focus of viewing translation since it "has shifted from the form of the message to the response of the receptor" (p. 1). They argue that the translator's main aim is to deliver a message that avoids misunderstandings among the target audience rather than focusing on stylistic features of a text in the target language. Following Nida and Taber, Toury (1995) refers to translation as "facts of target cultures" (p. 23) as he establishes the importance of an adequate contextualization of the translator to facilitate the understanding between the translators and the target audience. In the same vein, Assis-Rosa (2010) acknowledges the significance of culture in translating and remarks that the textual outcome needs to convey characteristics and conditions of the target context.

House (2018), in her most recent publication, provides an easily digestible definition and affirms that translation is often perceived as "a procedure where original text, often called 'the source text' (ST), is replaced by another text in a different language, often called the 'the target text (TT)" (p. 9). The author identifies that translation consists of two stages: in the first stage, the translator "understands and interprets" (p. 10) the original text, while in the second stage, the interpretation is transmitted into the target language. Thus, this explanation resembles Catford's notion of translation quoted above about the minimalistic perspective. This thesis applies House's conceptualization, which, although it may seem simplistic at first glance, captures the essence of the underlying processes of translation as an activity.

Having arrived at an operative concept of translation, in the following section I will explore key concepts relevant to this study, starting with "equivalence". Although it is not an essential term *per se* in this research, it is worth explaining for two reasons. First, it has already been mentioned in some definitions discussed above. Second, it will help the reader better understand the followings sections where translation as a process and translation as a means of communication is discussed.

## 2.3 Key concepts of translation studies

This section provides a conceptualization of the three main components of translation. In the first subsection, the notion of equivalence and a possible taxonomy will be presented, followed by the meaning of translation as a process. The last subsection argues that translation is a communicative activity.

### *2.3.1 Translation and equivalence*

In a glossary of terms developed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), they describe equivalence as "A translation procedure, the result of which replicates the same situation as in the original, whilst using completely different wording" (p. 342). They argue that it is especially useful when one encounters onomatopoeias, idioms, clichés, and proverbs, among others. Kenny (2009) claims that equivalence is a prominent feature of translation and explains that it entails a relation between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) or even parts of them. She indicates that there needs to be a shared relationship between the language being translated from and the language being translated to with the objective of achieving a specific purpose. Baker and Pérez-González (2011) emphasize that this relationship is not about the closeness that the ST may have to the TT, rather the reproduction of "the same effect or response" (p. 40) that the TT may generate in the readers.

Pym (2010) also observes that defining equivalence could result in some confusion, and he asserts that "Equivalence does not say that languages are the same; it just says that values can be the same" (p. 6). He further notes that it can be developed at any linguistic level such as form (grammatical structures), function (the use of the language), "or anything in between" (p. 6). This statement suggests that there is a variety of ways in which equivalence can be accomplished since it is not restricted to addressing form or focusing on function exclusively rather it can be used to explore the variety of options in order to mediate between two

languages. Keeping in mind that each language possesses its own linguistic and cultural background, Baker and Pérez-González (2011) advise about the risk of misunderstanding how equivalence can be achieved.

Baker (2018) classifies equivalence levels into seven categories considering linguistic forms and contextual meaning. The first type of equivalence happens at a word level, which is related to the kind of meanings that a word can convey. The second one is about equivalence above the word level, which includes collocations, idioms, and fixed expressions. The following category is grammatical equivalence, where principles of how to combine units of language are addressed. The fourth category is textual equivalence with an emphasis on thematic and information structures, which in this case, refers to features of discourse organization. Textual equivalence focuses on cohesion and involves developing a "network of lexical, grammatical and other relations that provide links between various parts of a text" (Baker, 2018, p. 194). Finally, pragmatic equivalence entails implicatures and coherence, whereas semiotic equivalence includes how to approach verbal and non-verbal signs. These categories offer a detailed classification of the many ways in which equivalence can be presented.

Equivalence is a procedure that shapes the translator's choices in the process of translating. This research is concerned with the process itself instead of translation as the product. That is to say, the objective of this study does not include the assessment of the product resulted from the students' performance through translation activities. In the next section, a definition of translation as a process will be discussed.

### 2.3.2 Translation as a process

Translation as a term has been elusive, and definitions have varied widely. Munday (2016) suggests that it has different meanings and identifies three. In the first one, the author indicates that translation is regarded as a general subject field or phenomenon. The second one sees it as a product, that is, "the text that has been translated". In relation to the third meaning, the author considers it as "the process of producing the translation" (p. 8). The distinction between these last two has provided one of the most significant dichotomies in TS and has led the focus of attention of researchers towards either a product-oriented approach (Henry, 1984; Newmark, 1988) or to a process-driven perspective (Nida & Taber,

1982; Seguinot, 1989). While the former refers, among other characteristics, to the methods used when performing a translation, the level of adequacy of the translation, or the cultural and situational context (House, 2015, p. 15), the latter is, according to Levý (2011), interested in decoding the original message and encode it into the L1.

Additionally, the process of translation is a decision-based activity that implies the selection of elements from available alternatives (Levý, 1967 as cited in Obdržálková, 2011). These decisions will depend upon the previous knowledge or schemata that the translator possesses and the organization of this knowledge through mental operations. In this respect, Conway (2017) shares three insights about translation: "1) To use a sign is to transform it; 2) to transform a sign is to translate it, and 3) communication is translation" (p. 710). The author's reasoning is relevant to this research since he makes evident the cognitive effort that translation requires and considers it a bridge of communication between two languages. Theoretical claims that underpin this argument and the communicative components involved in the process of translation will be discussed in the section below.

### 2.3.3 Translation as a means of communication

The notion of translation as communication has often been overlooked in language education, mainly due to a long-held belief that it is a static activity where the translator does not engage in any type of interaction. In this study, however, translating is understood as an inherently human communicative activity as well as "a natural communication and learning strategy" (González-Davies, 2018, p. 2). This is supported by researchers such as Gutt (2005) and Lörscher (1992), who have studied the cognitive aspects of translation while other scholars, including Hatim (1996), Holmes (1988), House (2016), or Pym (2010), conceive it as a means of communication. This subsection focuses on the relationship between translation and communication studies.

To start with, Bell (1991) determines that a translator is undoubtedly a communicator who is concerned with written (although not exclusively) communication. The author contrasts two communication models, monolingual communication (Figure 1) and translated communication (Figure 2).

**Figure 1**

*Monolingual communication model*

Code

SENDER  —Channel→  SIG (message)NAL  —Channel→  RECEIVER

Content
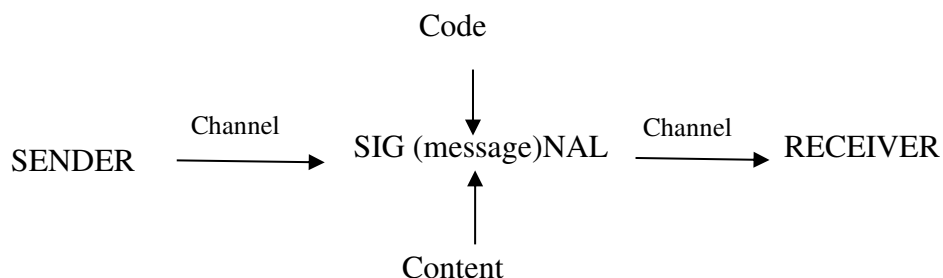
*Note*. Retrieved from *Translation and translating: Theory and practice* (p. 18), by R. T. Bell, 1991, Longman. Copyright 1991 by Longman.

    Bell's (1991) monolingual communication model (Figure 1) follows these processes: First, the sender selects a message and codes it, then s/he encodes the message and selects a channel. The signal, which contains the message, is then transmitted. The receiver receives the signal and recognizes the code where the message is retrieved from. The last step is when the message is comprehended. That is, there is a linear interaction between the sender and the receiver, although the author further acknowledges that this exchange is more complex than it seems.

Figure 2 shows the communicative process that a translator follows to deliver a message.

**Figure 2**

*Translating model*

Code 1

SENDER →Channel→ SIG (message)NAL 1 →Channel→ TRANSLATOR

Content 1

Code 2

RECEIVER ←Channel← SIG (message)NAL 2 ←Channel←

Content 2
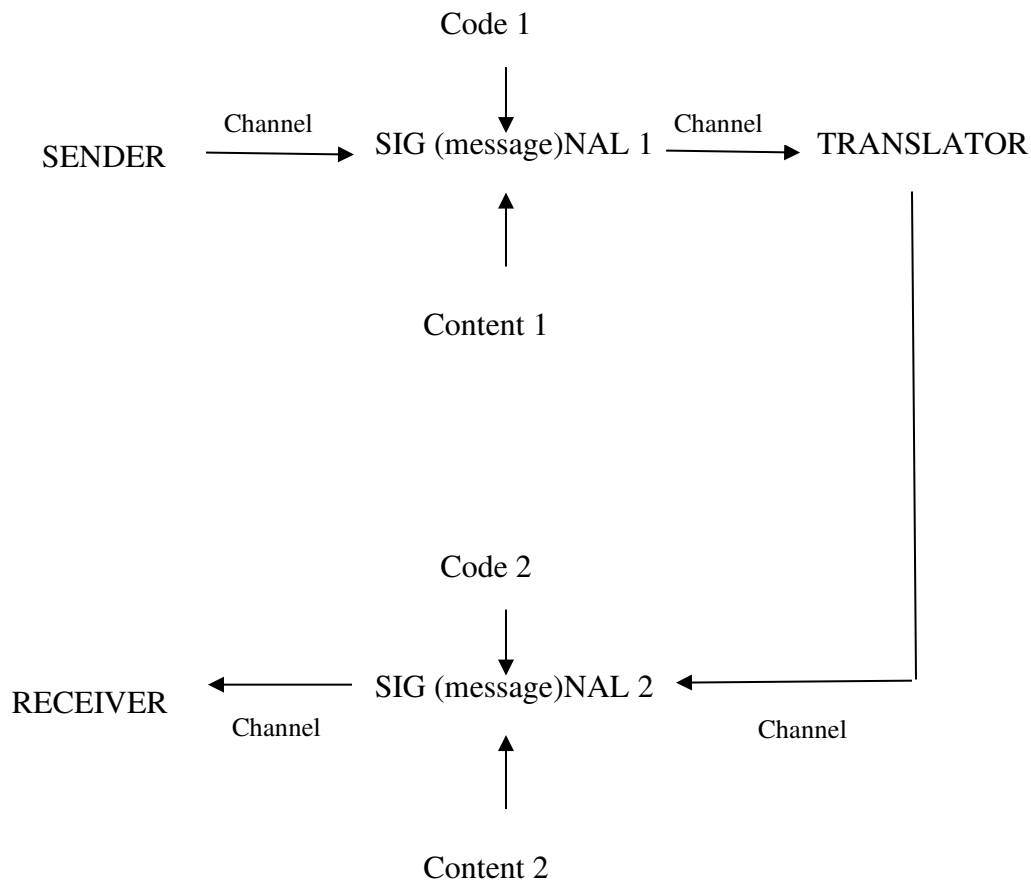
*Note*. Retrieved from *Translation and translating: Theory and practice* (p. 19), by R. T. Bell, 1991, Longman. Copyright 1991 by Longman.

The author adapted the monolingual model to explain the communicative process of translation, and he proposes a translating model (Figure 2) that includes nine steps where the process begins with the translator receiving the message identified with signal 1, then s/he recognizes code 1 and decodes signal 1. What follows this step is retrieving the message where the translator comprehends the message to select code 2. The message is encoded in relation to code 2 and then s/he selects the channel where the message or signal 2 will be transmitted. In this model, the translator works with two different codes and communicates the result of her/his understanding and reasoning.

Both models consider written texts, although one of the main distinctions that can be identified regarding monolingual and bilingual communication concerns the type of interaction that the two of them entail. As it was mentioned before, the former (Figure 1) includes a one-way interaction as it needs one sender and one receiver to complete the process of communication. In contrast, in the latter (Figure 2) "there are two codes, two signals, and more than one message" (Bell, 1991, p. 19). Then, the translation model presents the translator as a mediator of languages such as words and meanings and as a mediator of cultures.

This social-communicative function of translation has been addressed by House and Loenhoff (2016) who reflect on the benefits of a collaborative contribution between TS and communication studies. They remark that both disciplines are concerned with using the language in a specific context and how "the production of sense and the co-construction of meaning" (p. 97) impact the subjects. They also contend that one of the primary issues that both disciplines face is related to "problems of comprehension and cultural understanding" (p. 98). In this respect, translation and communication studies are concerned with interactions that enable people to communicate in different settings. Hence it can be deduced that translation can foster understanding among speakers of different languages.

Related to this communicative aspect of translation, research studies conducted by House and Loenhoff (2016), Kuzenko (2017), Muñoz-Calvo and Buesa-Gómez (2010), as well as Weiss (1997) are devoted to studying translation in multicultural settings where bilingual competences are necessary to promote communication as a response to a globalized world in which "language access has become a right" (Muñoz-Calvo & Buesa-Gómez, 2010, p. 2). It is clear that the role of translation has gained relevance as a bilingual process through which one can acquire knowledge and develop an understanding of reality. Even though Mexico is recognized as a multilingual and multicultural country (Chamoreau, 2014), the current educational policies in English as a foreign language teaching implemented by the SEP (*Secretaría de Educación Pública*) have promoted communicative interactions among monolingual students or bilingual learners who speak an indigenous language plus Spanish, This teaching approach has traditionally excluded the use of the L1 and translation, therefore, advocating for a political opening and responsiveness towards the linguistic reality of Mexico

seems urgent. The following section provides arguments to consider translation as a natural cognitive process.

## 2.4 Translation as a natural cognitive process

This section discusses SLA assumptions about the use of the L1 and translation in language education to argue that translation is not an artificial random activity rather a natural one (Hurtado Albir, 1988; Duff, 1989), particularly with learners of lower proficiency levels. Additionally, definitions of other cognitive processes that use the mother tongue are provided to distinguish them from translation and clarify certain misconceptions that result from the lack of conceptualization of related terminology. Understanding the difference between these concepts will help to frame translation as bilingual language use on its own.

### *2.4.1 Translation studies and SLA research*

Due to a backlash from the GTM that had prevailed as the primary second language teaching method until the Second World War, arguments against translation have found support in the reasoning that the use of the mother tongue has a negative effect on learning a second or foreign language. Ellis and Shintani (2014) observe that teachers and students fear that the L1 may interfere in the acquisition of the L2, however, as Schjoldager (2003) notes, arguments such as this are mainly based on theory, due to the lack of empirical studies. On the positive side, in the last decades, translation has been regaining ground as a viable resource to teachers and learners in language instruction, and researchers have started challenging the reluctance among the teaching community. Authors such as Colina (2002), Cook (2010), Machida (2011) or Wu and Thierry (2012), have shown interest in exploring translation through the lens of SLA research. How they refute the most common objections that prevent translation from being used in language teaching will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

The book titled *Translation and language teaching*, edited by Malmkjaer (1998), was perhaps one of the first publications to systematically discuss the natural relationship that language teaching and translation might have beyond the GTM. A decade later, Cook (2010) identified three arguable assumptions from the field of SLA about using translation in language teaching that could be challenged. The first problematic belief conceives translation as "detrimental to fluency in communication and to the learner's development of a new

language" (p. 88). This assumption became popular partly because translation had been used to contrast the differences in structure among two languages concerning their form and not in a way that they could serve as a tool to mutually understand meaning, a view confirmed by other authors (Colina, 2002; Duff, 1989; Ellis, 2008).

The second questionable assumption noted by Cook (2010), again, based on negative perceptions collected by Malmkjaer (1998), is that translation "prevents students from thinking in the foreign language" (p. 6). This belief could have its origins in Carroll's (1963) argument where he considered that "an individual learning a second language must be taught *to observe and codify experience as nearly as possible in the same way as native speakers of that language*" (p. 17, emphasis in the original). However, in the case of the acquisition of words, Pavlenko (2014) points out that "Traditional theories of L2 learning and models of the bilingual lexicon do not offer us much guidance" (p. 302) as they do not consider "that L2 learners may experience a cognitive dissonance trying to map new words onto 'old' concepts" (p. 303). This author provides an interesting observation regarding the impossibility of not resorting to using the mother tongue when learning another language.

The first stage of the L2 learning process is when no restructuring is evident, and the speaker continues to follow L1 patterns while speaking the L2. This stage is commonly known as L1 influence on the L2, with L2 interpreted widely as all subsequent or additional languages. Alternatively, it may be described as 'thinking and feeling in L1 for seeing, speaking, feeling, and gesturing in the L2'. With the proviso that such performance is not necessarily an outcome of conscious translation – the speakers themselves may be unaware of any influences. (p. 303)

The author's quote shows an influence of Piaget's theory of Cognitive Development where assimilation (acquisition of new information) and accommodation (restructuring schemata) occurs in the student's mind when learning an additional language. This information also reveals an unconscious and natural process in the acquisition of a second or foreign language. Another observation made by Pavlenko (2014) is that the learner needs to develop awareness about new features and structures of the L2 so its production can become automatic.

The last mistaken argument against using translation is the assumption that it generates interference and transfer (Cook, 2010). That is, the use of the L1 interferes with the acquisition of another language through the influence of students' own language into another one. The idea of viewing transfer as a negative process can be traced back to contrastive analysis development (Lado, 1957). It was assumed that if the target language did not share the same structural elements, it could result in students' difficulty in learning a second language. However, it is important to consider that acquiring a second language does not necessarily result from habit formation. For example, Corder (1967) observed that many errors produced by learners were not influenced by their mother tongue.

Transfer could be conceived as a strategy that learners use when they try to comprehend and produce messages, a process that contributes to the development of interlanguage (Ringbom, 1992). Apart from the influence of the L1 on the L2, it is worth noticing that transfer or crosslinguistic influence can also include the effects of the second language into the L1 at various levels of the language, such as phonology, morphology, or syntax (Odlin, 2012). In line with Kellerman (1995), who observed that "the more similar the languages are at some point, the more likely the L1 is to influence development, a role that is considered nowadays to be as much facilitative as it was formerly thought obstructive" (p. 126). Ellis (2015) argues that this influence does not necessarily provide negative results, as the knowledge of the L1 may help in the learning of a second language.

The use of our mother tongue shapes our way of thinking, and to some extent, our use of the foreign language (Duff, 1989). In other words, the students use their mother tongue to make sense of the teacher's input or other resources and look for different ways to understand and convey meaning. As Eldridge (1996) remarks, "decreasing mother tongue use in the classroom does not automatically increase the quality and quantity of target language use […] Debate about how to stop or decrease mother tongue use is in the last instance sterile" (p. 311). Researchers with similar ideas and at different times (Atkinson, 1987; Hall & Cook, 2012; Harbord, 1992; Widdowson, 2003) have been drawn to conducting studies that focus on using the mother tongue. They have offered a critical response to using native-speaker models as a basis for language instruction where students are asked to develop skills almost at the same level of proficiency as a native speaker (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). In this regard,

there is now a growing interest in developing a bilingual/multilingual identity where culture is considered as a fundamental component of the learning process (García & Wei, 2014). In terms of the affective and motivational aspects of translation, Auerbach (1993) asserts that it "reduces anxiety and enhances the affective environment for learning" (p. 8). This argument indicates that translation used in language education can be employed as an engaging tool for students and a strategy to create an affective learning environment.

Kiraly (1995) and Colina (2002) observed that language education, SLA, and TS are not separate entities. For instance, Kiraly (1995) believes that

> The integration of language competences in overall translation competence links translation skills instruction to foreign language teaching. Language teaching can clarify the nature of the L1 and L2 competencies that a professional translator must possess and use when translating. The systematic elaboration of a translation pedagogy need not retrace the evolution of foreign language teaching. Translation pedagogy can profit from the extensive experience and knowledge gained in that field for the development of its own specialized teaching approaches. (p. 26)

The common feature that translation and foreign language teaching share is the use and development of linguistic knowledge that aims to develop grammar competence. Through language teaching, translation competencies can be strengthened, and at the same time, language education can be enriched by translation pedagogy. As a solution to reconciling SLA and TS, Colina (2002) argues that a new approach to SLA towards language teaching and translation can be encouraged by leaving behind the legacy of the GTM and focusing on the shared objectives instead of the differences. An attempt to do so has embodied a particular educational approach in SLA where the incorporation of TS resulted in pedagogical translation, a term discussed in section 2.6. For example, a commonality that Colina (2002) highlights is that a current trend in language teaching is implementing the communicative approach that has also been adopted by TS. To TS, the "communicative purpose" is "a special form of communicative language use and therefore a unique form of second language education" (p. 5). So, it is clear that language teaching, SLA, and TS do not need to be isolated areas since their contribution to one another seems to be fundamental. Moreover, it

appears that translation is not an obstacle to developing communication in language teaching since it is a particular form of communication itself.

The following subsection presents a definition and discusses the characteristics of three naturally occurring linguistic phenomena that challenge the negative perceptions about the implementation of the mother tongue as a means to develop students' proficiency in another language. Even though pedagogic translation is the focus of study in this research project, it is pertinent to define code-switching and translanguaging to make a clear distinction between the three to avoid confusion and delineate the research subject.

### 2.4.2 Unconscious translation

Duff (1989) claims that translation is a natural and necessary activity performed by language learners at any level of proficiency, and it is seen as a resource to raise language awareness. Translation can be a helpful tool to "understand better the influence of the one language on the other" (p. 6) and contrast the differences and similarities between them, helping the learner to become critical regarding her/his performance throughout the learning process. In other words, pedagogical translation, a concept described in section 2.6, may help the learners to notice the gap between what they already know and the new knowledge they encounter.

With advances in cognitive neuroscience studies, Thierry and Wu (2007) became interested in conducting research to explore the effects of using two languages and involuntary word processing in bilingual participants. They intended to demonstrate that bilingual learners access the linguistic background of their L1 when they read words in their L2. The authors examined the reaction of 15 Chinese–English bilinguals who acquired English after the age of 12, from whom they obtained behavioral and electrophysiological information. Through a nonverbal judgment task on shapes, the participants were given a sequence of squares and circles. They had to differentiate them by pressing buttons. At the same time, they had to ignore words in English which included circle and square when translated into Chinese. The authors concluded that there is a spontaneous activation of the L1, that is, "native-language activation operates in everyday second-language use, in the absence of awareness on the part of the bilingual speaker" (p. 12,534). Therefore, as D'Amore (2015) reflects, it appears that translation has been part of EFL/ESL classrooms as

it has influenced language learning even in classrooms where a communicative language syllabus is being implemented.

However, translation is not the only bilingual performance that can be encountered in language education. A description of two other bilingual activities will be addressed in the following section to establish the distinction between translation, codeswitching, and translanguaging.

### 2.4.3 Translation Vs. other bilingual cognitive activities

Although this research project is concerned with translation as a pedagogical resource, it appears necessary to redefine the blurred boundaries that distinguish translation from other cognitive activities that are based on the use of the L1 and L2 (Pintado-Gutiérrez, 2018), such as code-switching and translanguaging. The relevance of establishing the similarities and, more importantly, the differences among these concepts lies in the fact that misunderstanding translation in language education can result in the misuse of the concept. Pintado-Gutiérrez (2018) shares her concern by stating the following:

> The inconsistent use of notions and pedagogical practices may result in harmful connotations of pedagogical translation and the subsequent recommendation that translation in language teaching should generally be forbidden. The traditionally widespread sense of mistrust or discomfort is partly due to a lack of terminological consistency in this field narrowing the possibility of developing pedagogical translation beyond a L1 use. (p. 7)

As previously mentioned, providing an accurate conceptualization of translation may clarify what it entails and aid in its understanding. The main feature that these activities share is the constant interaction between two languages. Hence, in the following subsections, the terms code-switching and translanguaging will be defined through the lens of pedagogy accompanied by a discussion of how they contrast with pedagogical translation.

#### 2.4.3.1 Code-switching

Code-switching has been of significant interest in bilingual research studies within the field of applied linguistics. As a broad definition, Amuda (1994) explains that code-switching is "the alternation within the same speech exchange of segments of speech of two varieties

of a language or two different languages" (p. 121). Thus, it involves the speaker's choice of using two codes within the same discourse when interacting with another speaker who shares the same languages. Bullock and Toribio (2009) go further and assert that code-switching is "the ability on the part of bilinguals to alternate effortlessly between their two languages" (p. 1). This means that codeswitching is the process of exchanging words or sentences fluently from one language into another with a degree of accuracy. However, the speaker who code-switches does not translate her/his own utterances to convey a message.

Despite the findings of researchers who support the claim that code-switching follows specific sociolinguistic rules that do not disrupt "specific grammatical constraints" (Meisel, 1994, p. 414), which makes it sequential and organized. Somewhat contrary to the fact that it is an "index of bilingual proficiency", code-switching has also been regarded as an indicative of language degeneration (Bullock & Toribio, 2009, p. 1). In other words, it is sometimes considered a damaging activity by some when learning a second or foreign language due to the use of the L1. This belief is not alien to pedagogical translation practitioners since, as it was mentioned in section 2.2.1, current trends in language education promote the use of the target language exclusively.

As translation and codeswitching have started to be used in educational environments, researchers from either of these areas have been advocating for their acceptance as creative and fruitful ways to include the L1. Their implementation responds to different purposes such assessing the development in the target language (Baker, 2001; Tsagari & Floros, 2013), increasing learner's motivation (Fernández-Guerra, 2014; González-Davies, 2004), or as an aid to develop language proficiency (Malmkjaer, 1998; Setati, 1998), among others. Just as translation, pedagogical code-switching is founded on the purposeful use of the native language. This shared feature might give rise to confusion leading to treating the two terms as synonymous.

According to Cook (2010), the difference between translating and other cognitive processes where the use of the L1 and L2 may be present is that "Translation entails use of the student's language, so it is a *kind of* own-language use, but it is by no means the only one" (p. xix). He continues this idea by explaining that teachers could use the L1 to explain or clarify grammatical points or build personal relationships, but those examples do not

necessarily involve translation. The author further states that "those advocating bilingual teaching are not therefore necessarily advocates of translation" (p. xix). In a broader sense, the use of two languages does not make evident the existence of a translation process.

To have a better understanding of the relationship between pedagogical translation and code-switching, Pintado-Gutiérrez (2018) proposes a map (Table 1) where she aims to provide a visual representation of how these concepts can overlap.

**Table 1**

*A map of translation in language teaching and learning*

| Translation in language teaching and learning | | |
|---|---|---|
| The expansion of the original TILT term borrowed from Guy Cook (2010) entails an all-inclusive approach to the use of translation and L1/L2/ALL in language pedagogy where the various forms of the learner's own language use are perceived as part of the language teaching tools and mechanisms as well as learning processes. This term acts as an essential umbrella that includes different types of language use in the FL classroom, including translating per se, translation related to linguistic skills, translation and language alternation, and translation as a cognitive strategy. | | |
| **Term** | Pedagogical translation *Also known as: pedagogic translation, didactic translation, traduction didactique, educational translation, traduction scholaire | Code-switching | Interior translation |
| **Nature** | Translating task | Classroom interaction | Cognitive strategy |
| **Explanation** | Pedagogical translation designates those translating activities and/or tasks that are included in foreign language (FL) teaching and learning. These tasks enhance the development of specific language and translating skills and are based on various aspects of translation and other pragmatic issues central to the FL classroom: language awareness, accuracy, pragmatic and intercultural competence, creativity, problem-solving, and autonomy and collaboration, to name just a few. These translation based activities help the language learner to have a better command of the language and translation as a key skill for language users. It involves not only written activities but also | Code-switching involves different forms of alternation between the learners and the teachers' languages (L1, L2, etc). That is, it refers to the interaction between the teacher and the students or among the students. Usually employed in an oral context, it applies to various situations, be it addressing problematic sources such a lack of understanding (for instance, clarifying linguistic or socio-cultural matters that the students find difficult to interpret), discussing certain communicative nuances by raising the student's awareness, maintaining the student's | Cognitive strategies that involve the use of the students' own language (L1) or additional languages (ALL) as a tool. The student lies in his/her L1/ALL with the purpose of building, developing or structuring the knowledge of the foreign language (FL). This strategy usually happens instinctively, and the learners are often unaware of it. Most research attribute this process to the earliest stages of learning a FL. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | multimodal material, including texts that reproduce oral features. | attention with the introduction of humour, etc. Terms relating to L1/L2 use may overlap, demonstrating the interconnected nature of the concepts and the processes they represent. | |
| **Type of practice** | cross-, multi-, plurilingual exercises; inter-, intralingual exercises; languaging; translanguaging | code-changing; explicative translation; scaffolding; languaging; translanguaging | interior translation; mental translation; languaging; translanguaging |

*Note*. Retrieved from "Translation in language teaching, pedagogical translation, and code-switching: restructuring the boundaries" by L. Pintado Gutiérrez, 2018, *The Language Learning Journal,* 1–21. Copyright 2018 by Association for Language Learning.

With this map, she also attempts to prove why it is not an easy task to distinguish one conceptualization from another. It is necessary to highlight that she adds 'translanguaging' as a transversal concept, which will be discussed in the following section.

### 2.4.3.2 Translanguaging

In the previous section the relationship between translation and code-switching as pedagogical resources was discussed. It was stated that although they both comprise the use of the mother tongue, they are performed under very different circumstances. However, this confusion does not only involve code-switching, as the emergence of translanguaging has questioned once again the starting point of translation and its boundaries. To clarify how translation and translanguaging differ from each other, it is relevant to begin by stating the difference between translanguaging and code-switching. García and Wei (2014) assert that translanguaging

> refers not simply to a shift or a shuttle between two languages, but to the speakers' construction and use of original and complex interrelated discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or another traditional definition of a language, but that make up the speakers' complete language repertoire. (p. 22)

The authors consider that translanguaging is a complex process that views language through a holistic perspective. That is an integration of the complete linguistic background possessed by an individual.

Lewis *et al*. (2012) propose a division where translanguaging can be seen from three perspectives: classroom, universal translanguaging, and neurolinguistics. In this research study, translanguaging is addressed from a pedagogical standpoint. Following this approach, the authors acknowledge that the definition of translanguaging is somewhat problematic due to the ambiguity that this term generates. They trace its origins back to the 1980s where it was initially used as "a reaction against the historical separation of two 'monolingualisms'" (p. 642) due to differences in prestige. Translanguaging emerged from the importance of using students' mother tongue plus second/foreign languages. Thus, the authors perceive that both languages are used in a dynamic and functionally integrated manner to organize and mediate mental processes in understanding, speaking, literacy, and, not least, learning.

More recently, translanguaging has been defined as "both the complex language practices of plurilingual individuals and communities, as well as the pedagogical approaches that use those complex practices" (García & Wei, 2014, p. 2). The authors here imply that translanguaging is highly attached to the learners' cultural background as it is a way to make their identity visible to others and empower them through self-knowledge.

Similar to translation and code-switching, translanguaging has its own purpose to be used in language education. Baker (2001) provides four "potential advantages" (p. 281) of implementing translanguaging which are listed as follows:

- It may promote a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter.
- It may help students develop skills in their weaker language.
- The joint use of languages can facilitate home–school cooperation.
- Learners can develop their second language ability concurrently with content learning.

Williams (2003) suggested that translanguaging often uses the stronger language to develop the weaker language thus contributing towards a potentially relatively balanced development of a child's two languages. A shared characteristic that the two authors have in common is that both consider translation as a strategy. In William's (1996) words, "Translanguaging requires a deeper understanding than just translating as it moves from finding parallel words to processing and relaying meaning and understanding" (p. 644). Thus, once again translation is disregarded as a strategy reduced to a simple transition process.

However, an emergence of studies that explore the pedagogical use of translation have traced its role in language education. In the following section, information about translation and its incorporation in language teaching will be addressed.

## 2.5 Translation and language teaching

This section aims to provide information related to the origins of the use of translation in language education to understand why it has recently been considered undesirable. The characteristics of seemingly opposing methods and approaches will be highlighted before moving on to defining pedagogical translation through an analysis of the most important agents and factors involved.

### 2.5.1 Historical background of translation in language teaching

To understand the role of translation in language education, it is pertinent to revisit its origins and analyze the circumstances that labelled GTM as an apparently obsolete method. Additionally, this section aims to describe the current approach in language teaching and the reasons why translation had been vanished from the L2 classroom.

### 2.5.1.1 Grammar translation method

This method started to be used to teach Latin and Greek to understand literature in these languages. Grammar was a central feature in this method since it was expected that "students would become more familiar with the grammar of their native language and that this familiarity would help them speak and write their native language better" (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 32). It is well-known that this method did not aim to develop learners' communicative competencies. However, to some extent, an additional purpose of this method was to increase learners' native language awareness. Richards and Rodgers (1986) provide the most relevant characteristics of this method, which can be summarized as follows:

- Learning is carried out by analyzing language grammar rules and then applying this knowledge by translating sentences and texts into the target language. In this case, from the L2 to the L1, with a focus on morphology and syntax.

- Reading and writing are strengthened through this method.

- The vocabulary is chosen in accordance with texts from literature. This resulted in the creation of word lists with their translation equivalents.

- The main objective of this method is devoted to translating sentences between the source and the target language in every lesson.

- A high value is given to accuracy.

- The syllabus consists of a sequence where the grammar points are first presented, and then students practice through translation exercises.

- The L1 is used to explain new items of the target language.

These characteristics reveal that the GTM entails the memorization of rules and that a reflection on the differences and similarities between languages was an essential part of the instruction. It is worth noticing that the current learning trends through natural approaches does not focus on teaching grammar deductively. However, the well-known methodology presentation-practice-production (PPP) is still widely used despite its rigid principles that go against the CLT approach. McCarthy and Carter (1995) state that PPP should include "procedures which involve students in greater language awareness of the nature of spoken and written distinctions, and thus of a range of grammatical choices across and between these modes" (p. 217). This advice makes evident that PPP follows an artificial use of the second or foreign language without proper contextualization.

One of the clear disadvantages of grammar translation is the lack of theoretical support. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), with the arrival of the industrial revolution, scholars started questioning the implementation of this method in language education since the interest in modern languages grew. The need to use listening and speaking skills began to emerge. The Reform movement brought about the study of phonetics, which changed the conceptions about language education. It advocated for the study of spoken language, pronunciation, conversation texts and dialogues, inductive grammar, and the focus on meaning which establish "associations within the target language rather than by establishing associations with the mother tongue" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 7). This new way of teaching languages led to the origin of natural methods that brought about a new period in language teaching. These still survive in educational settings despite the controversies that have emerged, as will be seen in the next subsection.

*2.5.1.2 The natural approach*

The natural approach is an umbrella term that refers to the acquisition of the second or foreign language in a way similar to the acquisition of the native tongue. This approach lies in the hypothesis that when students receive comprehensible input, they will be able to acquire a language and communicate using the target language (Krashen & Terrell, 1995). Grammar is overshadowed by the development of communication skills, although it is regarded as a guide to developing language functions in specific situations. In relation to the four skills, the two receptive skills, reading and listening, are implemented at a beginner level. Once students become more proficient, productive skills, speaking, and writing, are encouraged to be developed. Concerning the use of the mother tongue, the natural approach acknowledges that beginner learners can resort to their mother tongue, so it allows the production of incomplete sentences, but it gradually aims to reduce the use of the L1 as much as possible.

Initially, the natural approach did not consider academic settings, rather it concentrated on everyday contexts such as providing information about oneself. In this sense, Krashen and Terrel (1995) divided the syllabus into three stages. The first stage aims to place the students in familiar situations, such as talking about their interests or future plans. During the second stage, students are given "comprehensible input about experiences" (p. 73) and are encouraged to perform a conversation about them. The last stage is concerned with sharing opinions about contemporary topics. The authors state that these stages can be adapted to the interests and needs of the students.

The characteristics of the natural approach became the principles that gave birth to diverse methods and approaches, the most recognized ones being the direct method and the CLT approach. In the following subsection, these two will be defined with an emphasis on their principles and their current status in foreign language teaching where the use of the native language is not desirable, and translation is proscribed (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

*2.5.1.3 The direct method and communicative language teaching approach*

Due to the increasing necessity of using the target language to communicate, the direct method was used as a reaction against the GTM. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) indicate that a central principle is not to translate nor to regress to the students' L1 use. In

other words, "meaning is to be conveyed directly in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students' native language" (p. 46). One of the main goals of the direct method is that the students' language production should resemble that of native speakers of the target language, and at the same time, information related to cultural facts of the native speakers is provided to the students as a means of contextualization.

To understand the characteristics of this method, the authors identify 13 principles that aim to see the language as a tool and move away from the structural focus. The most relevant ones are as follows:

- It is desirable that teachers demonstrate instead of explaining or translating.

- Students should exclusively think in the target language.

- The purpose of language learning is communication.

- Grammar should be taught inductively.

- The syllabus is based on topics or situations. (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011)

Regarding the first principle, one of the teacher's roles is to teach by using objects or imagery as resources to convey the meaning of words or phrases. This should encourage the students to relate the target language form and meaning implicitly. The second point is a controversial topic and has been discussed in section 2.3, as there have been cognitive studies conducted that prove that learners return to their native language, and it is practically impossible to achieve that the students should only think in the L2. However, this method considers that the memorization of grammar rules prevents the students from thinking in another language. The third principle relates to communication with an emphasis on speaking skills, whereby teachers should dedicate time to improve students' pronunciation from the very beginning of instruction. Regarding the fourth principle, the presentation of grammar points should not be taught at the beginning of the lesson, preferably through the development of the lesson so that grammar rules can be arrived at inductively. The learners may produce errors, but the teacher needs to give them opportunities where self-correction can happen and increase awareness regarding their improvement in their learning. Finally, the last principle

refers to the content of the lessons, which is thought to be used in specific situations that the learner may encounter outside the classroom. Thus, grammatical structures do not frame the design of the syllabus.

It seems that much of the acceptance of the direct method is concerned with the belief that successful learners are those who produce the language as close to a native speaker's production as possible. Therefore, pronunciation and target language culture are essential features, while the method rejects the explicit teaching and memorization of grammar rules because they may be seen as tedious. However, despite the warm welcome that this method received, it has also been criticized for its implementation effectiveness. Richards and Rodgers (1986) explain that this method's first obstacle was that it was not useful enough when implemented in public schools as it did not consider real classroom situations. In addition, it was expected that teachers were native speakers of the target language, but not all the teachers were skilled enough to teach a foreign language. It was also identified that teachers could no 'act out' every word or phrase due to the length of content, so they had to resort to the mother tongue to be understood and to use time efficiently.

With the creation of the direct method, further methods and approaches emerged, such as situational language teaching, the audiolingual method, the silent way, suggestopedia, and total physical response. All of these methods had different perspectives to approach the language, but their shared goal was to explore how the use of the target language was the primary vehicle of instruction. The arrival of the CLT attracted scholars' attention and it came to influence foreign language instruction from the 1980s onwards. It continues to be the approach that guides foreign language education in many countries, despite the numerous controversies surrounding it. In order to define CLT, Howatt (1984) analyzes it from two perspectives, the weak version, and the strong version.

The 'weak' version, which has become more or less standard practice in the last ten years, stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider programme of language teaching […] The 'strong' version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication, so

that it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself. (p. 279)

It could be said that the objective of the weak version of CLT is learning through the language. The teacher focuses on the structural organization of the language that aims to develop fluency and accuracy; thus, teaching becomes explicit and intentional following a syllabus based on competencies and functions. On the other hand, the strong version proposes that students learn the language entirely through using it. There is no focus on linguistic points since the teaching process is implicit, so opportunities for incidental learning are provided.

Following this distinction, Celce-Murcia *et al*., (1997) argue that within the weak form of CLT, "traditional methods of teaching grammar, whereby new linguistic information is passed on and practiced explicitly" (p. 141). On the contrary, the strong form of this approach seeks to set up to be "managing lifelike communicative situations in the language classroom (e.g., role plays, problem-solving tasks, or information gap activities) and leading learners to acquire communicative skills incidentally by seeking situational meaning" (p. 141). Perhaps the distinction between these two versions of CLT may provide the teachers with options to implement this approach considering their students' context and foster motivation through it. Regarding the benefits that learners can obtain from either version, they both attempt to offer contextualized learning environments where the integration of the four skills is pursued. Ideally, learner-centeredness is considered one of the most critical aspects. Concerning the use of the L1 and translation in CLT, Finocchiaro and Brumfit. (1983) state that "Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible. Translation may be used where students need or benefit from it" (p. 91). As it can be assumed, CLT opens the door to a variety of understandings and interpretations depending on the scholars and practitioners' context and their own needs resulting in different adaptations of this approach.

The use of the mother tongue is still a subject of debate among CLT advocates. However, a key feature of teachers who implement this approach in the classroom is that they are viewed as 'counselors' which means that they should be a "skillful 'understander' of the struggle students face as they attempt to internalize another language" (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 118). The authors further note that students' confidence increases when

their native language is used to "make the meaning clear and build a bridge from the known to the unknown" (p. 126). The creative and purposeful use of the L1 might help the teacher overcome students' negative feelings or attitudes about learning a foreign language. In this regard, Duff (1989) believes that translation "can be introduced, purposefully and imaginatively, into the language learning programme" (p. 6). Furthermore, if we consider that translation by nature is a communicative activity, as it has been argued in section 2.2.4, it is difficult to see how it could be excluded from an approach that considers communication its main pillar. The way translation is used, however, should be considered carefully, as it is discussed with reference to pedagogical translation in the next subsection.

## 2.6 Pedagogical translation

Translation in second or foreign language education has raised questions about its effects on the learning process where several arguments against its use have originated from its relationship with the GTM. This has resulted in a poor conceptualization that labels translation as a misuse of the native language in the teaching and learning process of a second language. Despite the efforts that have been made to avoid translation, it has undoubtedly been part of the language classroom where its manifestation varies according to the subject who uses it, that is to say, the teacher or the students. For example, in the case of students, translation may happen internally when performing reading comprehension exercises. This type of translation is known as "internalized translation" (Martínez Ruiz & Zimányi, 2020 p. 5). Teachers are not the exception: purposefully or not, teachers tend to resort to the students' first language depending on the learning environment and students' characteristics. Such performance is known as "classroom discourse translation" (Martínez Ruiz & Zimányi, 2020, p. 12), for example, when teachers translate instructions from English into Spanish so students can understand or clarify any possible doubts. These two examples reveal a reality that needs to be evident specially for L2 teachers, teachers' educators, and scholars. It seems urgent and necessary to take advantage of learners' natural cognitive process in acquiring a second language instead of forbidding or disregarding it as an unwanted feature of their learning.

Back since the 1970s scholars such as Harris (1977) and Harris and Sherwood (1978) noticed that translation was an essential component in the bilingual learners' cognitive

process and even identified translation as an innate skill. Their main claim is that translating is a natural performance "done in everyday circumstances by people who have had no special training for it" (p. 1). A similar reasoning has guided other authors (Hurtado Albir, 1988; Leonardi, 2011; Malakoff & Kakuta, 1991) to assert that translation is a natural process which use in language instruction is inevitable. Such statements have resulted in an increasing and renewed exploration of the pedagogical use of translation in theory and in practice.

One of the most prominent authors that acknowledged the value of translation in language education was Duff (1989), who believed that it could be used to develop accuracy, clarity and flexibility in the production of the L2. In his words, translation "trains the reader to search (flexibility) for the most appropriate words (accuracy) to convey what is meant (clarity)" (p. 3). The author further asserts that while students can see the link between language and usage, focusing on form should be regarded as a means where explicit instruction leads to the automatization of the second language. This first attempt to redefine translation as a pedagogic resource led the path to a more focused conceptualization of pedagogic translation.

For Vermes (2010), pedagogical translation is "an instrumental kind of translation, in which the translated text serves as a tool of improving the language learner's foreign language proficiency. It is a means of consciousness raising, practicing, or testing language knowledge" (p. 83). The author differentiates pedagogical translation from general translation by identifying the function, means, and purpose about the role that each of them have. One should keep in mind that, along with other language tasks, pedagogic translation serves as a learning resource. Leonardi (2011) adds that pedagogical translation "is a complex activity which involves linguistic, cultural, communicative and cognitive factors. These factors are all closely intertwined with foreign language learning, thus making translation a necessary, unavoidable and naturally-occurring phenomenon when learning foreign languages" (p. 26). The author not only emphasizes the notion that translation is an inevitable activity that takes place in the learning process but also considers translation as an integrative linguistic resource that benefits from the learners' mother tongue to foster pragmatic and communicative competences in the target language.

Klein-Braley (1996) was visionary enough to consider translation as a necessary competence to face the everyday linguistic encounters either professionally or in informal settings. A line of thought similar to Klein-Braley's is recovered by David, *et al*., 2019 who define pedagogic translation as an "emergent social practice" since translation has become part of the everyday life in bilinguals or multilinguals. The recognition of translation as part of the learners' lives have resulted in further reflections about what this entails. That is the case of Carreres *et al*., (2017) who, opposed to Vermes (2010), believe that the purpose of pedagogic translation is beyond instrumental and state that it should be an objective in itself. Therefore, the authors propose that translation is part of the mediation ability which goes in hand with the descriptors of the CEFR. The concept of mediation is well defined by Liddicoat (2016), who considers that the one who translates brings together linguistic and cultural meanings and communicate new information that can be understood across languages.

After a close review of empirical and theoretical research, one of the most outstanding findings by Carreres *et al*., (2017) is that pedagogic translation is the fifth skill along with reading, listening, writing and speaking. In addition, the authors highlight its value as an individual or collaborative activity. Keeping these arguments in mind, it is possible to reflect on the considerations that need to be taken into account to incorporate translation didactically in language education. One of the most eminent authors on the subject, Cook (2010) observes that when implementing translation-related activities, one should think about the type and function of translation and the objective that is thought to be achieved. Students' characteristics are also relevant including factors such as age, level, learning styles, personalities and interests. Perhaps most importantly, he suggests moving away from generalizations regarding translation itself in order to become "more specific about what kind of translations can be used, in which circumstances, by which teachers and which students" (p. 125). Just like any other language task, Harvey (1996, as cited in Laviosa, 2014) observes that an effective translation-related activity should be comprised of learners' real-life experiences, needs, and linguistic background. Only then will it be possible to see the advantages of translation. Specifically, students will be able to increase their knowledge in "vocabulary and specialized terminology, making them aware of language-specific collocations, false cognates and single words or multi-word units that have several possible renderings in the target language" (p. 26-27). Following Duff (1989), Harvey also places

translation as a form of self-evaluation through which students can identify their errors "deriving from L1 interference and, in so doing, enables them to enhance their knowledge of the mother tongue" (p. 27). It is essential to note that a proper use of translation can aid in overcoming negative interference rather than promoting it, and at the same time, improve their skills in the L1.

The reasoning behind this research study unveils that translation is meaningful to teachers and students only when there is a cognitive effort. Beside considering one of the most interesting features of translation, Lacruz (2017) defines it as "the mental effort involved in reading the texts, thinking about how to translate and how to correct mistranslations, selecting the desired product, and reflecting on the chosen solutions" (p. 387). The importance of viewing pedagogic translation as an originator of students' mental effort provides another suitable justification for its integration in the language classroom and challenge beliefs that consider the use of the L1 as an indicator of laziness to produce in the L2. Arguments such as this one can be visible in the results of study carried out by Yavuz (2012). The author reviewed English language teachers' attitudes in using the L1 in the classroom. Her findings show that twelve out of thirteen participants indicated that the use of the L1 was necessary to deliver English lessons. However, one interesting argument was given by a teacher who asserted that "she never uses L1 in her teaching because she believes that overuse of L1 is making the students lazy. She believes that when students switch to their native language they are neither cognitive nor analytic in understanding the target language." (p. 4343). Statements such as this one reveal that it may be a common assumption among the teaching community that a reason to avoid translation is the prevailing belief that it does not represent a challenge for the students learning process.

After exploring previous research about pedagogical translation and acknowledging that it is an essential component in foreign language education, it becomes necessary to turn it in favor of teachers and students. Empirical studies conducted over time have allowed to see in which ways the didactic use of translation can contribute to the learning process.

### 2.6.1 Translation as a communicative activity

The reasons to use translation have barely been a subject of discussion among the teaching community since reasons against it have overshadowed its benefits. A key argument against

its use is the uncertainty about how to balance translation with the communicative approach. Thus, it becomes necessary first to recognize translation as a "real life communication activity" (Popovic, 2001, p. 1) that becomes a natural reaction when acquiring a second language. Proposals to integrate translation with the communicative approach have been made by researchers such as Parks (1995) who considers that translation should be part of the syllabus instead of an isolated activity. He also warns that translation activities cannot be of use if they do not have a communicative purpose. Therefore, the author provides useful criteria to design translation-based activities as follows:

a) The person who originates the message must have something s/he wants to say;

b) the person who receives the message must be receiving new, unknown information;

c) the message must refer to a common background of shared experiences;

d) the student must have a certain amount of choice available in making the translation -the teacher must not propose one "standard" version and condemn all others as inaccurate. A certain freedom of expression is necessary, and in actual experience is always present. (p. 240)

More recent proposals (Allford, 1999; Cook, 2010; González-Davies, 2014), although scarce, have also made engaging efforts in offering language teachers a solution to reconcile translation with their methodological requirements. While other scholars have made their contribution to the subject through the development of arguments based on extensive research (Hurtado Albir, 1988; De Arriba García, 1996; Cuéllar-Lázaro, 2009, House, 2016) suggesting that there is still room for further research in the development of communicative competences through pedagogical translation.

### 2.6.2 Translation and metalinguistic awareness

One of the most outstanding articles about the role of translation in bilinguals was written by Malakoff and Hakuta (1991) who provide a detailed analysis on the matter. The authors define metalinguistic awareness as the learners' capacity of examining the form and structure of an utterance. The relationship between translation and metalinguistic awareness does not come as a surprise since as a result of processing more than one language, bilinguals develop metalinguistic awareness "suggesting that learners are likely to benefit from focusing upon

the similarities and differences in their two or more languages" (Cook, 2012, p. 288). Cummins (2007) had already reflected on the potential of implementing the mother tongue in the language classroom and the reluctance of using translation in multilingual classrooms. In his study, he proposes a set of strategies that can be employed along with monolingual classes. Based on a case study conducted with children who arrived from Pakistan to Canada, he was able to implement collaborative tasks where the use of their mother tongue through translation was at the core of their performance. Apart from finding that translation allowed students to "participate actively in [their] instruction" (p. 236) when they have limited knowledge in the target language, the author was also able to see that translation "can be a powerful tool to develop language and literacy skills and increase metalinguistic awareness" (p. 237). An example of this could be seen in a discussion where children were looking for an equivalence between English and their native language. To one of them, translation was useful to remember words that she had forgotten in her L1, and finally, two girls asserted that translation helped them to understand the differences between the two languages.

In sum, these arguments show that even though monolingual classrooms intend to focus merely on meaning, learners tend to reflect on the structure of both the L1 and the L2 as a strategy to acquire a new language. Thus, the belief that translation has a preference to form over meaning may need to be questioned as its intention is not to reproduce the principles of GTM, rather to guide students towards becoming aware of the features of the target language and the mother tongue (Duff, 1989).

### 2.6.3 Translation to learn vocabulary

One of the benefits of pedagogic translation is that it encourages students to learn new vocabulary. In a study conducted by Carreres (2006) to explore the students' perceptions, who attended both language and translation courses, about using translation as a learning resource. After providing students a list of areas where translation could be more useful, the author identified that students rated "learning of vocabulary in the foreign language" (p. 9) the highest followed by grammar and writing. It is worth pointing out that students preferred to translate from the L1 into the L2. Saz *et al*., (2014) were interested in observing the impact of translation in the acquisition of a second language, specifically in students' accuracy and fluency of vocabulary acquisition in the English language using a platform that provides

students personalized texts that can be found on the internet according to their level and interests. It is also believed that these texts help students in learning new vocabulary in context. One of the main advantages of this platform is that it provides translation of words into the L1 and gives access to electronic bilingual dictionaries. Results show that, after measuring the number of times that students relied on translation, translation helped students to increase accuracy since they looked for the meaning of specific words that impeded their understanding of the texts. However, the authors warn that the overuse of translation may affect fluency in the long term.

Both studies suggest that forbidding the incorporation of translation in the learning process may be detrimental for students since they consider it as an aid through which they can increase their vocabulary in the L2 and improve the effective implementation of vocabulary.

### 2.6.4 Translation and motivation

The affective factors of translation have also been the subject of study especially in second language learners where motivation is one of the most researched issues in second language education. For example, after analyzing the attitudes of university students towards translation in English as a foreign language courses, Fernández Guerra (2014) found that the majority of students preferred performing translation-related tasks over speaking or language-focused activities since they asserted that they were "enjoyable and entertaining" (p. 162). In another study conducted by Liao (2006), the interest turned to university students' beliefs about using translation to learn English and the strategies that the students used when performing translation. Interviews with the participants demonstrated both positive and negative results. They indicated that "translation can help reduce learning anxiety and enhance motivation to learn English" but without careful implementation, it "may slow down students' English comprehension and production processes" (p. 201). Finally, the author found that students use a variety of strategies to translate when learning another language. These included "cognitive, memory, compensation, social, and affective strategies" (p. 208).

Studies such as these show the facilitative role of translation in second language acquisition by fostering a learning environment where learners may feel comfortable enough to learn a language from which they have little or no knowledge. Moreover, it seems that

translation can enhance students' autonomy by developing additional strategies promoted using translation in their learning process.

## 2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a historical overview of various definitions of translation to uncover its origins and offer an understanding from different perspectives. Three main concepts were discussed to understand how translation operates through the lens of TS with the intention of showing the basis and the overall characteristics of translation as a research area and as a means of communication. After analyzing mistaken assumptions of SLA about using the L1 and translation in the language classroom, findings of cognitive studies regarding the nature of translation were presented with the intention of proving that learners tend to resort to their mother tongue throughout the L2 learning process. Then, a description about two additional bilingual cognitive activities was addressed with the aim of establishing the boundaries with translation. Considering the description and analysis of the origins of translation in language education and the emergence of the natural approach, it seems that the position of translation is not well established due to its association with the GTM. Therefore, the last section draws a line between GTM and the didactic use of translation in language education. The distinction between them is that while GTM focuses on the acquisition of grammar rules and improvement of writing skills through mostly literal translation of literary texts, pedagogical translation presents translation strategically to facilitate learning through a communicative exchange that makes use of either one or the four skills, attempts to be developed in a context familiar to students, and intends to give teachers and learners a purpose to make a conscious use of the L1. In the next chapter, I will discuss the methodological framework that was established to conduct this study.

# Chapter Three
## Research methodology

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology under which this research was conducted. In the first section, the purpose of the study will be stated along with the research question that motivated this project. Then, the rationale for the research approach, method, and techniques chosen to gather information and analyze the data is explained. Since the incorporation of five translation-related activities into the language classroom was at the core of the study, they will be briefly addressed. A description of the research site where this study was developed, and the participants' profiles is followed by the ethical considerations. The last section consists of an overview of the data coding procedures used to label the findings and a conclusion of the chapter.

## 3.2 Research question and objectives

The reason that generated the interest in conducting research about the didactic use of translation in foreign language education is twofold. First, it appears necessary to question the dubious reputation that has characterized the use of translation in English language teaching and has impeded an insightful analysis of its potential in the teaching-learning process. Second, this research project seeks to record the teacher's and learners' voices about using translation from a pedagogical perspective in the EFL classroom. For these reasons, this study aimed to answer the following research question:

> *What are the teacher's and students' perceptions in upper-intermediate EFL classes at the University of Guanajuato regarding the implementation of translation-related activities?*

In order to guide the development and analysis, the objective that this study pursued was the following:

- To analyze and describe the teacher's and students' perceptions of the implementation of translation-related activities.

## 3.3 Research approach

The multidisciplinary nature of applied linguistics has allowed to conduct research related to language and its users through various perspectives and for different purposes. Heigham and Croker (2009) point out that one of the broadest areas of applied linguistics that attracts the attention of qualitative studies is "the experiences of language use" (p. 4), where the fields are varied. The study is situated in the TESOL field, where studying the impact of the classroom environment can affect the students' (and teachers') attitudes regarding language learning. It should be remembered that the primary purpose of this thesis is to analyze and describe perceptual information that resulted in "textual data" (p. 5). Therefore, it seemed pertinent to conduct this study through a qualitative approach.

Although the dividing line between qualitative and quantitative research tends to be blurred, Pope and Mays (2006) warn that the definition of qualitative research should not be built upon the quantitative approach. For example, it should be acknowledged that qualitative inquiry has its own measurement, which is the "taxonomy or classification" (p. 3) of the data. To these authors, one of the main differences between these two approaches is that a qualitative study interprets "social phenomena (interactions, behaviors, etc.) in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 4). While quantitative research analyzes variables instead of cases through statistics and with the objective to generalize the results (Dörnyei, 2007). Considering that the current project is developed under a TESOL frame, the six characteristics proposed by Richards (2003) should help in defining a qualitative inquiry:

- Studies human actors in natural setting, in the context of their ordinary, everyday world.

- Seeks to understand the meanings and significance of these actions from the perspective of those involved.

- Usually focuses on a small number of (possibly just one) individuals, groups or settings.

- Bases its analysis on a wide range of features.

- Employs a range of methods in order to stablish different perspectives on the relevant issues.

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- Only uses quantification where this is appropriate for specific purposes and as a part of a broader approach. (p. 10)

These characteristics comprised the key features of qualitative studies, however, each of them is explored in depth as follows.

The first characteristic is related to the subjects of study and their interaction with a natural setting. Creswell (2007) also highlights this naturalistic perspective by stating that the process of data collection in qualitative research should be done "in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places understudy" which results in the presentation of "the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action" (p. 37). Creswell (2014) furthers asserts that throughout this process, the researcher is expected to gather information, interpret human aspects that cannot be tangible, elaborate explanations that are sustained by the literature, and contribute to a possible understanding of the theme under study. In other words, the researcher's interaction with the participants and their environment will allow him or her to gain more significant insights regarding the participants' perceptions and experiences in a particular context and elaborate on possible interpretations.

Second, a qualitative inquiry aims to understand the meaning and importance of these interactions and the participants' reactions and perceptions. This thesis is focused on analyzing the participants' perceptions where, according to Sainn and Ugwuegbu (1980), perception is a process "by which we extract meaningful information" (p. 90) and includes a certain degree of awareness or consciousness (Gregory, 1980). Since perception is a cognitive process, Choy and Cheah (2009) consider it as "a higher mental process" (p. 199) through which the individuals code their reality to understand what is occurring. The authors explain that in perceptual processing, there is a constant selection of information and hypothesis formation. Then, selecting a qualitative approach can help in answering key questions related to the meanings that the participants construct of the world and how their context influences their perceptions.

The third feature refers to the flexibility of qualitative studies that allow the researcher to opt for one or a small number of participants. In the field of language education and applied linguistics, there has been an increasing interest in conducting qualitative research in different

learning environments the classroom being one of the most common contexts Duff (2008). This research considers the participants' individual reasoning about their linguistic experiences, so this implies that the results obtained from data collection in this context cannot be generalized. Nonetheless, the variety of classroom conditions and specific profiles of the participants provide the uniqueness of each research site and this opens the possibility of contributing or detecting specific needs of that context.

Another distinctive feature is that sometimes studies are developed to offer students with better opportunities to enhance learning through activity design or by implementing different educational approaches. Other studies aim to support teachers with resources to increase the possibilities of a significant teaching-learning process or with suggestions to overcome common obstacles in their teaching practice. However, certain factors influence the success of these goals. For example, Ghanizadeh and Jahedizadeh (2015) consider that the teachers' and students' perceptions about incorporating classroom activities need to be considered since they are paramount to expanding better and practical experiences. These perceptions portray teachers' and students' emotions, expectations, needs, and valuable previous learning experiences.

According to Richards (2003), the fifth characteristic of a qualitative inquiry relates to analyzing the data from different perspectives to identify relevant information. In this thesis, the researcher's goal was to provide an interpretation of the participants' insights, experiences, and understandings of their teaching and learning environment to provide unquantifiable results. This interpretative method allows the researcher to use a variety of methods and data collection techniques which deliver information that portray the uniqueness of each of the participants and the context in which the study is carried out.

Finally, qualitative research can sometimes be complemented by quantitative data collection techniques. This argument is particularly significant to this study since, as it will be discussed in-depth in section 3.5, one of the techniques used to collect information includes numerical data. In this regard, Richards (2003) points out that the treatment and presentation of the information distinguish qualitative from the quantitative inquiry. In other words, the researcher needs to become aware of when it is appropriate to use quantification and will not present the findings in quantitative terms, rather work under a qualitative

framework despite the use of some more numerical data. In the following sections, information about the research method and data collection techniques will be provided.

## 3.4 Research method

One of the most prominent methods in qualitative research is case studies. McDonough and McDonough (1997) consider that case studies are one of the best methods for qualitative research as they go in line with its principles: to analyze and interpret data from a holistic viewpoint while also focusing on particular aspects of the case. In other words, the purpose of a case study is to "[understand] people's own meanings and perspectives" (p. 205), with the researcher being the principal means of data collection whose analysis of this information will result in a highly descriptive product (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Depending on the nature of the investigation, the researcher will need to make decisions about the type of case study and the appropriate techniques to help him or her achieve the research objectives.

Yin (2003) defines a case study as a research strategy that aids in obtaining knowledge of actors (from individual to collective) and their interaction with their setting to understand "complex social phenomena" (p. 3). He further states that a case study is a systematic and complete method due to its structured design with a careful selection of data collection techniques and specific procedures to analyze data. In comparison, Hood (2009) focuses on the conceptualization of a case and its elements by asserting that it is a "bounded system comprised of an individual, institution, or entity and the site and context in which social action takes place" (p. 69). This means that the researcher will interpret his or her experiences and insights derived from the involvement with the participants and their interaction with the setting.

The enquiry's purpose, the conditions of the case, and the type of analysis will guide the researcher in the classification of the inquiry into one of the many types of case studies. Two of the most notable categorizations of a case study are proposed by Yin (2003) and Stake (1995). The former provides a threefold classification: a) exploratory, b) descriptive, and c) explanatory. In turn, Stake's taxonomy includes a) intrinsic, b) instrumental, and c) collective. A descriptive case study was considered for this research study to gain an in-depth and contextual understanding of the participants' perceptions. According to Yin (2003), a descriptive case study aims to "describe an intervention and the real-life context in which it

occurred" (p. 15). Similarly, Duff (2008) refers to a descriptive case study as one that focuses on describing an event in relation to its context. Considering that this study aims to analyze participants' interpretation of their own reality, it is necessary to ensure that the analysis and description provides a sustained interpretation of the data that will "allow the reader to see the case through the theory-driven lens of the researcher" (Mills, Eurepos & Wiebe, 2010, p. 288). The outcomes should assist in developing theoretical constructs (Yin, 2003) under which the teaching and the learning process occurs and how the participants' experiences influence this process.

### 3.5 Data collection techniques

One of the challenges that qualitative researchers face is to provide evidence that supports the study's validity and reliability. One way to ensure these is by implementing multiple data collection techniques. Since one of the objectives of a case study is to analyze participants and their context in-depth, Yin (2017) recommends not to use a single source of data. In this regard, he believes that by using various data collection techniques, the researcher will be able to analyze various sources of evidence and go "beyond appreciating the breadth of a case study's scope" (p. 172). The information provided by different research techniques should serve as a support to ensure the validity of the researcher's interpretations about certain phenomena. To accomplish this, Patton (2015) asserts that a good selection of techniques and triangulation of the information obtained from them is one way to guarantee that "qualitative data are credible, trustworthy, authentic, balanced about the phenomenon under study, and fair to the people studied" (p. 113). According to the author, triangulation involves using several techniques that may include quantitative and qualitative approaches. The triangulation process can include data, researchers, methods, perspectives, or theories (Duff, 2008).

Therefore, for this research study, the participants' information was gathered through three different data collection techniques from which qualitative and quantitative data were obtained, and which are described in the following subsections. After presenting the techniques, a brief description of the implementation of translation-related activities that were used to elicit perceptual information will be addressed.

### 3.5.1 Likert scale questionnaires

In order to obtain perceptual data, students needed to evaluate the translation-related activities according to their emotions and experiences that emerged while they performed them. The implementation of Likert scale questionnaires seemed suitable since the study considered the participation of two EFL groups where the intention was to collect all the students' perceptions. Created in the nineteen-thirties by Rensis Likert to measure peoples' attitudes and opinions about a specific issue (Robinson, 2014), Likert scale questionnaires consist of a "parametric strategy [that] converts ordinal data into interval values by assigning sequential numbers" (Mills, Eurepos & Wiebe, 2010, p. 354) which usually range from one to five. According to these numbers, the respondents rate their agreement or disagreement about a set of statements about a given topic or situation. The authors further note that when applying questionnaires, the researcher assumes that the participants are aware of the issue under study, so they should be able to "articulate their understandings of it" (p. 770). Thus, it was hoped that students could reflect on their performance by considering their beliefs along with their previous knowledge to provide an accurate judgment of the happenings related to the classroom context.

The reason behind collecting perceptual data through Likert scale questionnaires (see Appendix A) was to identify students' attitudes after performing each of the five translation-related activities. It was hoped that with the implementation of this instrument, they could provide accurate information about their immediate perceptions of their interaction with pedagogical translation. In this sense, these questionnaires served as guidance so students could identify and express their experiences and emotions. The themes addressed throughout fifteen items were statements related to enjoyment (Pereira *et al.*, 2010), motivation (Madrid Fernández & Pérez Cañado, 2001), autonomy (Gholami, 2016), improvement in vocabulary and communication skills, and language awareness (Tabaeifard, 2014). The instrument design gave a range of responses from 1 "strongly disagree", 2 "Disagree", 3 "Neutral·, 4 "Agree", and 5 "strongly agree". In addition, two close-ended questions were included to have a complete overview of the students' reflection about their performance. The questionnaire was written in the participants' L1 to avoid confusion.

### *3.5.2 Focus group interviews*

Two focus group interviews were carried out after the five translation-related activities had been implemented to expand on students' perceptions about the use of translation-related activities. Krueguer and Casey (2015) state that the purpose of conducting a focus group interview is to have a clear reaction or response about an issue or idea. Dörnyei (2007) observes that the researcher, who becomes the interviewer, records the participants' statements in a small group in this data collection technique. The objective of the group format is to obtain "collective experiences" through which the participants "react to the emerging issues and points" (p. 144). One of the purposes to conduct focus group interviews was to compare the results obtained from the Likert scale questionnaires with their feedback and closing thoughts. Additionally, it was assumed that students might feel more confident in an environment where others may share their point of view. For example, Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) assert that the most outstanding advantage of conducting focus group interviews is uncovering the participants' insights and how they are formed and changed.

As mentioned above, two focus group interviews, one for each EFL class, were conducted in English. The students were given the possibility of speaking in either their L1 or the L2. The first group consisted of fourteen students, and there were thirteen in the second one. The students' participation in the discussion varied in each group since not all students took part in this session. To elicit the participants' opinions, a semi-structured interview was designed with 11 questions (see Appendix B) that intended to gather specific information related to the same topics addressed in the Likert scale questionnaires (enjoyment, motivation, autonomy, improvement in vocabulary and communication skills, and language awareness). In addition, other themes were incorporated such as the role of Spanish in the language classroom and students' preferences for specific translation-related activities. It was expected that, by eliciting similar information to the questionnaires collectively from students, they would have the opportunity to expand on their perceptions about pedagogical translation as well as to provide information about their own needs as language learners.

Each of the focus group interviews lasted around 20 minutes. During that time, the interview questions and participants' responses were recorded and each of them was identified with a number to code their answers. In sum, the implementation of focus groups

was an aid that allowed the contrast and triangulation between the results obtained from Likert scale questionnaires, the participants' oral responses, and the prompted teacher diary, which will be discussed in the following section.

### 3.5.3 Prompted teacher diary

As stated in section 3.3, teachers' experiences constitute the foundation of TESOL research. Thus, the teacher's perceptions about the activities were contrasted with the students' point of view. It was also valuable to know the teacher's stance towards using translation inside a language classroom. Therefore, collecting her perceptions through a diary seemed pertinent to get detailed information. Heigham and Corker (2009) define this instrument as an introspective technique "that provides information about L2 learners and teachers and their perspectives on the affective and instructional factors that affect L2 learning and teaching" (p. 230). The teacher's perspective was an essential contribution to this research since not only did she provide information about her students' reactions and performance, but she also included her own opinions and evaluation about incorporating translation as it was the first time she was working with these types of activities.

Heigham and Croker (2009) further remark that in a diary, the teacher "keeps an account of his or her personal language teaching history, systematically recording events, details, and feelings […] about the current teaching experience" (p. 230). Therefore, 12 prompts were designed (see Appendix C) divided into three sections: 1) activity and materials, 2) students' performance, and 3) modifications. The first section intended to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the activities and materials, the second part aimed to obtain a description of the students' learning during and after conducting the activity. The purpose of the last section was to gather suggestions on how the activities can be improved. These prompts guided the structure of the teacher's writing in each entry. Overall, five entries were obtained from this data collection technique (see Appendix D) where each entry was developed throughout one page in a Word document.

### 3.5.4 Translation-related activities

To elicit perceptual information from the participants about the use of pedagogical translation, five activities (see Table 1) were adapted from internet resources and books to fit the purpose of this study.

**Table 1**

*Translation-related activities*

| Activity | Objective | Skills developed |
|---|---|---|
| Chinese whispers | To promote awareness of the importance of choosing the right words to convey meaning. | Listening Speaking |
| False friends | To identify words out of context. To become aware of interferences. | Reading Writing Speaking |
| Lost in translation | To understand and produce sentences in L1 and L2. To become aware of different translation options. | Reading Writing |
| Mad libs | To review parts of speech. | Reading Writing Listening Speaking |
| At the restaurant | To practice specific vocabulary and expressions. | Listening Speaking |

It is essential to highlight that oral and written translation was used to develop these activities to encourage learners to translate by using both productive and receptive skills in different interaction patterns. The activities were implemented by an EFL teacher with students of the same proficiency level in two of her groups over five weeks. The teacher received a short training that consisted of four hours distributed in two days at the Department of Languages in Guanajuato town where she was told that translation was the main component of the activities. The objectives and steps to follow to conduct each activity with her students were also explained so the teacher could incorporate them into her own lesson plans. Apart from the activities' procedures, printed material was given to guide the teacher's performance (see Appendix E).

There was limited interaction with the teacher and her students before and after implementing the activities to preserve the researcher's positionality.

**3.6 Research site**

The research was conducted at the language center of the University of Guanajuato, which is located at the heart of Guanajuato city. This center offers several language courses that are open to both university students and the general public. At the time of the data collection, there were enrolled 2,987 students of different ages who study English, French, German, Japanese, Italian, or Spanish from Monday to Thursday or in intensive weekend courses offered on Fridays and Saturdays. In this study, the students were young adults who attended general English language classes at 800 hundred level, an approximate to B2 in the CEFR.

According to the teacher, the syllabus followed by the language teachers is guided by the CLT approach. This information was confirmed after examining the document *Catálogo de educación continua 2019* where information about language courses is offered to the public. Such information includes the objective, content, student's profile, and the length of the courses. Regarding the English language course, the document states that its objective is to develop the linguistic skills required to communicate in a variety of contexts: "El objetivo del programa es desarrollar las habilidades lingüísticas requeridas para comunicarse en una gran variedad de contextos…". The program content is clearly aligned with the objective since it is indicated that "El programa del idioma inglés consiste en ocho semestres. Las clases se imparten con un enfoque comunicativo lo cual motiva al estudiante a producir la lengua inglesa en contextos en los que se pudiera enfrentar en la vida cotidiana" (University of Guanajuato, 2019, p. 21). From this quote it can be observed that the syllabus follows the communicative approach through which it is expected that students produce the language. According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011), CLT aims to develop communicative competence in language teaching, although they add that there are vague ideas on how this approach should be implemented in the language classroom. Consequently, this approach allows a certain amount of flexibility regarding its implementation since "there is no one single agreed upon version of CLT" (p. 152). This context was ideal for the implementation of translation-related activities and explored in which ways they can contribute to the development of this competence.

### 3.7 Participants

In qualitative research, a purposeful selection of the participants is generally expected. Creswell (2014) defines purposive sampling as a "data collection procedure [where] qualitative researchers select individuals who will best help them understand the research problem and the research questions" (p. 239). Similarly, Cohen *et al*., (2000) observe that this type of sample cannot be generalized to a specific population although it broadly displays the issues to be analyzed and interpreted.

This study included one EFL teacher who taught two groups at the same 800 English level, and 36 six Mexican students who belonged to these two groups. The first group comprised 20 students from which eleven students were women and nine were men. The second group consisted of 16 students, where eleven students were women, and five were men. The purpose of including participants from more than one classroom was to have a greater participant pool and increase validity.

Regarding the teacher's academic background, she holds an MA in Applied Linguistics in English Language Teaching and has been an English language teacher for more than ten years. Two meetings were organized to deliver a detailed description of the research and explore her willingness to participate in this research. After she had accepted to contribute, both of her classes were observed to explore the students' English language level and additional information that may be relevant to the research. This made it possible to confirm that in both groups, the students were between the ages of 17 and 29 years old, most of them were enrolled in undergraduate programs, and some others worked in different areas within the State of Guanajuato.

### 3.8 Ethical considerations

One of the researcher's essential responsibilities is to "respect the rights, interests, sensitivities, and privacy" (British Association for Applied Linguistics, 2006) of the informants. The ethical criteria for this research were to obtain the full consent of all the people involved in this process. Regarding permission, it was fundamental to obtain the approval of the English language course promoter. The following step was to present the research topic and objectives to the EFL teacher to clarify any possible doubts and make changes to the data collection techniques, if necessary.

Then, a consent form (see Appendix F) was designed and given to the teacher and students to give them a general description of the study and then inform them of their role and rights as participants. Underage participants were given a consent form directed to their parents. It was also essential to establish a respectful relationship with the participants by telling them that their anonymity would be protected by assigning them codes, and information would be treated confidentially. The consent forms were delivered face-to-face, where doubts and comments were addressed during the interaction.

### 3.9 Data coding in preparation for the analysis of the data

This research study was approached through a thematic analysis in which, according to Ritchie and Lewis (2003), "themes are identified, with the researcher focusing on the way the theme is treated or presented and the frequency of its occurrence" (p. 200). The analysis and interpretation of the perceptual data were based on the development of general themes, each containing sub-themes. The themes were possible to identify by "reading the material presented by the participants multiple times and constant comparison among the ideas presented" (Given, 2008, p. 368). The comparison resulted from the three data collection techniques previously mentioned. The data obtained from the participants was organized as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Data coding*

| Process | Data source | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Likert scale questionnaire (QU) | Teacher diary (TD) | Focus group (FG) |
| 1<sup>st</sup> step | Transcription | Collected through e-mail | Transcription |
| 2<sup>nd</sup> step | Source coding: QU-A1-GR1-P1 | Source coding: TD-A1-GR1 | Source coding: FG-GR1-P1 |
| 3<sup>rd</sup> step | Thematic coding | Thematic coding | Thematic coding |

The first column presents the three steps followed to organize data. The first one was to transcribe the quantitative and qualitative data elicited from the participants; then, a code was given to the data collection techniques and participants.

To conduct the analysis and interpretation of the data, a thematic analysis framework proposed by Vaismoradi *et al.*, (2016) was followed. The authors consider four stages; the first one is *initialization*, where the researcher starts reading the data and highlights meaning units that allow for the emergence of codes through reflective writing. The second stage implies constructing themes by classifying, comparing, labeling, translating, defining, and describing the results obtained in stage one (see Table 3).

**Table 3**

*Thematic organization table*

| Participant's pseudonym | Code | Raw data/Excerpt | Theme | Literature |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student 1 | FG-S1-GR1 | *We all do translation every day in our class, in our lives.* | Perceptions about the meaning of translation. | Carreres, Muñoz-Calvo & Noriega-Sánchez (2017) |

The thematic organization table allowed to identify the participant from which data was obtained, the code assigned to both the participant and the data collection technique, the excerpt where the theme emerged, the classification, comparison and the relation of data and finally, the literature that could sustain the interpretation of it.

In the third stage, the researcher relates themes to established knowledge. This process is called *rectification.* In the last stage, a storyline is developed to present the analysis.

**3.10 Conclusion**

This chapter explained the methodological process in this research study. In the first section, the purpose of the study was discussed as well as the research question that this study aimed to answer and the objectives that guided its development. Then, the method, the techniques used to analyze the gathered data, and the translation-related activities were described along with the research site and the participants' profile. Finally, an overview of the data coding used to interpret the findings and the ethical considerations was provided. The next chapter discusses the data collected from the different techniques.

**Chapter four**

**Data analysis**

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings obtained from the data collection techniques. First, an analysis is provided concerning the teacher and students' perceptions about the translation-related activities. In the next section, the participants' opinion about using translation as an activity will be explored where, among others, they reflect on the meaning of translation and on the emotions generated while performing these activities. This chapter ends with a discussion about the pedagogical use of translation and its possible contributions in the students' learning process followed by a conclusion.

## 4.2 Perceptions about the translation-related activities

In the following subsections, several perspectives and experiences of the teacher and her students that originated from each of the five translation-related activities will be examined.

### 4.2.1 Lost in translation and Chinese whispers

For logistical reasons, the Likert scale questionnaire was applied for the first two activities together, therefore, the analysis includes the participants' perceptions of both. "Lost in translation" and "Chinese whispers" consisted of performing in a chain in written and spoken form respectively. "Lost in translation" follows a fold-over format, where the first learner translates a sentence provided by the teacher from Spanish into English, folds the paper, and passes it on to the next learner, who can only see the English version. This is then translated back into English, and passed on to the next student, and so on, and so forth. "Chinese whispers" is essentially developed the same way, only orally. This way, both activities include direct translation, or translating from the foreign language into the mother tongue, and reverse translation, which involves translating written and oral translation from students' native language into the target language (Talaván and Rodríguez-Arancón, 2015).

A notable and essential consideration for a successful translation was made by Group 2. Unlike the first group, these learners reflected on their context while performing the activities. The teacher observed the following:

*The second group did not use "hot" and when I asked them why, they said that in Mexico most of the sauces are spicy and one student even said that he used "salsa" instead of "sauce". (TD-GR2-CW)*

This shows students' awareness about the importance of considering the cultural background. In Duff's (1989) words, native language "shapes our way of thinking, and to some extent our use of the foreign language" (p. 6). An example of this can be seen in the students' choice of words and their reasoning about making those choices. Their reflection about the most suitable ways to translate challenges Malmkjaer's (1998) observation: "[translation] misleads students into thinking that expressions in two languages correspond one-to-one" (p. 6). This does not mean that learners do not resort to literal translation, rather that they begin to understand how the context plays a fundamental role in the translating process. Thus, when applied carefully, pedagogical translation can aid in promoting cultural awareness not only about the L2, but also the learners' L1.

After performing the activities "Lost in translation" and "Chinese whispers", students filled out a Likert scale questionnaire. The Y axis indicates a series of numbers within a range from 1 to 5, while the X axis denotes the possible perceptions that emerged from the implementation of these activities. The results from Group 1 are shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

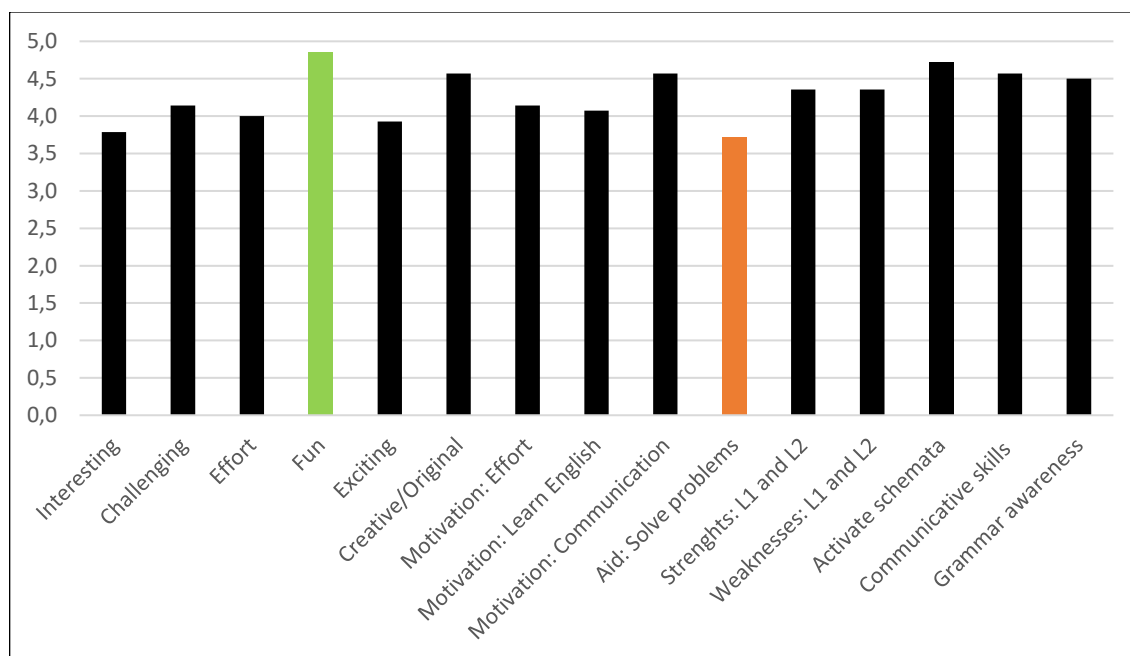*Group1: Students' perceptions about Lost in translation & Chinese whispers*



Figure 1 displays that the students gave the lowest score to the tenth statement of the questionnaire, which shows that most of them perceived that these activities did not provide them with the skills or competencies needed to solve problems outside the language classroom. In contrast, the highest score was given to a positive emotion since students considered that "Lost in translation" and "Chinese whispers" were fun activities. This means that the activities allowed the dynamics of the classroom to be positive enough to provide an environment where students may have felt comfortable with the performance of the activities. This perception was reinforced by statement from the teacher who recognized the following:

> *Both groups seemed to enjoy the activity. Therefore, I would use it again just that this time, I would divide the group into smaller groups so that I can see if there is a different outcome. (TD-GR1/GR2-LT)*

The positive reaction of the learners inspired the teacher to implement "Lost in translation" and "Chinese whispers" in future lessons as she is interested in exploring the impact of these activities by using different patterns of interaction.

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With reference to the perceptual data obtained from Group 2, it is interesting to see that the students' experiences with "Lost in translation" and "Chinese whispers" were mostly successful as they scored the activities above 3.5, as can be observed in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**

*Group 2: Students' perceptions about Lost in translation & Chinese whispers*
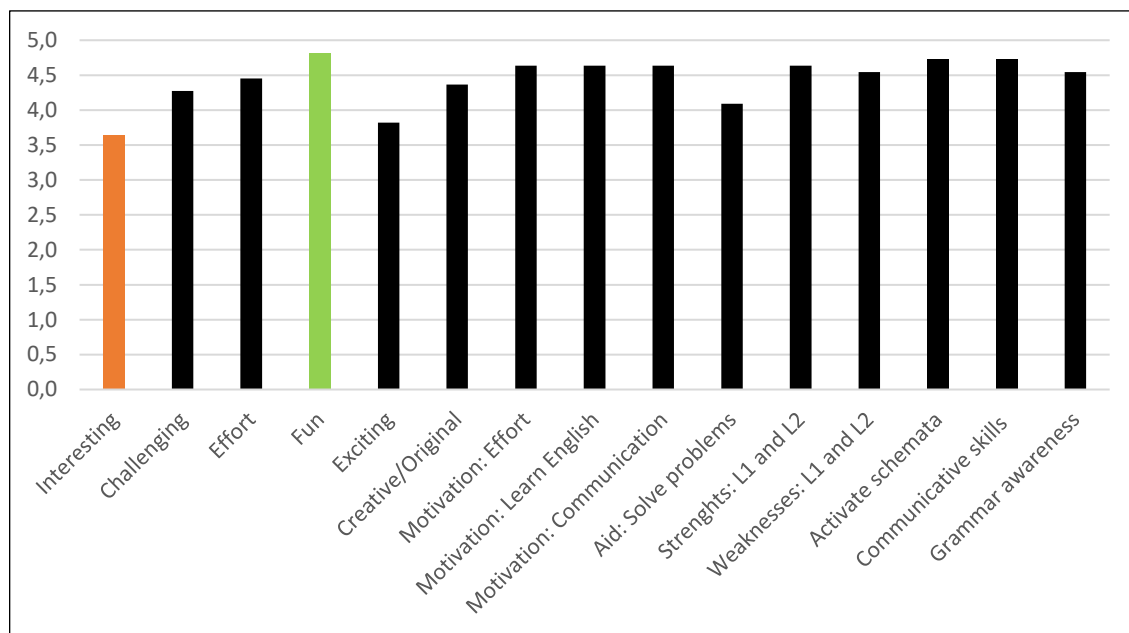


These findings suggest that some of the students perceived that the activities were not interesting to them. In other words, the content or topics of the activities were not related to the students' background concerning their interests or needs. Nevertheless, they still considered that these activities were fun as they gave the highest score to this feature. The fact that students perceived these activities as fun supports Duff's (1989) argument who rejects the belief that translation is a boring activity. Concerning the other categories, the results indicate that students struggled to distinguish between "interesting/fun/exciting" as the numerical difference between "fun" and "interesting/exciting" is significant. This apparent discrepancy could be worth exploring further in case of a replica study and will be contemplated in terms of the limitations of the current project.

As a final thought that mirrors what is presented in Figure 2, the teacher asserted the following:

*Some of my students that took 700 level [These students were at 800 level] with me last semester, told me that these types of activities would have been nice if I had implemented last semester. And I must say that after seeing them, I agree. (TD-GR2-CW)*

This entry provides evidence about the acceptance that these activities generated among the teacher and the students. Following their interest in exploring the effects of Chinese whispers at lower levels shows that they believe pedagogical translation can be beneficial at different stages of the language learning process. This perception is also shared by the teacher as she confirmed her interest in implementing these activities at previous levels after seeing the results obtained.

One of the findings described above was about the interest of the teacher to observe individual experiences of the students with reference to the implementation of translation-related activities. With the purpose of understanding some of the students' outcomes, the teacher asked them to share their experience:

*I also asked them why some of them took longer than others and two students said that they took longer because they were trying to use the right grammar tense, but they were also trying to understand the tense used in Spanish. (TD-GR1-LT)*

The excerpt demonstrates the students' metalinguistic awareness and their interest in analyzing the content of the activity from a grammatical perspective not only in the target language but also in their L1. The teacher further noted that this view was shared by both groups:

*I also asked them if grammar played a big role in these activities and they all agreed that it played a great role because they were trying to understand the tense. Some students mentioned that it was hard for them to choose the right word in English because the one used in Spanish. (TD-GR1-LT)*

Some students of Group 1 found that grammatical aspects of the two languages could become an obstacle to conveying meaning. They mentioned that the words used in Spanish made it difficult to select words in English that fitted into an accurate translation. However, "Lost in translation" made students analyze and comprehend grammatical features of the

Spanish language, whereas the strategy to convey meaning used by some in Group 2 was to focus on understanding the general idea of the message:

*I asked my students if grammar played a big role in this activity and they all agreed they focused more on the message than the grammar. (TD-GR2-LT)*

It appears that Group 2 gave priority to meaning over form, however in the results from the questionnaires (Figure 1 and Figure 2), both groups considered that these activities helped them to become aware of grammatical aspects of the language as they gave the same high score to this statement. The teacher did not provide information about which of the two groups were more successful in performing the activity, although the different strategies that the two groups used without having any experience in real translation are worthy of note (Klaudy, 1997, as cited in Vermes, 2010). As a concluding thought, Group 2 reflected on the importance that grammar has in learning a foreign language:

*I think grammar is really important because you can say many things thanks to it. Meaning is also important but how are you going to get the meaning if you don't get the form? (FG-GR2-S1)*

It is misleading to suggest that students prefer to learn grammar, however, this participant's statement shows that he considers that developing grammar in a proper way can help him to communicate in a foreign language. Having discussed the participants' perceptions of the first two activities, the following section will describe a more complex activity.

### 4.2.2 Mad libs®

The third activity that was implemented included a review of grammatical categories such as interjections, adverbs, nouns, and adjectives through a written dialogue that had to be performed orally after completing it. It was based on the "Mad lib®" design, a game where the players fill in blanks only described as a particular word category without further knowledge on the subject of the story that is co-written. The "Mad libs®" in this study consisted of two students asking for information in Spanish through prompting each other for parts of speech. The answers, a total of 20 items, were expected to be given in English, and could be considered direct translations or equivalences at a word level (Baker, 2018).

After this exchange, the students used the answers to complete a dialogue in English that ended in a roleplay between a thief and a detective. The objective was to evaluate the learners' knowledge about the parts of the speech and their accuracy in English.

According to the teacher, this activity was unknown to students and she was excited to implement it because it involved using an additional language besides Spanish and English in only one question of the worksheet:

*It turned out that they had never heard of Mad libs […] while I gave the instructions, I decided to do the first one with them which was the one about "Saludo en otro idioma". I chose "Hi" and I told them that my answer was not an option anymore, but they were more than welcome to use other languages. I did this because I know that most of my students are studying another language and that they have also been exposed to other "saludos", so I used the most common to make them think". (TD-GR1/GR2-ML)*

The teacher's knowledge about the students' profile generated a positive attitude in terms of the integration of other languages. Additionally, the teacher noticed that students felt confident at the beginning as they seemed to be having fun, however there was a change in their attitude. She reported the following in her diary:

*At the beginning I could tell that they thought it was just an activity for fun but as they began to do the first part, I could tell that they started to realize it was not just a fun activity. (TD-GR1/GR2-ML)*

From this statement it can be interpreted that students became aware of the complexity of the task. The teacher asked about their experience after performing "Mad libs®":

*One student from the second group told me that at first, when they saw that it [the activity] was in Spanish, she though that it was going to be easy and that she even told her class-mate that I probably wanted them to relax and have fun but after the third or fourth question, they both began to realize that they had to read the question more than once. (TD-GR2-ML)*

Perhaps the most relevant finding in the student's statement is that she felt relaxed after seeing that the exercise included words or phrases in their native language. It can be said that the use of the L1 in foreign language education help students to feel at ease, as proposed by

Atkinson (1987). However, as the student acknowledged, the use of the mother tongue did not mean that the learners were spoon-fed, thus, preventing them from developing high order thinking skills. The teacher also included the opinion of a student who was studying two additional languages beside English:

*Another student from the same group is studying French and Japanese as well and I could tell that he was comparing all the languages he knew. (TD-GR2-ML)*

This was an unexpected result, yet it is interesting to note that this activity served as a means to reflect on more than two languages suggesting that pedagogical translation may be used not only in an EFL classroom but also in a multilingual one. This finding coincides with Cummins's (2007) reflection who recognizes the potential use of translation in multilingual classrooms. In addition, Carreres et al., (2017) identify translation as a trigger to successful language education with plurilingual learners.

Another significant outcome is related to a student's self-evaluation about his linguistic knowledge. According to the teacher's diary:

*A student from the first group told me that he thought that he was good in grammar for both English and Spanish but with this activity he doubted himself and found that he needs to review both grammar and vocabulary in the two languages. (TD-GR1-ML)*

As indicated in the literature review and in agreement with Pavlenko (2014), automatic production of the L2 will be achieved only when students become aware about its structure. The excerpt above seems to confirm the advantage of implementing pedagogical translation and how it can help students to understand complex vocabulary or grammatical points of either language or contrast them. Additionally, as stated in the literature review of this thesis, pedagogical translation aids in noticing the gap between students' knowledge before and after a lesson.

Concerning the teacher's experience with "Mad libs®", she mentioned that this was one of her favorite activities for two reasons. First, she considered that this activity provided students with opportunities to raise their awareness of the features of two linguistic systems and identify their strengths and weaknesses in both languages:

*As a teacher I saw that with this activity most of the students at some point, became aware of their areas of opportunity because for both groups, I was asked to give examples or let them know if their answers were correct [...] I loved this activity because it shows that probably one of the reasons students are having such a hard time with grammar is because they are having trouble with it in their L1. (TD-GR1/GR2-ML)*

This assumption reveals that using pedagogical translation may help teachers to anticipate possible problems that can be an obstacle to understanding specific phrases or terms. It may also guide the teacher to take advantage of students' prior knowledge and look for suitable ways to integrate new knowledge more effectively. González-Davies (2004) recommends teachers to "select and adapt the procedures […] to his or her classroom setting" (p. 6). This would imply either designing new material or modifying already existing blueprints, such as the Mad Lib®, Chinese whispers or the fold-up story format, to incorporate translation elements, keeping in mind the class objectives and the learners' schemata.

The second reason is linked to the adaptability that pedagogical translation offers when incorporated into classes at different proficiency levels:

*I would definitely love to keep on using this activity in the future with my advanced levels. I think it would also be beneficial to intermediate groups because they are the ones that seem to use both languages the most, either because they are using it as a tool to communicate or as a tool to understand. (TD-GR1/GR2-ML)*

It could be argued that the teacher sees pedagogical translation as a means of mediation to balance the use of Spanish inside the classroom and give it a pedagogical use. However, it should be assessed that translation-related activities need to be in accordance with the students' background. Cook (2010) reinforces this assertion by mentioning that the arguments to implement translation in language teaching "apply to all type of learners in all types of contexts" (p. 129). This means that the use of translation may be a teaching resource from which students with different learning preferences can benefit. For example, teachers do not need to design translation-related activities from the beginning, instead there is a wide range of activities that can be adapted to include a translation element. One author that should be considered as a reference in the strategic use of translation is González-Davies (2004) whose proposal includes a series of interactive activities, tasks, and projects developed under

socioconstructivist principles where she shares ideas about taking advantage of pedagogical translation.

The results obtained from the Likert scale questionnaires shared in Figure 3 allow to see that, at least with the data from Group 1, all the participants' perceptions of the implementation of the activity are congruent.

**Figure 3**

*Group 1: Students' perceptions about "Mad libs®"*
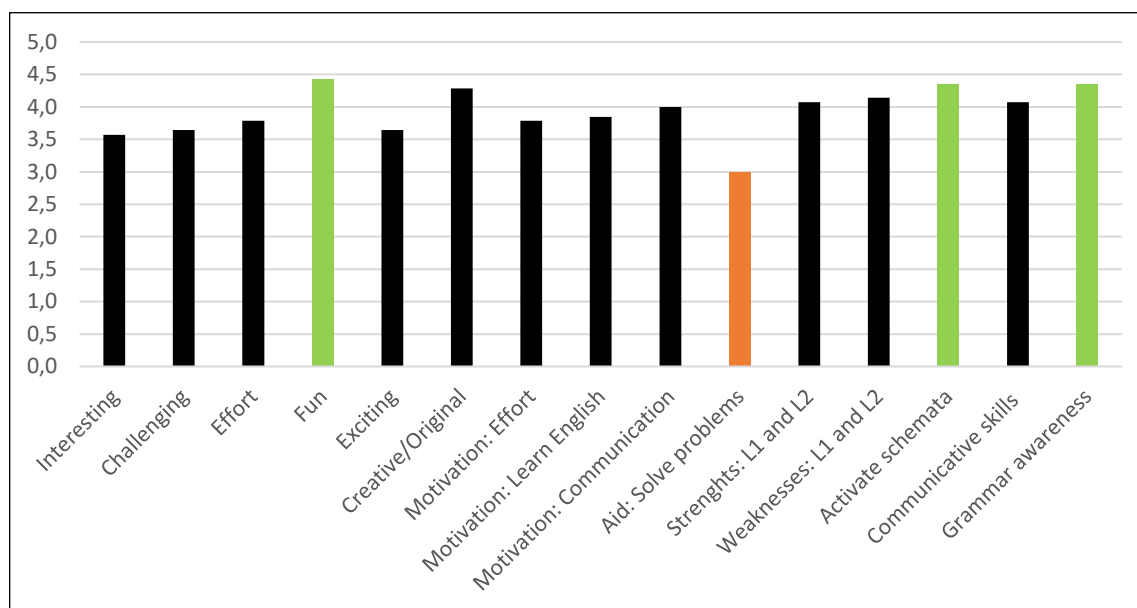


Most of the students considered that the activity was fun, helped them to activate their schemata, and to become conscious about grammatical features of the language. Information found in the teacher's diary complements these findings:

*They enjoy reading their dialogue to the rest of the group and we all laughed with their answers. (TD-GR1/GR2-ML)*

She also commented that one of the stages was more demanding than the rest:

*The first part of the activity was the most challenging because the students kept asking me to check their answers. (TD-GR1/GR2-ML)*

In contrast, Figure 4 shows that the majority of students in Group 2 found that "Mad libs®" was creative and original. This may be a consequence of the unfamiliarity with this type of activity.

**Figure 4**

*Group 2: Students' perceptions about "Mad libs®"*
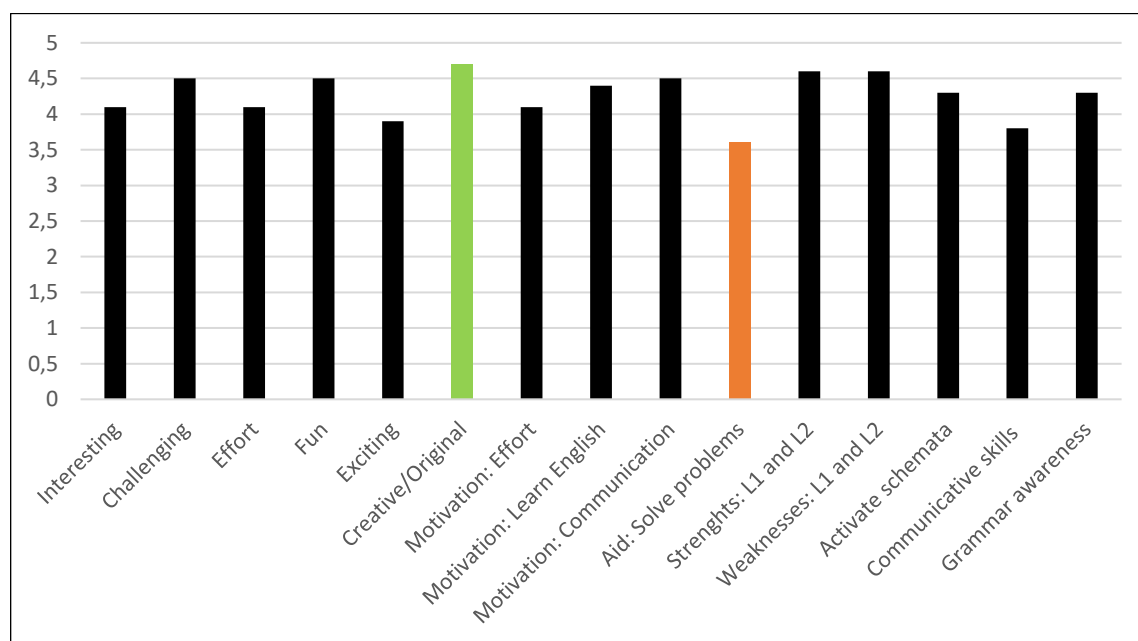


In contrast with the results of Group 1, Group 2 considered that "Mad Libs®" was not a resource that could help them to overcome linguistic problems outside the language classroom. Once again, Group 2 seemed to be more appreciative of the activity on the whole, with a slightly higher average in most categories. Problem solving still remained the lowest scoring aspect, however, based on the evidence, it is difficult to decide whether this is due to the activity design or the translation element, a factor considered further below.

### 4.2.3 False friends

The fourth activity provided the students with the opportunity to identify false cognates and explain why some words were not suitable to be used in a written text. In relation to this, the teacher remarked that the students did not succeed in identifying all the false cognates that were included in the text:

*Neither group got all the answers. I was surprised because I expected that at least one of the groups identified them all. (TD-GR1/GR2-FF)*

Following the implementation, the teacher asked the students about their experience and their results, which she wrote about in her diary:

*Some students expressed that it was not a hard activity, but it was a challenging one. Specially [sic] because they had to focus on the spelling and the meaning of unknown words. (TD-GR1/GR2-FF)*

In other words, some students were analyzing spelling differences between the false cognates and the words that fitted the context. As this activity was focused on developing vocabulary, it appears that it also allowed students to recognize that they may be using some words as false cognates in other sessions and their daily life, too. This information can be seen in two separate data fragments:

*One student also mentioned that with this activity she noticed that she is missing a lot of vocabulary. (TD-GR1/GR2-FF)*

*I feel that this activity did more than expected because the students were able to read something that reminded them of how they used to write which also gave them the opportunity to analyze and say "Oh! this word looks like this in Spanish". (TD-GR1/GR2-FF)*

This last entry indicates two points. First, students were able to reflect on their progress throughout the language courses which can be motivating to them as they noticed common mistakes that foreign language learners can make. Second, it seems that this activity can be a resource to contrast the two languages. These results are in accordance with Duff (1989) and Harvey (1996, as cited in Laviosa, 2014) who emphasize that translation can be beneficial to promote students' self-evaluation and to raise their awareness about the cross-linguistic influence between the L1 and the L2. Laviosa (2014) also argues that translation can serve as a self-evaluation tool with which learners can increase self-awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in both languages.

One item in the questionnaire was dedicated to exploring if students could appreciate the strengths and limitations of their L1 and the target language. As described in Chapter three, the organization of the questionnaire as well as the meaning of each item was explained to

the participants before the implementation. Figure 5 shows that "False friends" guided the students in the identification of linguistic weaknesses, in other words, use translation as a self-evaluation tool.

**Figure 5**

*Group 1: Students' perceptions about "False friends"*
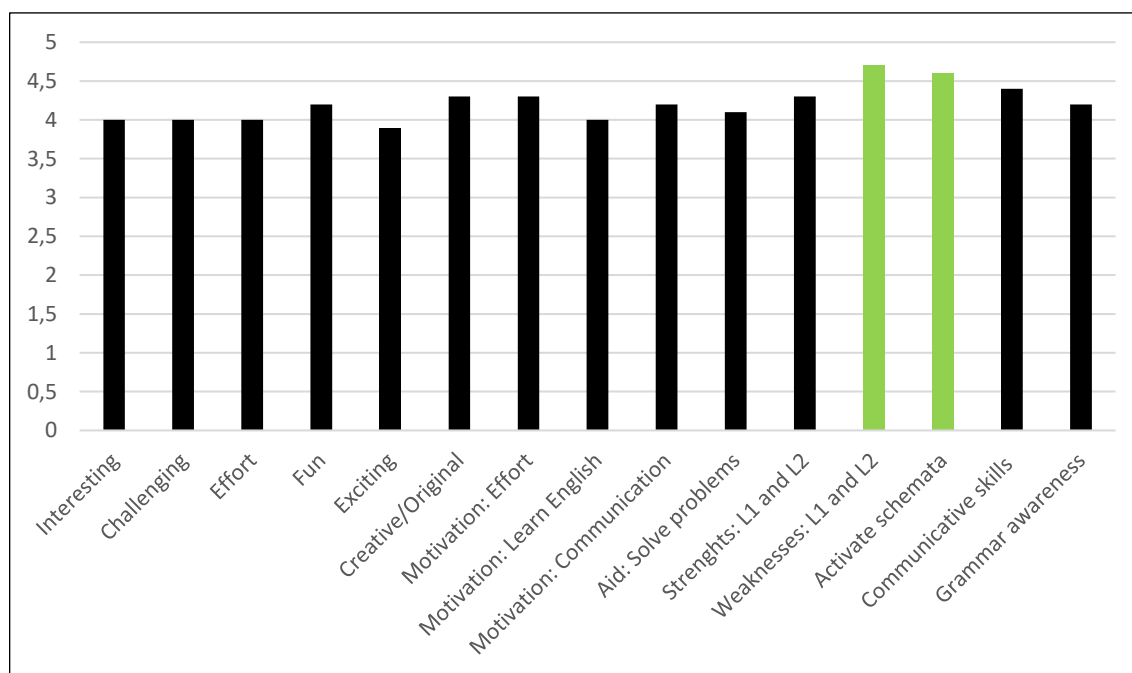


Figure 5 illustrates that Group 1 considered that the "False friends" activity was suitable to activate prior knowledge. This result contributes to what Castro Moreno (2015) asserts: "translation deals with two languages that interact and that are related to each other, because, at the time of learning a new language, there is always an undeniable connection with previous knowledge." (p. 12). Thus, resorting to the native language is a common strategy that second language learners use when looking for specific knowledge acquired during the learning process of the L2, thus, making learning meaningful.

**Figure 6**

*Group 2: Students' perceptions about "False friends"*
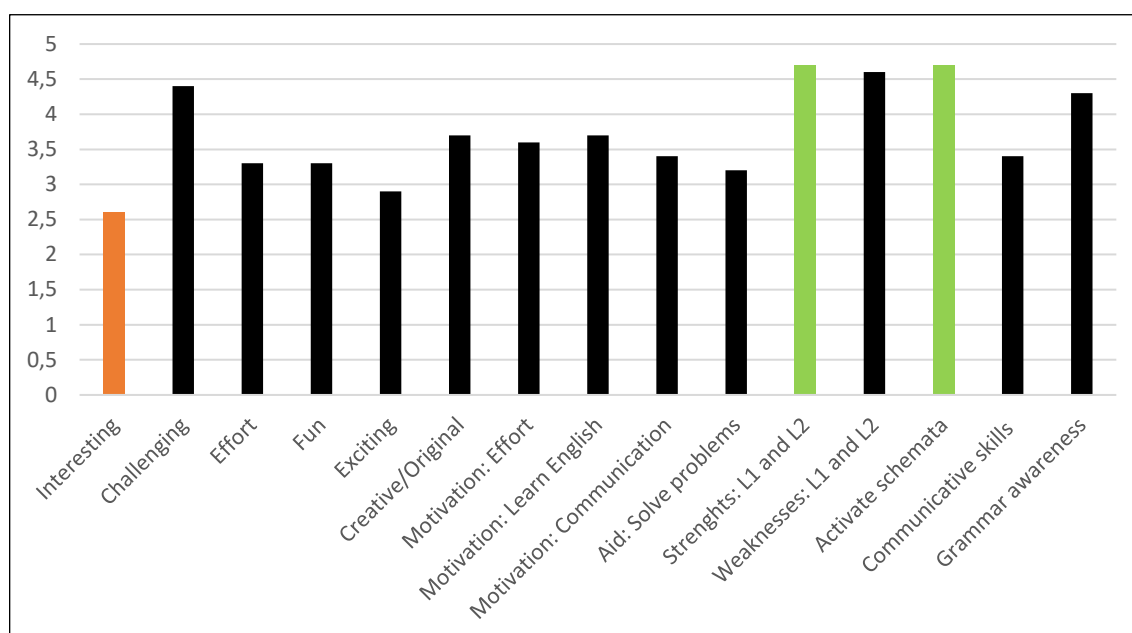


Figure 6 suggests that, in comparison with Group 1, "False friends" was an activity that aided Group 2 the most in exploring their strengths in the knowledge of both languages. Moreover, working with false cognates also increased their ability to reflect on vocabulary they had already acquired. In contrast, the figure above makes it evident that several participants did not find the activity interesting since this item was scored with an average of 2.6.

This appears to somewhat contradict the students' reaction to the activity at the time of its implementation according to the teacher's records:

*A student from the second group, told me that he found the activity entertaining. (TD-GR2-FF)*

There is no doubt that the fact that some students enjoyed performing pedagogical translation confirms the facilitative role of translation in EFL. Similar findings were presented by Fernández Guerra (2014) who reported that students enjoyed performing translation-related tasks and even found them entertaining, an aspect that continues to be addressed in the following section.

### *4.2.4 At the restaurant*

The last activity was different from the previous ones as it included a roleplay where students could develop "pre-interpreting skills" (González-Davies, 2004, p. 157), that may include "summarizing, fast decision-making and mental agility" (p. 22), "listening comprehension and guessing through context" (p. 159) or "memorization and speed translation" (p. 170), which could all be considered as higher level thinking skills. The activity consisted of performing a roleplay between a waiter/waitress, a customer, and her/his interpreter who followed a semi-controlled dialogue. The students practiced both receptive and productive oral skills while working with direct and reverse translation.

According to the teacher and the students, this activity was useful to incorporate authentic use of the language inside the classroom where translation became a "real life communication activity" (Popovic, 2001, p. 1). After implementation, the teacher reported that some students from the two groups had experienced a similar situation in which they had to translate for other people outside the language classroom.

*I asked them if they have ever done something like this and, in both groups, I had a couple of students that answered yes to that question. (TD-GR1/GR2-ATR)*

This seems to suggest that this is a situation that can arise outside the classroom, and that there are different environments where translation learner may encounter translation. Thus, teaching translation does not need to be limited "for training translators" (Malmkjaer, 1998, p. 6), as it is commonly assumed. In this regard, a student expressed the following:

*I think the activity [At the restaurant] was useful. I work at a hotel, so I talk to foreign people almost every day and it helps me because they ask us to translate for them and it is pretty hard if you don't do it often. (FG-GR1-S2)*

Therefore, it cannot be considered that translation should be restricted to professional translators or that implementing pedagogical translation means a considerable amount of effort, or in Duff's (1989) words: "time-consuming or wasteful" (p. 5). The fragment also gives an insight into the different reasons and needs that students have about learning a foreign language and how the teacher can foster language learning by being aware of her students' motivation. Bilingual students can also benefit from this type of exercises since,

according to the teacher, a student realized that interpreting for others may be a common activity in real contexts.

It is important to mention that "At the restaurant" was one of the teacher's favorite activities:

*I have to admit that this is one of my favorite activities because it served its purpose and maybe more than expected. I think that using this activity at this level was very enlightening and I wonder what effect it would have in intermediate groups. (TD-GR1/GR2-ATR)*

Not only did the teacher express her preference for this activity, but it also seems that the results that she obtained from it were encouraging for both herself and her students. By stating that it "served its purpose" she may refer to the general objectives of the course at the language center that follows a CLT approach. Thus, the success of this particular activity also challenges the prevailing assumptions that translation does not suit this teaching method (Pym & Ayvazyan, 2017). Therefore, it is not surprising that it would function well in a task that is based on such a setting.

Although the teacher did not reveal information about the students' perceptions that emerged from the implementation of this activity, she mentioned, just as she asserted in other activities, that she would like to apply it at different language levels.

The reactions of Group 1 can be seen in Figure 7, suggesting that they had a positive experience and they believed that that "At the restaurant" was "fun."

**Figure 7**

*Group 1: Students' perceptions about "At the restaurant"*
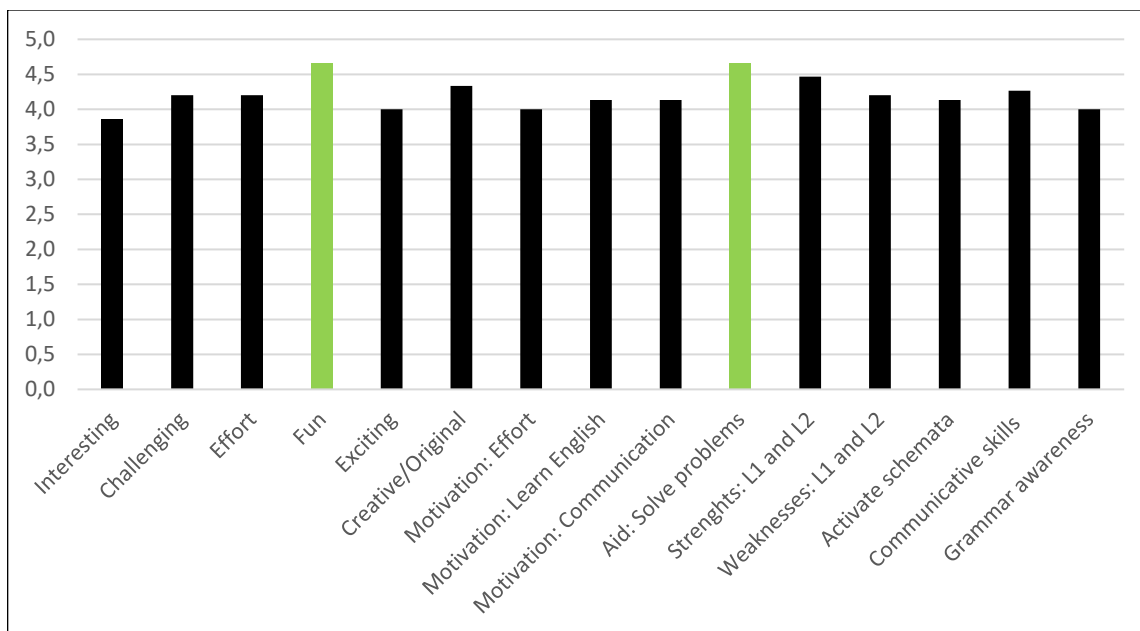


The most significant result is that Group 1 regarded the activity useful in real life situations, with a high score in the category of solving problems outside the language classroom.

Similarly, Group 2 agreed that it was a creative and original activity. Even though some students considered that it was somewhat stressful, they enjoyed it. Evidence of this can also be seen in Figure 8, as the statement related to "fun," shows the highest score.

**Figure 8**

*Group 2: Students' perceptions about "At the restaurant"*
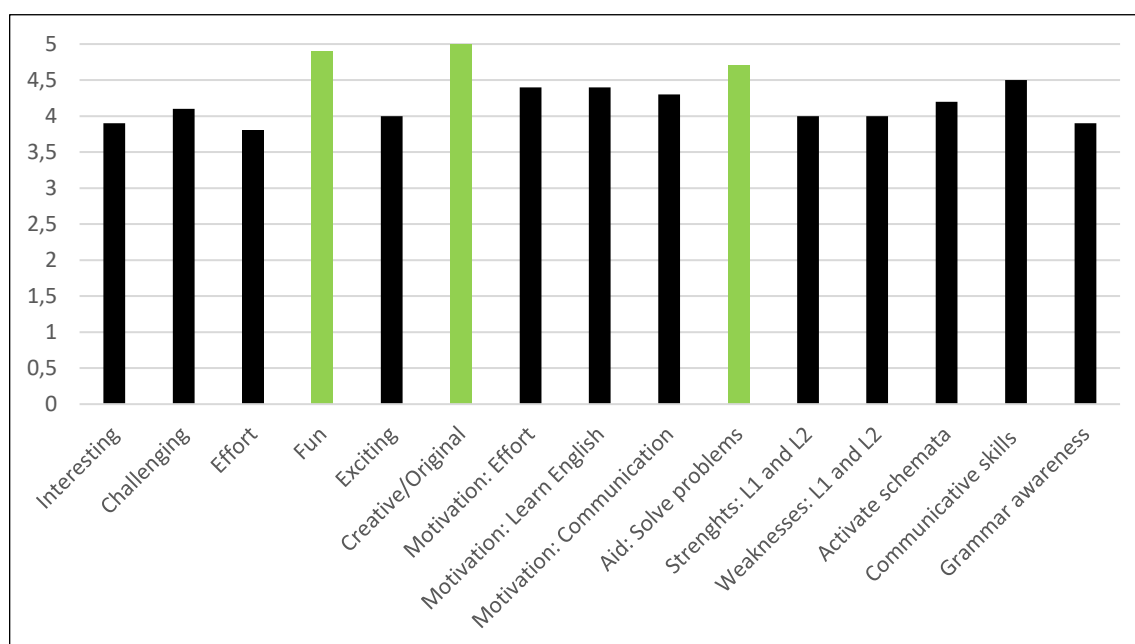


This activity provides an insight into the adaptability of different designs to pedagogical translation and how a series of activities can be adjusted by using this component. In this respect, studies about the pedagogical uses of interpreting (Rido, 2011) as well as audiovisual Alonso-Pérez & Sánchez-Requena, 2018; Lertola, 2019) have been researched to explore their benefits in SLA.

On a final note, it is worth mentioning that useful or entertaining does not necessarily equal easy. In the following excerpt the teacher remarked on the emotional ambiguity generated by this particular task:

*One of my students that is studying LEES program (BA in Teaching Spanish as a Second Language) said that this activity was nice and cruel at the same time because this activity was something that is likely to happen but at the moment it is frustrating. (TD-GR2-ATR)*

Judging by the comment, this was the activity that seemed most relatable with real-life settings. At the same time, it was also proof of the cognitive complexities that translation, or interpreting, entail. This apparent dichotomy leads to the discussion of the participants' perception about translation as an activity, detailed in the next section.

## 4.3 Perceptions about translation as an activity

One of the main arguments of this thesis is that translation is a naturally occurring phenomenon as suggested by Duff (1989), Thierry and Wu (2007), and D'Amore (2015). Therefore, the last section of the questionnaire was designed to explore students' awareness about the translation component of the activities. Their definition of translation, their understanding of its complexity, and the emotions it generated are addressed in the following subsections.

### *4.3.1 Students' awareness about the use of translation*

As it was mentioned before, after each translation-related activity, the participants were asked to evaluate it and reflect about its use. Thus, they were asked to answer the following question: Did you realize that you performed a translation-related activity?

In Table 1, the answers to this question were summarized and displayed as follows:

**Table 1**

*Results obtained from Likert scale questionnaires*

| Translation-related activity | GR1 | | GR2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Lost in translation & Chinese whispers | 100% | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Mad libs® | 79% | 21% | 90% | 10% |
| False friends | 88% | 12% | 0% | 100% |
| At the restaurant | 100% | 0% | 60% | 40% |

*Note*. The number of respondents varied across the sessions, depending on the students present.

The previous table shows that all students from Group 1 and Group 2 were aware that "Lost in translation" and "Chinese whispers" included the use of translation. This was the only case in which both groups provided the same results. In relation to Group 1, after carrying out "Mad libs®", 21% of the students did not notice that they were using translation to complete this activity. Whereas in Group 2, 10% was not aware that s/he was performing a translation-based activity.

Looking at the results that emerged from the implementation of "False friends", it is noteworthy to highlight that contrary to Group 1 where the 88% of the participants realized that it contained elements of translation, none of the respondents from Group 2 believed that they were performing a translation-based activity. This result does not come as a surprise since the use of translation was not as explicit as in the other four activities. It is also worth observing that this was the activity Group 2 found the least interesting. Naturally, a direct correlation cannot be established based on such a small sample size, however, this is an area may be worth exploring in future research.

With respect to "At the restaurant," students were expected to notice that they needed to translate to complete the activity. Group 1 confirmed this expectation, unlike Group 2, where nearly half of the respondents did not consider they were translating. This difference can be explained if it is regarded that not all of them had the chance to become the interpreters in the roleplay. Alternatively, it may be due to the fact that, in their eyes, translation refers to the transfer of written text rather than spoken words.

In sum, these outcomes indicate that the translation component does not necessarily have to be explicit in the activities used. This would appeal to the natural character of this cognitive process, as proposed by the authors mentioned above (D'Amore, 2015, Duff, 1989, Thierry & Wu, 2007). On the other hand, awareness of its presence in the teaching material could facilitate the development of this fifth skill, a notion that will be detailed in the following subsection. Thus, the judicious incorporation of pedagogical translation can contribute to a better understanding of its different manifestations and applications which are not restricted to translating decontextualized chunks of text to evaluate grammar features exclusively.

### 4.3.2 The meaning of translation

One of the most striking results of the focus group interview conducted with Group 2, was a conversation about what translation entails. In the excerpt below, one of the participants construed translation as an every-day activity:

*We all do translation every day: In our class, in our lives because we watch series, movies, we read some texts in our schools. Also, for my area where I live because we have to deal with foreign people. (FG-GR2-S1)*

Here the respondent considers that translation is a process where he decodes L2 input inside and outside the classroom. He mentions that he uses translation to engage in everyday actions such as hobbies or classroom tasks. It also appears that he uses translation to communicate with foreign people in his own context.

However, another participant disagreed with him by asserting the following:

*I think there is a misunderstanding because translation is when we are doing it explicitly but when you are listening to music, more than translating you are understanding what others are saying. If you were constantly translating that would be very hard for you, it wouldn't be that easy. Translating might be something that you do for fun maybe when you are listening to a song and you say oh maybe in Spanish the lyrics will be like this or like that. (FG-GR2-S3)*

Three aspects arise from this excerpt. First, he makes a distinction between translating and understanding as he does not consider that they are related to each other. By doing so, he apparently ignores the fact that understanding may involve translating (Cook, 2010; Pavlenko, 2014), or that the first stage of translation is understanding (House, 2018). Second, he argues that translation cannot be performed at all times as it could become an obstacle to conveying meaning due to a significant cognitive load that impedes fluency. This would be a somewhat simplified view of translation and language learning, one that has been critiqued by Kiraly (1995), Malmkjaer (1998), Colina (2002) or González-Davies (2018), who argue that teaching translators a second language or teaching a second language to translators are not mutually exclusive, rather complementary activities. Third, he is aware that translation is a helpful resource to understand the meaning of words or phrases in a given language, which reflects a more traditional approach in terms of second language teaching methods. Finally, it is relevant to note that, to this student, translation involves a conscious decision, a perspective that is unaware of the cognitive understanding of this phenomenon (D'Amore, 2015, Duff, 1989, Thierry & Wu, 2007).

The last contribution to this discussion came from a student who conceptualized translation in the same way as certain scholars (Carreres et al., 2017; Colina & Lafford, 2018; Malakoff, 1992; Naimushin, 2002). The student asserted the following:

*I consider translation as a skill. It is equally important to reading or writing. (FG-GR2-S7)*

The fact that she perceives translation as an additional skill to reading, writing, listening, and speaking, may shed light on its importance to successful language learning. This statement echoes Leonardi's (2011) analysis of translation where she affirms that if it is "employed as the fifth skill along with reading, writing, listening and speaking then it could help learners develop and further strengthen their linguistic, cultural and communicative competences in a foreign language" (p. 2). This new focus of pedagogical translation may contribute to certain reconsiderations in terms of successful second language education.

The data presented in this subsection provided information about how students conceive translation. In the excerpts above, it can be observed that they analyzed the meaning of the concept based on their unique experiences with the language learning process. In addition, one participant shared her perception of translation as the fifth skill the way, according to Carreres et al., (2017), it has been recognized as an essential component in plurilingual education. However, the inclusion of translation in the language classroom does not guarantee a straightforward implementation, as reviewed in the following section.

### 4.3.3 The complexity of translation

During the performance of the activities, learners faced obstacles that they needed to overcome. Only one student in the focus group interview considered that, in general terms, he expected the translation-related activities to be more challenging:

*I think the level used in these activities was very basic. (FG-GR2-S1)*

In contrast, some participants reported difficulties, for example, this respondent from Group 1 expressed that an issue he had to resolve was that literal translation was not an option in all cases.

*Sometimes you can translate literally the phrases. But if you translate literally all the phrases in the other language, they don't have sense sometimes. That's the difficult part of it. (FG-GR1-S1)*

He seems to argue that a full understanding of the spoken or written text and knowledge about the two language systems was necessary to complete such tasks.

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Another student from the same group referred to a specific translation-related activity and revealed the following:

*I think that people that translate songs, for example, need some background of both languages because is not the same to translate phrasal verbs in English or in Spanish. Especially because of the context. (FG-GR1-S2)*

This participant acknowledges that phrasal verbs are difficult to transfer from one language to another, a statement that does not come as a surprise since this type of lexical items are a complex topic for many EFL learners at any level.

Perhaps the most revealing account was shared by the teacher who practically narrated the series of problems Group 1 had to overcome to complete "Lost in translation." She reported having some initial difficulties with these students who, first, struggled to understand and follow instructions:

*I found strange that the first student that I explained the instructions did not follow them correctly. I even explained it to the whole class and then I explained it again to the student […] but the whole class was able to carry out the activity with the exception that they were supposed to fold it [the sheet of paper] but that did not affect the real purpose of this activity. (TD-GR1-LT)*

She further asserted that this misunderstanding did not interfere with the development and results of the activity. Due to the different number of students in Group 1 and in Group 2, the outcomes varied, and one group with an odd number of students finished with a Spanish version, while the other group, with an even number of students, concluded with an English one. Thus, the last translation from the first group was the following:

*Si tu fumas, probablemente tu vida podría terminar antes si debes tenerla (TD-GR1-LT)*

whereas the final product of the second group was

*Smoking statistics say that can finish with our live 15% more learn (TD-GR2-LT).*

The comparison of the results from the two groups suggest that Group 2 exhibited more problems in the translation process since their product seems to lack coherence. It is not unexpected to find omissions or the addition of words throughout the development of this

activity, however, it is important to highlight the decision-making carried out by the students when performing translation. For example, the use of words such as finish (instead of "ends") indicates that students from Group 2 leaned towards the use of literal translation rather than looking for a dynamic equivalent, as explained in Chapter 2.

With reference to the completion of "Chinese whispers", the teacher wrote in her reflective diary that the translations provided by Group 1 were once again more accurate than those of the Group 2:

*For this activity, the first group got most of the sentences similar to the ones I gave them unlike the second group. (TD-GR1/GR2-CW)*

Beyond this straightforward observation, the teacher also identified that some students' execution of the first and second activity was similar:

*I noticed that the same people from last week that took a little longer to pass the sheet, also took a little longer to think before they told their classmate the sentence in the language that they had to translate into. (TD-GR1-CW)*

From this excerpt, it can be observed that some students struggled more than their classmates to perform these two activities. This implies that the teacher was not only aware of the overall result of both of her groups, but she also made an evaluation at an individual level. It does not come as a surprise that translation is complex and may generate difficulties Malmkjaer (1998) accurately explains that "translation has come to be seen, increasingly, as a complex process involving a variety of behaviours and skills. These behaviours, skills and cognitive components are brought into operation in a text-production process" (p. 7). This recognition of translation as more than a simple interaction between two languages is necessary to understand the students' learning process. Furthermore, it indicates that this finding may not be restricted to the performance of translation-related activities, as can be noted from the next diary fragment, where the teacher acknowledged that translating takes time and a considerable amount of effort:

*And I try to defend my student by saying that the percentage was not the only thing missing and that they should keep in mind that they only had 1 minute to read, process and translate, which is hard. (TD-GR1-LT)*

The last line of this passage also reveals that the teacher believes that translation is demanding and a complex activity, which may generate feelings of frustration, a topic discussed in the next section.

### *4.3.4 Emotions generated by the activities*

As seen in the analysis of the "Mad Libs®," from the teacher's diary it was possible to note that some activities fostered fun, or motivation, while, in other cases, the activities generated anxiety. For example, she pointed out that at the beginning "Chinese whispers" might have made Group 1 feel uneasy:

*I noticed that as they were waiting for their turn to hear the sentence, they all got nervous. The first group told me that it was because now they were not going to be able to analyze what they were going to be telling their classmate like they did with Lost in translation. (TD-GR1-CW)*

Unsurprisingly, oral translation made students to experience a feeling of unease while performing "Chinese whispers". However, it is relevant to mention that the objective of this activity was not to measure their fluency in speaking, rather the accuracy of the message. In this regard, it is worth recalling that translation aids the development of three qualities that are important in language learning: "accuracy, clarity and flexibility" (Duff, 1989, p. 7). Activities such as "Chinese whispers" provide an opportunity to explore how to promote one or all of these three qualities.

Despite the learners' nervousness, the teacher indicates that they were interested in continuing with "Chinese whispers":

*I was only going to do one or two [phrases] but my students asked me to do more. I was able to use the three phrases that I was given plus another one that I found on the internet. (TD-GR1-CW)*

The teacher revealed that she did not expect a request for more phrases. This indicates that, according to the teacher, the students were able to overcome nervousness and showed a desire to continue.

During the interviews, some students also commented on how they felt about these activities. One participant recalled:

I think the activities are motivating because these kinds of activities challenge our thoughts and minds and is not the same being challenged by these activities than just reading or listening. (FG-GR1-S1)

In this fragment the participant expresses how he felt motivated by the challenge and differentiates these activities from the ones that focus on developing a specific skill. In contrast, translation, by definition, involves a receptive and a productive skill, and, therefore, is a more complex cognitive pursuit.

In the next statement, another respondent described what posed the challenges:

*I think they were challenging because the general activity was easy but finding the right words were not easy. But you can see your level of English, you can feel motivated when you find the right words and then you realize that your English is not that bad. (FG-GR2-S4)*

It is interesting to note that to this participant not only found translation challenging, but he also asserted that they were a suitable option for self-assessment, which reinforced positive feelings when he became aware about his proficiency in the L2.

These positive comments concerning motivation corroborate the Likert scale results that confirm a generally high score on all three motivational aspects, including to what extent the activity motivated the participants to make an effort, to continue learning English and to communicate in the L2 outside the language classroom. Only two instances showed a slight diversion of this average, in Group 1 regarding "Mad Libs®" and in Group 2 regarding "False Friends" where the respondents were a little closer to the "neutral" than the "agree" value on the 1-to-5 scale on average.

This seems to indicate that the activities, on the whole, generated a positive response, which would support the argument for using pedagogical translation in the L2 classroom. The participants' perceptions of this topic are detailed in the following section.

## 4.4 Perceptions about translation in the language classroom and its pedagogical use

The analysis of the data collected from the participants allowed the identification of three main subthemes. The first one is about the direction in which the students preferred to translate, in the second one, the respondents provided a reasoning about the interaction of the

L1 and L2 in the learning process. The las subtheme includes their views about how translation contributes to their language education.

### 4.4.1 Directionality of translation

In 2020, the Interinstitutional Committee for Translation and Interpretation provided a definition of translator and interpreter profile with a preference for working into one's native language. As Zanesco (2016) comments, "Their argumentations are based on the assumption that the knowledge of a second language is always inferior to that of a native one, and a lessened linguistic competence invariably leads to inaccurate translations" (p. 63). This still prevailing official requirement seems to contradict current practices among professional translators, almost half of whom admits to producing texts in both directions (Piróth, 2014).

In terms of using translation for pedagogical purposes in the L2 classroom, translating into the L1 could easily be believed to be counterintuitive, provided the learners only practice receptive skills, leaving the productive skills aside. Therefore, translating into the L2 should also be encouraged. The purpose of the question: Was it easier to translate from Spanish to English or from English to Spanish? was to explore the language which the participants found easier to translate from and into, regardless of their actual performance. The results of Group 1 and Group 2 with reference to their answers are condensed in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Results obtained from Likert scale questionnaires*

| Translation-related activity | GR1 | | GR2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | S-E | E-S | S-E | E-S |
| Lost in translation & Chinese whispers | 3 | 11 | 4 | 7 |
| Mad libs® | 8 | 6 | 1 | 9 |
| False friends | 1 | 7 | 9 | 0 |
| At the restaurant | 5 | 10 | 9 | 1 |

The results provided in Table 2 show that the two groups had very different perceptions about the direction. An overwhelming majority of Group 1 found easier to translate from the target language into their L1 after performing "Lost in translation" and "Chinese whispers,"

while in Group 2 the values diverged less. Concerning "Mad libs®", Group 1 believed that it was easier to translate from Spanish to English, whereas almost all of the second group had an opposing perspective. "False friends" also generated opposing views among the two groups, and the results were notably different. Seven participants in Group 1 expressed that it was easier to translate from English into Spanish and one from Spanish to English. In contrast, all the participants from the second group chose translating from Spanish to English. In the last activity, the results once again were reverse between the two groups. According to the figures, to Group 1 it was easier to translate from English into Spanish, which was not the case of the second group, as they found it more difficult.

Given that the numerical results do not provide conclusive evidence, an analysis of the qualitative comments in the focus interviews may shed light on the participants' opinions. The reasons for their perceptions may be varied but two could be highlighted in received particular. The first one is related to the different options that Spanish language offers to convey meaning in the students' experience.

For example, one participant remarked that Spanish was a productive language, and for this precise reason, he preferred to translate from the L2 to the L1.

*It is easier to translate from English to Spanish because in Spanish we have so many expressions and so many tenses that sometimes it is harder to translate from Spanish into English because we mix times, words, expressions. (FG-GR2-S1)*

This excerpts clearly displays the student's understanding of his limitations in the L2 compared to his L1, which appears to be the reason for his preference for translating into has native language.

Another participant from the same group commented on the abundance of his mother tongue.

*In Spanish we know many grammatical ways of saying something and in English they are simpler. Spanish is a very rich language. (FG-GR2-S3)*

It appears that to this participant, the complexity of Spanish allows him to communicate in a variety of ways, although he does not specify his preference for either direction. In other words, he considers that his L1 is wealthier in terms of linguistic expression. It is interesting

to note as well, that by saying so, he might have given a higher status to Spanish language, which probably owes to his lower proficiency in his L2.

Another important finding was that students do not always prefer translating from English into Spanish, as one may assume (Zanesco, 2016). In Group 1, two participants expressed their opinion.

*In my case it is very difficult to translate into Spanish (FG-GR1-S6).*

*For example, in Spanish sometimes we don't use the words correctly [...] translating is difficult because if we need to pass a message, we need to use the right word and that's the challenge. (FG-GR1-S5)*

Both statements reveal that students face an obstacle when they need to translate into Spanish. One of the reasons may be that, according to the second excerpt, the participant considered that sometimes that lack of metalinguistic awareness in his L1 could impede translating from the L2 to the L1. Moreover, he believed that the knowledge about the L1 needs to be enriched in order to avoid miscommunication.

So far, the responses relate more to the participants' linguistic competence rather than their translation performance. Although some were more specific about the transfer of lexical items they found challenging, such as *vocabulary (FG-GR2-S1)*, *phrasal verbs (FG-GR2-S3)*, and *cognates (FG-GR2-S5)*, as Zansco (2016) warns, "a distinction must be drawn between language and translation competence" (p. 7). Nevertheless, one student reflected on both languages and the importance of choosing the most suitable words to preserve the idea from the source text.

*I think it is different [translating from and into the L1] because the form of the sentence and you need to change it because if you don't do that you can lose the sense [meaning] of the sentence. (FG-GR1-S2)*

This contribution was the most explicit in terms of translation direction, which indicates that language learners may not have metacognitive awareness of translation as a phenomenon, and neither should they. It should be emphasized that the purpose of pedagogical translation is not to educate translators, rather, to help L2 learners with their acquisition process. The fact that students recognize the interplay of form and meaning at all,

opens the possibility to consider pedagogical translation as a guide to take students beyond the one-to-one correspondence and develop a fifth skill.

### 4.4.2 Thinking in two languages

The results so far have shown that some students believe that thinking in English is evidence of their high proficiency in the target language. To some of them, it should be natural and do not feel under pressure when they are asked to think in English:

*I don't get worry [*sic*]. I try to think in English. (FG-GR2-S2)*

However, this constraint imposed by the CLT approach supposedly used in the research context generates negative feelings. The next fragment reveals that insufficient lexicon often poses a problem, accompanied by a feeling of anxiety that impedes becoming fluent in the language:

*In my case I think that sometimes I feel nervous because I know that I need more vocabulary to speak in English and sometimes when I participate, I have conflicts to talk about something because I lose words that are important in the sentence. (FG-GR1-S12)*

As mentioned in the previous section, the greatest concern for learners seems to be vocabulary, or rather, the lack of it. It appears that the participant intends to find words and expressions, probably direct equivalents of what he would try to say in his L1, and not being able to find them makes him nervous.

This feeling was shared by another respondent.

*I think it is hard and sometimes I feel scared, but most people try to translate in their minds, but they get lost in the conversation. So, it gets impossible to establish a channel with someone and I think it is a habit that we must get by practicing. (FG-GR1-S8)*

This statement shows that the student is not comfortable when he is required to think in the L2. According to Auerbach (1993), this anxiety could be reduced by accepting that internal translation could benefit the learning process (Hurtado Albir, 1988; Pym et al., 2013). However, the participant also observes that a lot of learners overuse translation, and this may be an obstacle to achieving meaningful communication. Finally, he ends on a positive note by stating that thinking in the L2 can be developed gradually.

A similar complaint was expressed by another respondent who explained that one obstacle that did not allow him to think in the target language was that he tended to center his attention on isolated words rather the general meaning of an utterance.

*I think that one of the most important problems is that we sometimes focus on the words and not in the meaning of the sentence, so we are searching words but sometimes you don't find the right ones. (FG-GR1-S11)*

Once again, the respondent seems to be preoccupied by finding the exact term, only concentrating on word level equivalent.

A possible solution was presented by a classmate, who reflected on the steps he followed when formulating an utterance in the target language.

*No, in my case when I'm asked a question I think in my opinion and next try to order the sentence and next I try to talk and give my opinion. But I think that I first try to understand the context. (FG-GR1-S12)*

To begin with, he thinks about the context and what he is going to say, then he structures the sentence and finally, produces it. This process indicates that the student responses are not spontaneous and may involve some form of internal translation. More significantly, he realizes that language should not be produced at a morpho-syntactic level, but pragmatics and discourse should also be taken into account. Perhaps Baker's multilevel organization of translation could help to draw the learners' attention to these issues so that they would overcome their fear of not finding the perfect lexical item.

This progression could eventually lead to higher proficiency, as expressed in a surprising statement by one of the participants. He explained that translation helped him to think in the L2, especially when he translated from Spanish into English:

*I consider that translation is useful because that pushes you to start thinking in English. For example, when we translate from S-E, we quit thinking in Spanish, and we start thinking in English. (FG-GR2-S2)*

This perception challenges the argument that translation "prevents students from thinking in the foreign language" (Malmkjaer, 1998, p. 6). This is exactly the reason why indirect

translation into the L2 could contribute to successful learning, through its judicious use for pedagogical purposes. At what level this can be implemented will be examined in the next section.

### 4.4.3 The usefulness of translation

In this subsection, participants' perceptions about the role of pedagogical translation as a learning resource and its impact on their foreign language learning will be analyzed.

Contemplating the purpose of these activities, a student reflected on the usefulness of translation as an aid in a foreign country:

*It will be helpful if we are in another country as well, if we want to travel. I mean, we do translation every time we are speaking English, every time that we are listening to English because we have to process what people are saying. Maybe not exactly the same but we tend to look for the most important things. I think that the purposes of these activities is to increase our ability to translate. (FG-GR2-S1)*

In this fragment, he considers that translation can be a guide to help him to select relevant information and to understand the overall meaning of a message instead of isolated phrases or words. Unconsciously, he also realizes that translation is a cognitive process that occurs naturally, as proposed by Duff (1989), Thierry and Wu (2007), and D'Amore (2015).

Similar to the excerpt above, the next participant also based his opinion on a personal interest. He highlighted the importance of translation by commenting on its relationship with learning English for academic purposes:

*I think that translating is very important for our careers [University degree] because there are some words that are important to my career to do essays. You need to be capable of translating for our careers [University degree] but also when you are watching a tv series. (FG-GR2-S4)*

Following on from understanding translation as an everyday activity, this respondent asserts that it is essential to complete tasks at the university, without restricting its use to translation education.

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In this regard, another participant noted that she found translation when encountering unknown words:

*In a traditional conversation we could get the general idea but when reading a book, we need to translate words. (FG-GR2-S6)*

According to her, translation is useful to understand unknown words in a written text, unlike spoken language, where comprehending the general meaning is enough to communicate with others.

Another benefit that resulted from the implementation of these activities was that students believed that it helped them to remember vocabulary through looking for words to suit the translation. The next excerpts relate the usefulness of pedagogical translation in developing vocabulary and metalinguistic awareness. For example, a participant from Group 1 asserted that translation is a resource to review knowledge acquired in previous lessons:

*You have to scratch in your mind and look for words and vocabulary and try to be as close as the original meaning of the words. It helps you to look for synonyms. (FG-GR1-S2)*

In this excerpt, the student mentions that translation-related activities encouraged him to reflect on vocabulary he had already learned in the target language and to look for different words to express a similar concept. This suggests that he understands that sometimes it is not possible to find the exact words, so translation is an aid to locating a suitable equivalent.

Another participant, this time from Group 2, similarly reported that through the activities, he could learn new words and recall those that he had previously acquired:

*I consider them very useful because you can learn more words and it reminds you more words that maybe you could have learned but maybe you have forgotten. I think too that translating is important for our careers to write academic papers in English because we tend to use the same words in English and Spanish and sometimes, they don't mean the same. (FG-GR2-S2)*

This result coincides with the findings by Carreres (2006) who observed that, according to students, one of the main benefits of performing translation-related activities was to learn

new vocabulary in the L2. This participant also sees the usefulness of pedagogical translation in academic writing, although he acknowledges that false cognates may hinder this process.

The same participant also used translation as a self-assessment tool:

*Well, these activities helped me to say, "Oh I shouldn't use this article, or this preposition is bad." (FG-GR2-S2)*

Another student added that pedagogical translation is a tool to assess semantic knowledge and could serve as a strategy to increment the number of new words to his lexicon:

*I think that it's a good way to practice the language because we review our vocabulary and we know different meanings for the words, and I think that is an easy way to know new words. (FG-GR1-S11)*

Furthermore, it appears that the student feels confident and finds translation suitable to his learning process as he considers it "easy."

Translation was perceived by other students as a way to promote cultural awareness. The next excerpts provide another point of view to understand how it can be regarded as a useful resource. For instance, another respondent saw translation as an opportunity to analyze meaning from the perspective of users of different language:

*When you translate you can appreciate other point of view. When you try to explain the things in another language, you can feel like you are watching the same thing but with a different gaze or with different eyes. (FG-GR1-S8)*

While he observed that perhaps using another language to communicate apart from the L1 can foster new approaches about the same phenomenon, another participant viewed phenomenon as a bridge to understand one language through another, possibly by contrasting the similarities and differences between them:

*I think translation is also important in the classroom to make the students conscious not only about the language they are studying but also their own language. (FG-GR2-S3)*

In this excerpt, the student states the importance of interacting between the mother tongue and the target language. This interaction is regarded as an aid to understand features of the two languages.

In the same group there was some further reflection about translation and the advantages of knowing two languages:

*I think that it makes us aware of the importance of English and that we are very lucky because we speak Spanish. (FG-GR2-S3)*

This participant appreciates the value of both his mother tongue and the English language. This finding increases in relevance considering that translation could be seen as an educational strategy to resist language hegemony. These three statements suggest that pedagogical translation may serve not only as a vehicle to contrast two languages at a syntactic and lexical level but also at the pragmatic and discursive levels (Baker, 2018). In addition, this data is in line with one of the broadest definitions of translation where it is conceived "as a creative force in which specific translation strategies might serve a variety of cultural and social functions, building languages, literatures, and nations" (Venuti, 2000, p. 11).

In the next excerpt, the teacher provides her opinion by focusing on the usefulness of it in language education after implementing pedagogical translation.

*These activities are very helpful for my students and for me as a teacher in the sense that they are helping my students realize that translating is not wrong when there is a purpose and that they shouldn't do it all time. Also, it has shown them that sometimes they are translating without them knowing. (TD-GR1/GR2)*

The teacher considers that pedagogical translation is helpful to her students only if it meets a purpose, but she warns that translation should be used with caution as students may fall into the trap of overusing this resource. Additionally, she reports that the students realized that they use translation unconsciously which is consistent to Duff's (1989) assertion that translation is a natural activity performed by language learners. The teacher's acknowledgement of the role translation plays in the students' learning process represents an

advantage to her teaching practice since she can benefit from its application as a common strategy.

In another fragment, she added that she started to notice that students used both languages in class and asserted the following:

Lately, I have been noticing that my both groups have been using both languages to complete activities and also to explain things to each other when I am helping other students. (TD-GR1/GR2)

According to the teacher, the students were using the L1 mainly as a resource to carry out the activities and also to help their classmates to understand a certain topic. The use of the mother tongue fostered students' interaction and collaborative work. With respect to the teacher, it may have been an advantage since she recognized that some students solved their peers' questions or doubts about an activity, thus increasing their proficiency in the two languages. Once again, this proficiency may result in the development of translation as the fifth skill.

## 4.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to present the analysis of data obtained from a teacher's diary, post-activity Likert scale questionnaires and focus group interviews with her students. The first part of this chapter comprised a reflection about the participants' perceptions of the five translation-related activities where the teacher considered them useful and interested in implementing them again. She also sees translation as a means of mediation between the L1 and the L2. In regard to the students, they were able to identify their strengths and weaknesses in the two languages, understand complex vocabulary or reflect about crosslinguistic influence between the L1 and the foreign language. The next section included an analysis about the learners' awareness of the translation component in the activities followed by a discussion about the meaning of translation where the notion as a fifth skill emerged as a possibility to become a learning objective in second language education. The complexity of translation was also discussed, and it is recognized as a process that requires cognitive effort that also generated emotions were the positive ones prevailed. Perceptions about the pedagogical use of translation are presented in the last part of this chapter. These were classified according to the learners' preference as to which language they feel more

comfortable translating, their opinions about thinking in the L1 or the L2 as part of their language production, and the benefits of translation in the students' learning process.

In Chapter Five, an overall analysis of the findings will be presented along with the implications and possible contributions.

**Chapter Five**

**Conclusion**

**5.1 Introduction**

The present chapter provides a summary of the key findings obtained from the study. This is followed by the pedagogical implications for teachers, administrators, and teacher trainers. Then, the limitations encountered during this research are addressed as well as the recommendations for further research. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary of the preceding sections.

**5.2 Summary of key findings**

Over the last few decades, pedagogical translation has been a focus of study due to the increasing interest of educators in exploring the use of the L1 inside the language classroom (Carreres, 2006; Carreres & Noriega Sánchez, 2011; Colina, 2002; Cook, 2010; Duff, 1989; González Davies, 2004; Malmkjaer, 1998; Pintado Gutiérrez, 2012; Widdowson, 2003). However, few perception studies have been conducted regarding the use of pedagogical translation in the foreign language classroom in Mexico.

The main purpose of this descriptive case study was to analyze and describe the teacher's and her students' perceptions about the implementation of translation-related activities. Therefore, this research intended to answer the following question:

> *What are the teacher's and students' perceptions in upper-intermediate EFL classes at the University of Guanajuato regarding the implementation of translation-related activities?*

The study was conducted at the language center of the University of Guanajuato with one teacher, who taught general English language classes at an upper-intermediate level, and two of her groups. The first classroom had twenty students, whereas in the second one there were sixteen. Perceptual data was gathered by means of three data collection techniques: A prompted diary kept by the teacher, Likert scale questionnaires and focus group interviews for the students. The information obtained from these techniques was interpreted through a triangulation approach which made it possible to elucidate the participants' perceptions after

they had gained experience with pedagogical translation. The next section presents a summary of the key findings in reply to the research question.

### 5.2.1 Teacher's and students' positive perceptions about translation-related activities

The teacher's diary allowed to analyze her stance towards the implementation of pedagogical translation through five translation-related activities. From this information it could be seen that, after implementing the activities, she showed herself optimistic about using pedagogical translation as a resource in further lessons and experiment with it at other proficiency levels. In relation to the students, their perceptions were varied, and changed depending on the activity they performed. Some activities were more successful than others depending on the students' needs and interests and the level of complexity that each of them had.

Furthermore, it was observed that, in order to meet students' needs and interests, translation-related activities need to be more accurate regarding their contexts. For example, considering students' current studies and the places where they live or work. These activities also need to take into account students' proficiency level since some students expressed that few activities were too easy to perform. The next findings present the perceptions that the participants had towards translation in itself.

### 5.2.2 A discussion about translation as an activity

This information that this finding contained was classified in four subthemes that included the students' awareness about the integration of translation into the activities, a discussion about the definition of translation followed by a reflection upon its complexity and the emotions that the participants experienced.

The outcomes from the first subtheme revealed that translation may not be necessarily explicit in the design of the activities since some participants were not aware of its integration. This reinforces the idea that translation can be a natural cognitive activity which manifestations can vary according to the students' needs, furthermore, its incorporation in the teaching practice can provide a better understanding about what it entails and objectively evaluate its role in the learning process.

An interesting discussion about the meaning of translation emerged during the focus group interviews. The data showed that students conceptualized it as an everyday activity that is performed inside and outside the language classroom, as a resource that is only used when necessary, and as an additional skill being this definition one of the most outstanding and supported by existing literature. It is relevant to consider that the respondents based their answers on their experiences with translation.

Translation was also recognized as a process that requires cognitive effort. The findings indicate that learners encountered some difficulties. One of the most significant is that students noticed that literal translation cannot be employed at all times suggesting that they are aware of the importance of language in context. The teacher also realized that translating requires effort and time. These claims provide evidence that assist in the argument that this process goes beyond codeswitching or translanguaging. Finally, it was possible to observe that one of the students' biggest concerns seems to be vocabulary in the two languages or the lack of it.

In relation to emotions, the teacher remarked that "Chinese whispers" made learners feel anxious and nervous since this activity required instant oral translation. However, overall, she perceived that her students had positive experiences in performing pedagogical translation. This statement is reinforced by students' perceptions who asserted that despite some activities were challenging, they had fun and felt motivated while carrying out the activities.

This study does not provide a generalization of results about which translation-related activities were the most preferred by the students since both groups perceived them differently. However, it is important to note that grammar and vocabulary were two prominent linguistic branches that were brought into discussion in both groups. In the next subsection, these will be discussed in greater detail.

### 5.2.3 The usefulness of implementing translation-related activities in the classroom

The learners' experiences with direct and reverse translation provided information about the language in which they preferred to translate from and into. Many statements showed that the participants had to overcome metalinguistic obstacles in the L1, however, the data indicates that students preferred translating from the L2 into their mother tongue due to a

lower proficiency in English language. Although further studies about the directions of translation need to be conducted, it becomes clear that translating into the L2 should be encouraged and thus making translation a fifth skill as an aid to the learning process.

Connected to the previous finding is the interplay between two languages. Since it was believed that thinking only in English signals a high proficiency in the language, some students claimed that they felt anxious when trying to think in the L2. However, other participants admitted that they use internal translation before they produce an utterance encouraging the argument of translation as a natural cognitive activity. Moreover, the data denotes that some students realized that translation did not work only at a word level since pragmatic knowledge is also necessary to convey meaning.

According to the information provided by the participants, pedagogical translation was useful for the teacher and her students. The results suggested that the teacher was able to assess her students in relation to their vocabulary knowledge. In other words, three translation-related activities focused on incidental learning. These were: 1) "Lost in translation," 2) "Chinese whispers," and 3) "At the restaurant." In contrast, "Mad libs©" and "False friends" required students' attention on the specific use of vocabulary. The teacher asserted that she was able to assess their previous knowledge through all five activities. Nonetheless, she remarked that translation should only be used when there is a pedagogical purpose.

As mentioned before, lexical items were a prominent concern among learners and according to them, translation at word level helped them to reflect about their vocabulary knowledge in the two languages. Furthermore, they were able to achieve the following:

- Activate schemata by reflecting on previous vocabulary they had already acquired.

- Assess their performance and progress through the acknowledgment of their strengths and weaknesses in the L1 and L2.

- Increase metalinguistic awareness by comparing grammatical features between two languages.

In addition, the teacher and her students agreed that pedagogical translation requires using more than one language skill and challenges their knowledge in the two languages. It can also provide real-life situations where communicating with foreign language speakers is necessary due to their context. Learners asserted that translation can also be beneficial to developing academic language skills and become aware of their self-growth. Having looked at the findings, the following section presents the pedagogical implications.

## 5.3 Pedagogical implications

The results of this research study showed that pedagogical translation is a communicative activity that could be considered as part of bilingual competence. In other words, it is a process that involves the use of the language skills with the purpose of achieving communication. Additionally, pedagogical translation is an accepted resource through which students and teachers can make use of the mother tongue in foreign language instruction. However, in order to increase the benefits of pedagogical translation, teachers need to take into consideration students' background regarding their level of proficiency, learning preferences and interests when adding the translation component into a particular activity. These appear to be key factors that influence the impact of translation-related activities on students regarding its usefulness in language education. Teachers will also need to remember that historically, translation has been perceived as boring and time-consuming. The acceptance or reluctancy that translation can generate will mainly depend upon the relevance, purpose, and goals of the activities aligned with the students' needs. These considerations may help teachers to ensure students that pedagogical translation can be a valuable resource from which they can benefit and improve their learning.

Chapter three revealed that the communicative approach guides the design of the language center syllabus. However, it should be acknowledged that translation does not intend students and teachers to use the L1 indiscriminately rather give the native language a purpose to be used. Moreover, the rejection that it has faced in ELT leads to reflect about the influence of negative opinions about using the mother tongue and their impact on second or foreign language education. It is important to remember that these opinions are mostly widespread by publishers and scholars who influence the guidelines of language education policies. As it was mentioned before, translation is perceived as a complex integrated skill that intends to

strengthen students' learning. Teacher trainers play a fundamental role in fighting the negative labels that have relegated translation to be regarded as an undesirable resource. Another relevant consideration is to keep in mind that one should be critical about current trends in education and identify the positive and negative aspects that these bring to the language classroom.

This study aims to encourage teachers to take advantage about translation and justify its usage to administrators when necessary. However, coordinators and administrators need to be receptive enough to integrating alternative forms of approaching students to foreign language learning. This could be accomplished by designing workshops or seminars that explain how pedagogical translation can be implemented along with the syllabus not only in language schools but also in public and private schools at any educational level.

Finally, considering that translation in language education has gained interest among scholars and teachers and it is slowly positioning itself as a renewed pedagogical practice, a reconceptualization of translation needs to be carried out from two research areas: pedagogy and applied linguistics. Providing a proper definition to translation and highlighting its pedagogical use, can help to promote an unbiased understanding of what it involves and the benefits of its application in the language classroom. While translation is a subfield of applied linguistics, scholars such as Cook (2012), House (2016), Hurtado Albir (1988), Laviosa (2014), Munday (2016) urge to recognize its importance due to its role in second/foreign language education. Therefore, it becomes clear that collaboration between pedagogy and applied linguistics should be reinforced in order to encourage a new analysis about the impact of translation on language education. The next section presents the limitations that were encountered throughout the development of this research.

## 5.4 Limitations

The limitations encountered during the completion of this study are mostly concerned with time constraints. With the purpose of eliciting perceptual data, five translation-related activities out of nine were implemented. Due to the language center schedule, it was not possible to implement all nine translation-related activities as it was initially planned which could have given the opportunity to provide the teacher with different ideas on how to approach translation and elicit richer information from the students.

Another possible limitation was that not all students were able to perform the five activities because of their absences. This may be a factor that did not allow a consistent data collection. Taking these limitations into consideration, in the section below, recommendations for further research are provided.

## 5.5 Implications for further research

This study has uncovered the experiences that the teacher and students had about performing pedagogical translation in the EFL classroom. The first suggestion is to know in depth the context under study. Participants' age and educational background is relevant information, but interests and needs are additional data that may help to adapt the activities to the students' profiles and increase their involvement. Being able to design or adapt activities that go in line with the teacher's lesson plan may save time and even expand on their results. However, a correlation between translation and negative perceptions portrayed in the analysis of Likert scale questionnaires need to be conducted with a bigger sample of participants and using a mix-method approach.

The second suggestion is concerned with the use of the Likert scale questionnaire as a post-activity data collection technique. The rationale for this was to obtain a broader and clearer picture about students' perceptions in relation to pedagogical translation. Comparing and contrasting initial and posterior perceptions of teacher and students would help to have a more complete view of their knowledge, previous experiences and opinions about translation through the use of pre and post-activity questionnaires.

As previously stated, the findings of this study also suggest that teachers and students are not against the use of pedagogical translation in the language classroom. This opens the door to conducting research focused on the measurement of how useful translation is when reinforcing each of the four language skills separately, as well as developing pragmatic competence. The claim that translation requires cognitive effort was a sustained claim throughout the thesis, in order to increase validity an examination through observation needs to be conducted. Additionally, translation is considered as a skill itself. Exploring this perception through experimental or longitudinal studies, may provide a deeper understanding about the role of pedagogical translation in second or foreign language teaching and learning.

## 5.6 Conclusion

The primary objective of this research was to analyze and describe the teacher's and students' perceptions that emerge from the implementation of translation-related activities in an EFL classroom at the University of Guanajuato. The findings suggest that teachers and students perceive pedagogical translation as a useful resource to learn English as a foreign language. However, more studies need to be conducted in order to consider pedagogical translation as a creative way of using the L1 and avoid considering it as an obstacle to the development of communicative competences. Conducting this research encouraged me to recognize the value of the Spanish language and to understand that there is not a single "correct" way of teaching a foreign language. With this study, I expect that administrators and coordinators take into account not only the teachers' thoughts about the use of pedagogical translation and the L1 but also the students' insights as an opportunity to meet teachers' and students' needs and improve the curriculum and teacher practices.

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# Chinese whispers

| Subject/Course: | General English | Interaction: | Group work |
|---|---|---|---|
| Topic: | Phrases | | |
| Level: | 800 - Advanced | Activity Duration: | 5 minutes |

## Activity Objectives

To promote awareness related to the importance of choosing the right words to convey meaning.

## Summary of Tasks / Actions:

1. T divides students into two groups or more depending on the size of the group.
2. T tells a sentence to one of the members of the group in L2. The students have to share the sentence with the person next to him in the L1.
3. The next student shares the sentence with the person next to him/her in the L2. Ss then proceed to whisper by translating the sentence they hear into the L1-L2-L1…
4. When the message reaches the last member of the team, he/she writes the sentences on the whiteboard.
5. T writes the original sentences and compare the outcomes with the ss.
6. As a whole class, ss and T look for the best option to translate the sentences.

## Materials / Equipment:

Phrases:
- Don't move! There's a gigantic spider behind you!
- I'd like six tacos al pastor with extra piña and hot sauce.
- I don't like cats, but I love dogs.

Whiteboard

## Language skills:

Listening
Speaking

# False friends

| Subject/Course: | General English | | Interaction: | Pairs/Trios |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Topic:** | To identify words out of context. | | | |
| **Level:** | 800 - Advanced | | **Activity Duration:** | 15 minutes |

## Activity Objectives

To identify words out of context.

## Summary of Tasks / Actions:

1. T tells ss that they are going to read a text which has 12 false cognates. In order to model the activity, the T and ss read the first line and identify the first false cognate.
2. T gives some time for ss to read the text individually and identify the false cognates. Then, asks them to find a partner.
3. In pairs, ss check their answers and look for a suiting word to correct the text.
4. T and ss check the text together.

## Materials / Equipment:

Worksheet

## Language skills:

Reading
Writing
Speaking

## Anecdote

**1) Read the text and find 12 false friends. Then, try to substitute them with a correct word.**

Let me tell you a story. Since I was a child, I pretended to be a novel actress on television. Last week, my mom, my dad, my sister and I were going to visit some parents on the countryside. After driving for some time, my dad decided to stop in a little shop near the road so we could eat and relax for a while. Inside the shop, there was a small library, so I decided to buy some books and magazines. When I was paying, I saw my favorite actress right next to me! I couldn't believe it. I looked at her and she smiled at me. I told her about the dream I had, and she said that she had always dreamt about becoming a physician since she loved Maths, although she eventually found her way on television. I was so moved by it that I started crying, I am a very sensible person, you know. She was very comprehensive and told me she would try to help me. Everything was so strange, but after some time I got a role in a novel. I realized my big dream! Actually, I play a young girl who works in a fabric. I am extremely happy, and I have a lot of exit being what I always wanted to be: an actress!

1)_____          7) _____

2)_____          8) _____

3)_____          9) _____

4)_____          10) _____

5)_____          11) _____

6)_____          12) _____

# Lost in translation

| Subject/Course: | General English | | Interaction: | Group work |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Topic: | Anti-smoking campaigns around the world | | | |
| Level: | 800 - Advanced | | Activity Duration: | 10 minutes |

## Activity Objectives

To understand and produce sentences in L1 and L2.
To become aware on different translation options.
To become aware of interferences.

## Summary of Actions:

1. T divides students into two groups or more depending on the size of the group.
2. T gives a member of each group the same sentence in L2 written on a top of a sheet of paper. Their classmates CANNOT read the sentence.
3. The student that has the sheet of paper needs to translate the sentence into the L2. He/She folds the sheet of paper to cover only the original sentence and pass it to the next student.
4. The next student then proceeds to translate the main idea into the language that corresponds (L1/L2) and write their translation below the original sentence.
5. Ss then fold the paper over concealing the original sentence, only showing their translated version of the sentence and pass it around.
6. T asks ss to unfold the piece of paper and make ss to analyze their translation and find the sentences where the meaning is lost.
7. T takes a couple of sentences and analyze them along with the classroom.

## Materials / Equipment:

Anti-smoking campaigns sentences:
- Smoking causes premature aging.
- If you smoke, statistically your life will end 15% before it should.
- Make the right choice, don't smoke.
- No accident kills more than smoking

Sheets of paper

## Language skills:

Reading
Writing

# Mad libs

| Subject/Course: | General English | Interaction: | Pairs |
|---|---|---|---|
| Topic: | At an interrogation center | | |
| Level: | 800 - Advanced | Activity Duration: | 15 minutes |

## Activity Objectives

To review parts of speech.

## Summary of Tasks / Actions:

1. T pairs ss
2. T gives each student a chart that needs to be completed with a part of the speech.
3. Each student ask his/her partner in Spanish, but the answers must be given in English.
4. Ss proceed to complete the mad lib with the answers given by their partners.
5. Ss practice the role play with the completed sentences.
6. T asks some pairs to perform the dialogue.
7. T asks ss to evaluate the accuracy of the words used to fill each blank as a model activity.

## Materials / Equipment:

Worksheets

## Language skills:

Reading
Writing
Listening
Speaking

SHEET #1 _Instructions: Complete the following chart according to the column "Parts of the speech". Your answers must be written in SPANISH.

| Parts of the speech | Answers in SPANISH |
| --- | --- |
| 2. Saludo en otro idioma | |
| 3. Nombre de alguien Famoso | |
| 5. Interjección: Exclamación | |
| 6. Adverbio | |
| Adjectivo + Parte del cuerpo humano | |
| Sustantivo plural | |
| 7. Interjección: Exclamación | |
| 9. Número entre el 100 y 100'000,000 | |
| 11. Adverbio | |
| 13. Lugar ficticio | |
| 15. Sí en francés | |
| 17. Sustantivo + Adjetivo negativo | |
| 18. Sustantivo desagradable | |
| 20. Fecha de Nacimiento | |
| 22. Año | |
| 24. Fecha importante en México | |
| 25. Interjección: Exclamación | |
| 27. Profesión que no te guste | |
| 29. Nombre de una cancion | |
| 30. Sustantivo plural + color | |

**Sheet #2_** AT AN INTERROGATION CENTER (ROLEPLAY)

1. Batman: Good evening.

2. Joker: _____ (Saludo en otro idioma)

3. B: Do you know why you're here, Mrs./Mr. _____ (Nombre de alguien famoso)?

4. B: You were arrested under suspicion of aggravated assault.

5. J: _____ (Interjección: Exclamación)

6. B: Security cameras captured you striking the victim_____(Adverbio), Mr. Rojas, numerous times in the_____ (Adjetivo + Parte del cuerpo humano) and his/her_____ (Sustantivo plural).

7. J: _____ (Interjección: Exclamación)

8. B: Approximately how many times did you hit him?

9. J: _____ (Número entre el 100 y 100'000,000)

10. B: Can you describe the manner in which you left the crime scene?

11. J: _____ (Adverbio)

12. B: And where were you going?

13. J: _____ (Lugar ficticio)

14. B: Is that right?

15. J: _____ (Sinónimo de "sí")

16. B: Mr./Mrs._____, you left behind an unusual picture. What is this?

17. J: My _____ (Sustantivo + Adjetivo negativo)

18. J: And it's painted the color of _____ (Sustantivo desagradable)

19. B: When did you start making these?

20. J: _____ (Fecha de nacimiento)

21. B: Please cooperate with us.

22. J: _____ (Año)

23. B: Mr./Mrs._____ (Nombre de alguien famoso), please.

24. J: _____ (Fecha importante en México)

25. B: _____ (Interjección: Exclamación)

26. B: What do you do for a living?

27. J: I used to be a _____ (Profesión que no te guste)

28. B: And now?

29. J: _____ (Nombre de una canción)

30. B: Ugh.

31. J: Fine! I committed the robbery!

32. B: Why?

33. J: I needed the money to buy _____ (Sustantivo plural + color).

34. D: Ok, thank you for the confession. I will need to take you to jail.

# At the restaurant

| Subject/Course: | General English | | Interaction: | Trios |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Topic: | At the restaurant | | | |
| Level: | 800 - Advanced | | Activity Duration: | 30 minutes |

## Activity Objectives

To practice specific vocabulary and expressions.
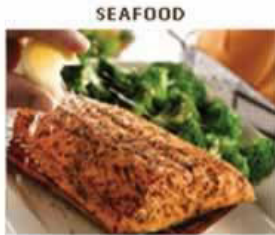
## Summary of Tasks / Actions:

1. T forms teams of three
2. T asks ss to look and read the dialogues.
3. T gives to each student their character (waiter, customer and interpreter).
4. Ss act out the dialogue and exchange roles when they have finished.
5. T chooses a couple of teams to present the dialogue.
6. T writes on the board problematic phrases to translate and discuss them with the whole class.

## Materials / Equipment:

Worksheets
Menus

## Language skills:

Reading
Listening
Speaking

**APPETIZERS**

**CHICKEN & RIBS**

**STEAKS & COMBOS**

**SEAFOOD**

**PASTA**

**SALADS & SOUPS**

**SANDWICHES**

**BURGERS**

Belgian Waffles

| Appetizers | |
|---|---|
| Onion rings | $2.25 |
| Squid rings | $ 7.50 |
| Mini burgers (4) | $ 6.49 |
| Nachos & ribs | $ 6.00 |
| chicken wings | $5.75 |
| Caesar salad | $3.99 |
| clam chowder | $4.50 |

| Entrées | |
|---|---|
| meat Spaghetti | $11.95 |
| seafood noodle | $15.95 |
| NY steak | $12.89 |
| **Desserts** | |
| Belgian waffles | $1.50 |
| toppings each | $1.00 |
| whipping cream | $1.00 |
| blueberry pie | $2.35 |

| sandwiches | |
|---|---|
| chicken& onion | $ 3.15 |
| Cheeseburger | $2.59 |
| triple deck | $5.29 |
| tasty veggie | $3.19 |
| **Drinks** | |
| soda light | $0.99 |
| soda diet | $0.90 |
| reg. soda | $0.70 |
| tea | $0.68 |
| coffee | $0.85 |

**<u>Get ready to make an order:</u>**

**W:** Are you ready to order?

**C:**
………………………………………………………
……………….

**W:** What would you like to start with?

**C:**
………………………………………………………
……………….

**W:** Would you like to try our special course?

**C:**
………………………………………………………
……………….

**W:** Would you like vegetables or salad?

**C:**
………………………………………………………
……………….

**W:** Anything to drink?

**C:**
………………………………………………………

**Appendix B**

**Likert scale questionnaire**

**Propósito:** Conocer tus percepciones respecto a las actividades que fueron implementadas en las clases de inglés.

**Instrucciones:** Por favor lee las siguientes declaraciones y marca con una X, la columna con la que mejor te identifiques en cada enunciado.

○ Hombre      ○ Mujer           Edad _____

| Nombre de las actividades: | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **La actividad…** | **Totalmente en desacuerdo** | **En desacuerdo** | **Neutral** | **De acuerdo** | **Totalmente de acuerdo** |
| | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| Me dio oportunidad de tratar temas que me interesan. | | | | | |
| Fue intelectualmente retadora. | | | | | |
| Me inspiró a esforzarme en clase. | | | | | |
| Fue divertida. | | | | | |
| Las frases usadas en la actividad fueron motivantes. | | | | | |
| Fue creativa y original. | | | | | |
| Me motivó a esforzarme. | | | | | |
| Me motivó a continuar aprendiendo inglés. | | | | | |
| Me motivó a comunicarme en inglés dentro del salón de clases. | | | | | |
| Me puede ayudar a resolver problemas fuera del salón de clases. | | | | | |
| Me ayudó a explorar mis fortalezas en mi idioma y en el idioma inglés. | | | | | |
| Me ayudó a explorar mis debilidades en mi idioma y en el idioma inglés. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Me ayudó a recordar vocabulario. | | | | | |
| Me ayudó a desarrollar mis habilidades comunicativas. | | | | | |
| Me ayudó a ser consciente de aspectos gramaticales. | | | | | |

¿Te diste cuenta de que realizaste una actividad relacionada con la traducción?

○ No      ○ Sí

Se me facilitó más traducir del:

○ Español al inglés      ○ Inglés al español

**Teacher prompted diary**

**Activity and materials**

What activity did I implement?


Was there a clear outcome for the students?


What problems did the students have (if any) with the activity?


What problems did I have (if any) with the activity?


What did they learn or practice in the activity? Was it useful for them?


Did the materials and activity keep the students interested?


**Students' performance**

Did the students find easy and/or difficult the activity?


Did the students seem to enjoy the activity?


Were all the students on task (i.e. doing what they were supposed to be doing)?


If not, which were the clues that helped me to identify this?


How much English and Spanish did the students use?

**Modifications**

Would I use the same activity in further lessons? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using it?

**Appendix D**

**Focus group interview**

1. How do you feel about translation?

2. ¿Crees que sea una buena idea implementar actividades de traducción en las clases de inglés? ¿Por qué?

3. How motivating were the activities?

4. How useful were these activities?

5. ¿Las actividades te hicieron reflexionar acerca de las similitudes y diferencias entre tu idioma y el idioma inglés?

6. Which are the main problems you encountered when translating from English into Spanish and vice versa?

7. ¿Crees que usar el español en clase pueda interferir en tu aprendizaje del idioma inglés?

8. ¿Crees que el usar el español en clase reduzca las oportunidades de aprender inglés?

9. ¿Crees que en este nivel puedes aprender inglés sin necesidad de recurrir al español?

10. ¿Sientes preocupación cuando se te pide pensar en inglés?

11. Which were your preferred language learning activities?

## CARTA DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA PROYECTOS DE INVESTIGACIÓN EDUCATIVA

Yo, María de Lourdes Martínez Ruiz, alumna de la maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés del Departamento de Lenguas en la Universidad de Guanajuato, con número único de alumno (NUA) 231691, para mi trabajo final de la carrera, tengo como propósito llevar a cabo un estudio relacionado con la implementación de actividades enfocadas al aprendizaje del idioma inglés, así como realizar observaciones dentro del aula, aplicar cuestionarios y finalmente, organizar un grupo de discusión con el fin de conocer las percepciones de los alumnos y docentes respecto a las mismas.

En relación con lo anterior, se enumera la siguiente información para su consideración:

1. Si accedes a participar en este estudio, se te pedirá responder preguntas en una entrevista en grupo (y/o completar un cuestionario, según sea el caso). Esto tomará aproximadamente 30 minutos de tu tiempo. Las observaciones de las sesiones realizadas en el aula, así como las entrevistas y grupo de discusión, serán grabados con el único propósito de analizar lo observado y transcribir las ideas que los participantes hayan expresado.

2. La participación en este estudio es estrictamente voluntaria. La información que se recabe será confidencial y no se usará para ningún otro propósito fuera de los de esta investigación. Tus respuestas al cuestionario y a la entrevista serán codificadas usando un número de identificación, por lo tanto, serán anónimas.

3. Tu participación como alumno(a) no repercutirá en tus actividades ni evaluaciones programadas en el curso.

4. No habrá ninguna sanción en caso de no aceptar la invitación o de retirarte del proyecto si lo consideras conveniente.

5. No recibirás remuneración alguna por la participación en el estudio.

En caso de tener alguna duda sobre este proyecto, puedes contactarme mediante el correo lulumruiz1@gmail.com o a mi directora de tesis Dra. Krisztina Zimányi, a través de su correo krisztina@ugto.mx.

**CONSENTIMIENTO VOLUNTARIO**

**Declaro que he leído y comprendido la información y la investigadora-alumna me ha contestado todas mis preguntas. Una copia de este documento me será entregada. Por lo tanto:**
**___ Acepto participar en este estudio**
**___ No acepto participar en este estudio**

**_____ _____**
**Firma de la alumna de la maestría**                  **Fecha**

**_____ _____**
**Firma del participante**                             **Fecha**