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Inglés como Lengua Extranjera para Alumnado Adulto

Limonese Creole Interference in English as a Foreign  
Language: A Descriptive Study of Aural and Visual  
Stimuli in Fifth Grade at IEGB Limon 2000

David Fernández Elizondo

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## APPROVAL BOARD FORM

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M.A. Lelia Yolanda Villalobos Rodríguez

Chair of the Master's Program in Second Languages and Cultures with Emphasis on English as a Foreign Language for Adult Learners

---

M.A. Ana Isabel Campos Centeno

Professor of the Course: Research on Second Languages and Cultures

---

M.A. René Zuñiga

Tutor

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## **Resumen**

El siguiente es un estudio descriptivo el cual presenta la tendencia de cinco estudiantes nativo-hablantes del criollo limonense de usar fonemas del criollo cuando tratan de hablar en inglés en la escuela. Este estudio se llevó a cabo en el IEGB Limón 2000 en Liverpool, Limón durante los meses de Setiembre y Octubre del 2015 con la participación de la clase del 5-1. Además, la opinión de los padres, las maestras de inglés, la directora, y también del Asesor Regional de Inglés en Limón y de un sociólogo sobre el reconocimiento del criollo limonense, como parte de la cultura limonense ayudó a obtener una visión contextualizada de esta investigación. Para recoger la información necesaria, se utilizaron diferentes métodos de recolección de datos tales como observaciones, cuestionarios, entrevistas, y material audio-visual. Los resultados mostraron que si existe interferencia fonológica del criollo limonense en la producción de inglés en el aula; sin embargo, esta interferencia no afecta negativamente la comprensibilidad del mensaje en el proceso de comunicación. Con respecto a la importancia de la enseñanza del criollo limonense en las aulas de las escuelas en Limón como una forma de revivir la cultura criolla en esa provincia, las respuestas de los participantes fueron diferentes sin importar el origen étnico de los participantes.

Palabras claves: interferencia del lenguaje; transferencia; criollo e idioma; identidad cultural.

Trabajo presentado para optar al grado de Maestría Profesional en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas con Énfasis en Inglés como Lengua Extranjera para Alumnado Adulto, según lo establece el Sistema de Estudios de Posgrado de la Universidad Nacional, Heredia, Costa Rica.

## **Abstract**

The following is a descriptive study which presents the tendency of five Limonese Creole native speaking students to use Limonese Creole phonemes when trying to produce in English. This study took place at IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School in Liverpool, Limon during the months of September and October of 2015 with the participation of the English teacher and students from the 5-1 grade. Moreover, the opinion of their parents, English teachers, and the Principal from that school, and also from the English Regional Advisor in Limon and a sociologist towards acknowledging Limonese Creole as part of the Limonese Culture attempted to obtain a contextualized vision of this research. In order to gather the necessary information, different methods of collecting data were used, such as observations, questionnaires, interviews, and flash cards. The results showed that there is language transfer in the phonological domain of Limonese Creole to Standard English as taught in the classroom; the use of phonemes from Limonese Creole, however, does not impede or break the communication attempted in the target language. Regarding the importance of Limonese Creole in the Limon province and its incorporation as a formal subject as a means to revitalize the Creole culture in Limon, the impressions from the participants was not homogeneous, nevertheless the ethnic origin.

**Key words:** language interference; transfer; creole and language; cultural identity.

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*“The limits of my language means the limits of my world.”*

Ludwig Wittgenstein

## **Introduction**

English as a foreign language (EFL) has been taught in Costa Rica since 1963 in high schools in the Public Educational System all over the country. It was introduced in elementary schools as a pilot project in 1994; then it was officialized in 1998; and from then it has extended to more schools every year. By 2013, 89,2% of elementary school students were receiving English instruction (MEP, 2013). The teaching of English offers many advantages; one is that it gives learners the opportunity to know the linguistic and cultural diversity of the target language, and also of the classroom participants (Damen, 1987). According to the English syllabus, English as a Foreign Language is divided into three components: Formal, functional, and cultural (MEP, 2005, p. 17).

To explain these concepts in brief, in the formal component (also known as the grammatical one), the structures of language such as lexis, morphology and syntax are used depending on the functions and the topics included in the planning. The functional component points out the communicative goal for which the language is used, what the different forms mean by themselves, but also how people use those forms distinctively. The third component, cultural, states that knowing the cultural features a language has (implicitly included in the former two other components) is key to understand and use the target language.

As more elementary schools have included English as a foreign language in their programs, consequently more students have graduated in universities pursuing a job opportunity as English teachers (Quesada, 2015). The Plans of Studies from universities to form new teachers

are designed using a perspective to include English as a Foreign Language; however there is not any trace of methods or approaches for training teachers to teach English to students other than to native Spanish speakers. Therefore, as the teaching of English as a foreign language in schools has been widely spread, there have been some challenges in areas where Spanish was not the only language spoken by the locals, as it has been the case of indigenous communities (every one of them using their own language); the sign language known as LESCO; and the Limon province, where the Creole language has been used along with Spanish and English.

The Limon population is known to be at least bilingual, since they master a combination of Spanish, English or Creole. Therefore, many classrooms in Limon feature students who enter their formal education with a mixture of languages. In the case of Creole speakers learning English, their similarity is enough to attempt assumptions or substitutions, a condition which might affect native Creole speaking students regarding the distinction in the oral use of English. When students are aware of how their native language works, they can use that understanding either positively or negatively in the development of skills in the target language (Knight, 1996). This interference of the native language while learning a second language is called transfer. To explain the concept of transfer in few words, students screen their target language needs through their well-established native language skills, conveying that proficiency from native language to target language in order to successfully complete the current task (Whitley, 2002). Whereas English and Spanish have linguistic features that are different from each other (such as syntax, morphology, and phonology), Creole has more linguistic features that resemble the English language than Spanish does, therefore the possibility to transfer is even bigger for Creole speakers. Mufwene (1996), Holm (1998), and Hall (1966) have affirmed that Creole was first influenced by English. This similarity between Limonese Creole and English is

evident in the structural characteristics of the vernaculars spoken by the founders of the Caribbean colony here in Costa Rica or in the borrowing of words from English. However, Limonese Creole and English do not share some phonological segments as in the case of the phonemes /ɪ/ for the word “bit”, /ə/ as in the word “girl”, or /æ/ as in the word “cat”.

Limonese Creole, as other Creole languages, has its origin in a mixture of West African languages, Caribbean Creole, and the English language (Herzfeld, 2002). The cultural and geographical contexts have made Limonese Creole a unique language that has been used by thousands of people for many years. Regarding its pronunciation features, some of them can be traced back to the Caribbean but not necessarily meaning that they have their origin there, as in some studies it is stated that they were carried to Jamaica from West African languages (Winkler and Obeng, 2000). On the other hand, there is the influence of English that has been present for over sixty years, noticeable in their churches, schools, and social clubs to mention a few examples (Herzfeld, 1978).

As a result of the influence of different languages on which Limonese Creole has been built, its phonology is very distinctive. Herzfeld (2002) and Portilla (1996) have carried out separate studies which show detailed analysis on vowel sounds. In summary, those studies show that even though there are some similarities in the phonemic considerations, there are also differences especially when they both refer to the length of the vowel sounds.

Below is a list of equivalences of vocalic segments according to the symbology presented by Wolfe, Wright, Herzfeld and Portilla (Portilla, 2010)

Wolfe	Wright	Herzfeld	Portilla		
ɪ	ɪ	i	ɪ	‘bit’	pedazo
ʊ	ʊ	u	ʊ	‘book’	libro
ɛ	e	e	e	‘bet’	apostar

ə	ə	o	ʌ	‘cut’	cortar
a	a	a	a	‘back’	espalda
i	i	ij	i:	‘beat’	golpear
u	u	uw	u:	‘root’	raíz
e	ie	ijh	ie	‘name’	nombre
o	uə	wowh	ʊo	‘know’	saber
ɔ	ɒ	aa	a:	‘aah’	todo
aɪ / ɔɪ	ai	aj	aɪ	‘like’	gustar
—	əu	ow	ʌʊ	‘cow’	vaca

The phonology of Standard English (not American for the purpose of this research even though it is the language with which Costa Ricans have more contact according to <http://go.usa.gov/37hHF>) is described as having twenty different vowel sounds and twenty-four different consonant sounds (Power, 2015; Giegerich, Heinz, 1992). There are several other scholars who propose different pronunciation charts however Herzfeld and Portilla’s mentioned above very well include the phonemes that most authors consider as the typical for Standard English. Below is a chart based on Adrian Underhill’s layout:

		monophthongs				diphthongs			Phonemic Chart voiced unvoiced
VOWELS	i:	ɪ	ʊ	u:	ɪə	eɪ			
	sheep	ship	good	shoot	here	wait			
	e	ə	ɜ:	ɔ:	ʊə	ɔɪ	əʊ		
bed	teacher	bird	door	tourist	boy	show			
æ	ʌ	ɑ:	ɒ	eə	aɪ	aʊ			
cat	up	far	on	hair	my	cow			
CONSONANTS	p	b	t	d	tʃ	dʒ	k	g	
	pea	boat	tea	dog	cheese	June	car	go	
	f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ	
fly	video	think	this	see	zoo	shall	television		
m	n	ŋ	h	l	r	w	j		
man	now	sing	hat	love	red	wet	yes		

The 44 phonemes of Received Pronunciation based on the popular Adrian Underhill layout. adapted by EnglishClub.com

<https://www.englishclub.com/pronunciation/phonemic-chart.htm>

The target population in this study was a fifth grade class at a public elementary school in the Limon province. For the purpose of this study, fifth grade was selected over the other grades because of the amount of students who were native creole speakers.

The Instituto de Enseñanza de Educacion General Basica Limon 2000 (IEGB Limon 2000) is located in the Limon 2000 neighborhood, fourteen kilometers north of Limon downtown. It started as a housing project after some people invaded some land, not counting then with basic services. After a while, the government developed a housing project that went off irregularly in terms of paper work for land owners. Later on, inhabitants undertook a period for residence that went from three to six years.

The elementary school was founded in 1991 due to the large amount of students who moved into the housing project, and who were not admitted in Liverpool Elementary school because of lack of room and infrastructure. IEGB Limon 2000 started with fifty-six students, and the then Principal Marielos Montoya ran a D1 school. It was located in an old building which

eventually was demolished. After years of struggling, the school was included in a PROMECUM program (state program for the improvement of education). The community showed socio-economic challenges such as alcoholism, unemployment, domestic violence, and other situation that affect negatively the image of the inhabitants, giving the community a status of robbery and murder. In 2008, the III Cycle of General Education started in the same facilities of IEGB Limon 2000, and more rooms were built accordingly.

The population in Limon 2000 approximates to 2500, most of them Costa Ricans, and a small percentage of indigenous people. A few foreigners live in the area including Nicaraguans, Salvadorians, Colombians, and Panamanians.

This school year, the IEGB Limon 2000 registered twenty-eight elementary school teachers, eight special subject teachers, and thirteen high-school teachers. There are also sixteen administrative employees. The school works the morning and afternoon shifts, starting at 7am, and leaving at 5:30pm.

The English curriculum that the target school follows is that of the Ministry of Public Education, which pursues a sense of tolerance to other cultures and wider knowledge of the world (the first of the four basic needs stated in the official program launched in 2003). Rodolfo Stavenhagen in the Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century affirmed that, though globalization affects everybody around the globe, ethnic diversity has turned into everyday concern.

According to Kasper (1992), students learning a second language might show transfer errors. Based on that statement, analyzing the observable transfer evidence from Creole native speakers when trying to produce in the English class is the goal of this research. Special attention

is drawn to the occurrence of the errors that students made in the phonological domain of Limonese Creole to English as taught in the classroom, and its occurrence during normal English lessons at school and after personal assessment.

In Costa Rica, the English language is the main means of communication between local and foreign business people (Country Commercial Guide Summary), and for that, the eventual governments have requested the appropriate academic and technical preparation on the learning of the English language (Ministry of Education, 2005 p. 13).

According to MEP,

Whenever a teacher is ready to introduce an activity focusing on one of the four basic skills describe above [listening, speaking, reading and writing], he/she should take into account five steps: a) preparation, b) demonstration, c) time to introduce the skill, d) correction, e) follow-up. In order to follow these steps, the teacher should provide: “Pre-activities” to help the students think about what they already know and find a reason for listening, speaking, reading or writing; “While-activities” to exploit oral or written speech. These exercise different skills to carry out the tasks assigned and “Post-activities” to link the new information and skills the students own experience and other skills. (2005, p. 25)

This paper covered all five aspects mentioned right above. Other factors were considered, for example the phonemic awareness by both the teacher and the students; and also the theories stated by Lado about contrastive analysis (Lado proposed to study two languages to identify their structural similarities and differences with the goal of explaining why some characteristics of the target language were more difficult to understand), and the contrastive rhetoric theory (how



much a person's first language and culture can affect his skills while learning a second language), more recently by Connor (2008).

### **1.1 Problem and its importance**

Herzfeld in 2011 mentioned that for many years, students in Limon have had the opportunity to attend to English classes which were imparted mostly by Jamaican teachers, who used to teach the English language starting from Limonese Creole, but access for such instruction became very limited (Episcopal Church for instance combined English and Spanish in their classes). Nowadays, students in the different schools in the Limon province have suffered of inconsistencies while trying to finish their education such as buildings falling apart, low promotions, high level of attrition especially in seventh grade, and few schools offering IV cycle registration. These variables above which affect the teaching-learning process amount to consider an attempt to solve it (<http://www.estadonacion.or.cr/>).

English as a regular subject was introduced in elementary schools in most of the entire country (not only for the Limon province) in order to offer students an opportunity to improve their quality of life from an earlier age, which is described in the "Transversalidad en los Programas de Estudio" by the Ministry of Education. What has been missing ever since the programs for teaching and learning English as a second language in public schools is the fact that teachers are trained to work with Spanish speakers (Spanish is the official language in Costa Rica), and any other native speaker who uses a different language is out of the range for certain teaching techniques by the teacher in the classroom. Cunningham (1995) states that teachers should know about their area of specialization, the application of the techniques they use, and theories of teaching and learning. She does not include, however, knowing the socio-cultural

context in which the teachers are immersed. Salgueiro (1998) said that teachers should build their knowledge and understanding by both scientific and everyday life knowledge, which for this paper meant the work of teaching the English language to Limonese Creole native speakers by the act of contextualizing the methods, techniques, and approaches to that particular community and their cultural and linguistic particularities.

Limonese younger generations use Spanish as their native language due to the increase of non-black individuals in the Limon province, which has forced the Afro-Caribbean locals to use Limonese Creole for a few specific scenarios limited mainly to family and friends conversations (Herzfeld, 2002). This diglossia of using different languages for different situations (Spanish for commercial and occupational activities, English for church services, and Creole for family chatting) has led Afro-Caribbean locals to become very versatile in the use of languages, but also has given way to language interference if used carelessly or when ignorance of forms has been present and substitution has been at hand.

The existence of transfer of Creole to English has been a problem for the classroom scenario, in which the English teachers have considered to correct such errors so that the students can develop awareness and avoid fossilization of errors. Yet some transfer errors do not affect communication in the sense that the message is conveyed successfully, therefore the correction strategy is unnecessary. Another factor that needs to be taken into account as relevant is the age and level of proficiency of the learner, in order to decide if correcting errors is advised.

## **1.2 Theoretical antecedents**

About this perspective, Carroll (1964) states that the circumstances of one language intruding into the speech of another language is common and even similar to those that are

showed when acquiring the mother tongue. Some linguists (Chomsky, 1965; Ellis, 1984) have remarked that language interference would occur even for competent speakers of the second language (there is a difference between competence and performance, though), and native like competence only exists in native speakers. Even though language interference can include different levels, this work will only focus on the phonological one, and of course will consider oral production and pronunciation from the target population as the main sources of information. Samples of language interference or transfer errors need be collected so that the theory is supported. Also, to find out why students use features of Creole to English in order to know the reason whether it is simple unaware substitution or if the learner is led to use Creole as influenced by the teacher.

The Limonese Creole language has been the object of several documents written by Costa Ricans and also foreigners especially considering the sociolinguistic conditions that have affected its reduction in the amount of living speakers (Herzfeld, 1983, 2002). There have been similar studies of other Caribbean creole languages such as Jamaican English (Brian, 2011) and Bahamian English (Bain, 2005). However, there have been a few works on the study of Limonese Creole as a separate language (Herzfeld, 2002; Portilla, 1993; Zuñiga, 2014). At present, there is not enough data regarding Limonese Creole speakers who are monolingual (meaning that they could use only such language for communication).

It is important at this point to remark that it cannot be assumed that all errors during language learning are caused by language interference (Reid, 1993). That is why this work also mentions (however briefly) the Contrastive Analysis theory by Robert Lado in 1957.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

Adult Afro-descendants are multilingual, meaning that they could make a difference between Limonese Creole and English (especially because they were aware of the contexts where a language was to be used). Vargas (2012) stated that “there is a generation gap between students and adults (*regarding language proficiency\**)”; in fact, the younger counterpart would rather use Spanish as it is the common language spoken by the majority of their peer friends, and Limonese Creole was never used during her observations.

This research attempts to find out if the similarities between Limonese Creole and Standard English in the phonological field in elementary school students could affect the learning process. The method to obtain evidence was through observations, questionnaires and oral exercises designed to elicit natural spontaneous responses from the target students.

In order to find out if the formal teaching of Limonese Creole needed to be encouraged, this study used interviews with people in a position of authority in the areas of education and sociology. Movements to promote the embracement of Limonese Creole and the Creole culture in general by the Limon population have showed that there is interest to invigorate the use of that language.

All things considered, this research tried to remain as objective as possible.

### **1.4 General objective**

The main objective of this study was:

To investigate if Creole native students at fourth grade in IEGB elementary school suffer from language interference in the pronunciation domain from Creole when producing English after an aural or visual stimuli in the classroom.

### **1.5 Specific objectives:**

1. To identify instances of language interference in oral production in vowels, diphthongs and consonants of Creole in Fourth grade learners of English.
2. To analyze instances of oral production in Creole speakers learners of English to identify the frequency of language transfer of Creole pronunciation into English.
3. To examine the implications of language interference of Creole into English in order to improve English learning while respecting the culture and identity of the Creole speakers.
4. To identify the opinion of Limon authorities on the importance of learning English and Creole in school for the Limonese community.

### **1.6 Research questions:**

1. What are some examples of language interference of Creole to English present in the phonological domain in an EFL classroom at fourth grade in IEGB in Limon?
2. What is the frequency of occurrence of Creole phonemes in the production of oral Standard English in an EFL classroom at fourth grade in IEGB in Limon?
3. How does language interference of Creole to English affect the teaching and learning of the English language in the classroom?
4. What is the perspective of Limon authorities on the importance of learning English and Creole in school for the Limonese community?

### **1.7 Definition of terms**

Native language: Also known as mother tongue, both refer to the language that a person has learned from birth. It is also referred as the first language that one has been exposed to. A wider

concept would be to use the term first language, involving any amount of languages that a child has been exposed to on a daily basis.

Foreign language: A foreign language is one language that is not native to a specific population. English as a foreign language is the teaching of the English language to people whose native language is not English and live in a country where English is not the official language spoken there.

Language interference: Also referred to as transfer, it deals with speakers or users who apply their knowledge from one language to another language. It is commonly cited as in the effects that the native language has on the production of the second or target language.

Learning stimuli: The reinforcement such as rewards in response to previous linguistic behaviors. They can be words in response to a stimulus, depending on one's state of mind.

Cultural identity: Feeling of belonging that an individual or a group has in terms of ethnicity, nationality, language, religion or affiliation.

## **II. Theoretical framework**

Limonese Creole has been undermined by some of its speakers and non-speakers who do not consider it a language, or believe that is declining in use. On the other hand, there have been efforts by some others as stated by Purcell (1993) and Vargas (2012) to keep it as part of the culture of the Limon province, adding that Limonese Creole has been enriched by the influence of other languages, and the eventual migration of inhabitants and the growth of commerce in the area. Unfortunately, there have been very few studies regarding the learning and use of Limonese Creole as a separate language and the possible consequences of it being used or not used.

Starting from the linguistic perspective that all languages have their own story and it is important to keep them live as part of culture, this research attempts not to find ways to eliminate the influence of one language over the other (Limonese Creole over Standard English as taught in Costa Rica), believing the multilingualism is an enriching feature in an individual. On the contrary, it is of great relevance to know how humans separate from other species by the use of language, and to find ways to see how humans use their particular features in a learning process would be of incredible gain.

The focus of this paper is to find out if there is any interference taking place in the production of learners of a foreign language, and specifically how these speakers would use elements of the phonology of their native language (Limonese Creole) into their target language (Costa Rican Standard English) for learning. It includes the factors that promote such changes from the sociolinguistic perspective as mentioned by Krashen et al (1982) remarking in other language interaction such as borrowing and switching which occur when speakers of two languages are in contact. This being stated, the aspects to be considered in the theoretical framework are: language acquisition, phonological awareness, comprehension and production, language interference, stimuli for language learning, learning styles, learning strategies, pidgin and creole languages, history of the Limonese Creole, and phonology of Limonese Creole and of Costa Rican Standard English taught in public elementary schools in Limon.

## **2.1 Language acquisition**

The language acquisition process is the same for all children, which is evident regarding articulation and word order. Yet, it is not possible, under regular circumstances, to control the way that they speak. Children usually follow the pattern that is more common to them, that being the everyday language used around them (Clark, 2003). Language acquisition takes long time;

children acquire language naturally by interacting with people around them, usually relatives and caretakers. For children learning a second language, they can do it in one of two ways: simultaneously or sequentially (McLaughlin et al., 1995). Simultaneous learners are in contact with the two languages at the same time. Sequentially learners are those required to learn a second language. This last type of learning style is more familiar to formal language learning as taught in school. Research on this area can help to figure how strong an acquired language influences over a learned language, or not.

## **2.2 Phonological awareness**

Phonemes are the smallest sound units in a language that can convey a difference in meaning. Phonological awareness is therefore the ability to identify units of oral language such as words or syllables. Acquiring phonological awareness is a relevant predictor of how children will read and speak during elementary school, especially the first years. They recognize sounds which would eventually become familiar. Children then go from recognizing to building phrases. When using phonological awareness in class, it is important that students recognize the sound that they represent, which will help them with the blending process (Goswami, 2000).

Phonological awareness is therefore a process developed through a series of activities that expose students to the sound structure of the language so that they can use it during their learning process. The learner of a second language needs to distinguish phonemes that are similar in the second language as she or he shapes how concepts are interpreted. The awareness of interference of the native language in the process of phonological production is a major aspect contributing to an eventual effective communication ability in the target language.



Even though phonological awareness has been cited more often for reading and writing skills, research in this area can help understand if students learning English as a foreign language notice the phonemes from the target language that they are being exposed to.

### **2.3 Comprehension and production**

Speaking and understanding a language are usually considered enough abilities to mastering it. Yet there should be comprehension before production when learning a second language, which seems to be the pattern in language acquisition. One clear example of comprehension occurring before production is the silent period. The difference between comprehension and production could be linked to cognitive or processing limitations. But production is not a supervised task; it is not strictly supervised learning (Elbers, 1995). The only way to know about this possibility of producing before comprehending is through experimentation. Comprehension and production processes are often related to the output hypothesis, though it can set the right conditions for language learning to take place.

Comprehension and production comes very useful at the time of observing whether students analyze prior to speak, or if these speakers of Limonese Creole give little importance to the learning of the target language.

### **2.4 Language interference**

Language learners use numerous strategies when they want to communicate in the target language. One of them is to use words or phonemes from their native language when they face a gap in vocabulary or pronunciation to overcome such gap. This type of scenario is more common if the native and target languages are close in their own structures. The result from this process of interference has received different names according to different scholars: language interference

(Ellis, 1997), transfer and cross-linguistic influence (Chang and Mishler, 2012), and contact-induced change (Van Coetsem, 1995).

Language interference was first introduced by Weinreich in 1953, and defined as "those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language" (Weinreich, 1953). It has also been referred to as negative transfer from first language into second language (Adedimiji, 2007), and even as the carryover of the linguistic habits of someone's native language to the target language (Egbokhare, 2007).

The influence that the native language may have when learning a second language (referred to as interference) has been mentioned as positive or negative depending on the output from the interference phenomenon (Ellis, 1988). Language interference is positive if the native language and the target language have similar structures, therefore the forms used by the learner to fill the gap are coincidentally correct. On the contrary, Odlin (1989) considered language interference as negative because the structures from native language taken by students would inhibit the learning of components of the target language. The outcome from language interference is very valuable material for scholars researching language learning process, in as much as the output may provide information on how students are getting the input received (contrastive analysis). An example is error correction as a common tool used to improve students' proficiency from their own output (Swain, 1995). Faerch and Kasper (1983) argue that the less contact that the learner has with his or her native language, the better scenario for learning there is.

## **2.5 Stimuli in the Language Learning Process**

Stimulus is understood as “something that causes a change or a reaction” (<http://www.learnersdictionary.com/definition/stimulus>). Harvey (1981) proposed that after an experiment, students reacted better to native-speed speech, even though it was faster yet it was more familiar to the subjects. The stimulus there presented was the ability to understand native-like speech over slow monotonous speech from recordings. The Audiolingual Method, for example, is based on the response to a linguistic stimuli. The respond to a correct request creates habit formation (Richards, J.C.et al, 1986).

Some linguists are in favor of stimulus while others argue against it. Constructionists such as Tomasello (1992) propose that language is learned through functional distribution analysis. Nativists, on the other hand, state that learners follow a more related Universal Grammar that Chomsky proposed in 1980 (that all humans are capable of learning grammar by the functions of their brains). However, a study by Hudson and Newport (2009) showed that creoles and pidgins systematize that language based on the probability and frequency of forms.

## **2.6 Learning styles**

All these arguments above mentioned, it is necessary to make a difference between stimulus and learning style. Learning styles are factors that facilitate the learning process for an individual in a specific situation. These factors may be influenced by culture, geography, maturity level, and individual experiences to mention a few. Even though effective teaching mixes various approaches, Rief (1993) states that students retain mostly on what they say and do, see and hear, and read. The following is a chart which includes the different learning styles by Brown (1994):

- Visual learners usually enjoy reading and prefer to see the words that they are learning. They also like to learn by looking at pictures and flashcards.
- Auditory learners prefer to learn by listening. They enjoy conversations and the chance for interactions with others. They don't need to see words written down.
- Tactile learners learn by touching and manipulating objects - also known as "hands-on" work.
- Kinesthetic learners like movement and need frequent breaks in desk activities.
- Field-independent learners (also called analytic learners) like to concentrate on the details of language, such as grammar rules, and enjoy taking apart words and sentences. They are sometimes unable to see the "big picture" because of their attention to its parts.
- Field-dependent learners (also known as global learners) focus on the whole picture and do not care so much about the details. For example, they are more interested in conveying an idea than worrying about whether it is grammatically correct.
- Reflective learners like to think about language and how to convey their message accurately. They tend not to make so many mistakes because they take time in formulating what they want to say.
- Impulsive learners take risks with the language. They are more concerned with speaking fluently than speaking accurately, and so make more mistakes.

Brown stressed the visual and auditory styles in apart, stating that both styles are the most preferred by learners. He even refers to them as another dimension of learning style that is salient in a formal classroom setting. Visual learners can remember words after seeing them a few times, and discriminate encryption better. Some material which can be used in the classroom for visual activities includes graphs, maps, charts, posters, and images in context. Auditory learners

remember words after hearing them a few times, and also discriminate between similar sounds. Interviewing, debating, and oral reports are some activities which can be used for auditory learning.

## **2.7 Learning strategies**

It is important to include also the strategies used by learners. Brown (1994) argues that in second language acquisition there are two types of strategies: the learning strategies, which deal with successfully receiving messages from others; and the communication strategies, involving how messages are positively delivered to the recipient. Transfer or language interference is considered a cognitive learning strategy through which the learner uses “previously acquired linguistic knowledge to facilitate a new language learning task” (Brown, 1994).

## **2.8 Multiple intelligences**

The theory of multiple intelligences was presented by Howard Gardner in his work “Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences” in 1983. Howard debated the idea that intelligence was a single entity that was inherited, and that humans were a blank paper who could be taught any type of knowledge. Gardner identified eight different types of intelligences that humans can possess and use:

- Linguistic intelligence: involves the ability to learn and use languages in spoken and written form; and the capacity to use such languages to achieve specific goals. It involves sensitivity to sounds, meaning, and rhythm of words.
- Logical-mathematical intelligence: includes reasoning and calculating; entails the ability to detect patterns and think logically.

- Spatial: implicates the potential to recognize and use patterns of space or area, either wide or confined.
- Musical: implies skills in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns.
- Body / kinesthetic intelligence: associates the use of the body effectively; physical activity may be accompanied by tools such as real objects.
- Interpersonal intelligence: involves interaction with other people or students; understanding and empathy for others is key.
- Intrapersonal intelligence: is concerned with understanding oneself, and being in tune with one's inner feelings, values, and beliefs.
- Naturalist intelligence: involves the ability to recognize and categorize objects in nature.

Children have the ability to memorize using their senses, and can even use cross-sense (Berman, 1988). This means that children can hear sounds, and also see sounds or hear colors. Gardner (1993) suggests that there is not only one type of intelligence but several instead, and he does not limit the amount to a number, however their definition represents a long process of research to determine its results.

Brewster, Ellis, and Girard (2003) state that the younger children start getting involved in physical activity, the more they will need to use their senses. Children can act out after listening to a short story, for example, or make a drawing about it; or even repeat the story in their own words. Using different senses to show that learning is taking place is a clear scenario that multiple intelligences occur in the EFL classroom.

Teachers are aware that their classrooms are full with students who are different from each other in as many ways. Their challenges (strengths and weaknesses), interests and background are different, which makes the teachers be aware of their individual intelligence style. It is for that reason that different learning strategies need to be used in order to assure that students are given different strategies to understand the and attain the objectives presented by the English teacher in the classroom effectively.

## **2.9 Pidgins and Creoles**

Although it was for long time that pidgins and creoles produce little interest to linguists, it is now that they are considered rather languages and not wrong versions of other languages (Holm, 1988). The fact that pidgins and creoles borrowed words from a language that was older to help the need for communication, made them seem to be distorted variants of that older language. It was by analyzing the phonological, syntactic, and word structures of those pidgins and creoles that scholars realized that their linguistic system is different from the languages from which they borrowed words.

The first scholar to carry out analysis on creoles was Hugo Schuchardt who stated that individuals lead the task in the social process of language amalgamation (Fought, 1982). But since his remarks took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they were not paid much attention to as his contemporaries continued thinking that pidgins and creoles could not be considered a normal language. Then Reinecke in 1937 (cf. Holm, 1988) concluded that pidgins and creoles own insights that were worth analyzing to the research of language study. He even mentioned that the way pidgins and creoles are formed are “very rapid and pronounced”. It was then at the end of the 1950s that the study of pidgins and creoles became an academic discipline. It was the insights

of Lavob in his African American Vernacular English that recounted the grounds for modern sociolinguistics (Holm, 1983).

Holm (2000) states that a pidgin is a limited language that is the result of contact between individuals who do not speak a common language, and the purpose is usually for trade. Those with less power (substrate) generally suit and use words from the language of individuals with more power (superstrate). However, all participants in the pidgin adopt the changes to be readily comprehended in order to help their needs. This resulting pidgin is limited to its original purpose and it does not serve as a native language (Hymes, 1971), yet it might evolve to satisfy more imperious communicative demands (Mühlhäusler, 1986).

A creole is then a language that originated from a pidgin that a generation of children was exposed to (nativization) and was eventually more useful than the native languages of their parents (Hall, 1966). Creole speakers need a more extended vocabulary to meet their daily needs, and the first generation was able to organize it into a language that may even have phonological or grammatical rules not found in the former pidgin, which aids to make it a more stable language. Many of creoles are the result of slave trade, and out of prejudice they have been referred to as dialects of the source language. Nowadays, the status of creoles has improved, and some have been acknowledged as official or semi-official languages (Sebba, 1997).

There are other researchers such as Mufwene (2000) who argues that a creole not always evolves from a pidgin. He states that

“...creoles developed in settlement colonies in which speakers of a European language, often indentured servants whose language would be far from the standard in the first place, interacted extensively with non-European slaves,



absorbing certain words and features from the slaves' non-European native languages, resulting in a heavily basilectalized version of the original language. These servants and slaves would come to use the creole as an everyday vernacular, rather than merely in situations in which contact with a speaker of the superstrate was necessary”.

A note about the difference between interference and interlanguage needs to be cleared out. The interlanguage hypothesis is acknowledged to Selinker with his paper "Interlanguage" in 1972, in which he remarks the speech of the second language learner when striving to accomplish meaning while using the target language and it is different from what a native speaker would produce. Interlanguage theory eventually led to Lado's claims that the analysis needed evidence from the learner's speech data to be compared to the system of a second language (Lado, 1957). What is important for this research is that the changes in the linguistic context are mainly local, meaning that the mispronunciation might rely on the similarity or difference from the native language phonological system.

It is quite interesting to notice that interlanguage happens at an individual level, but the creation of pidgins and creoles is the outcome of a group in contact with another language, which means that it is hard to shift while individuals may overcome the error and the interference from the native language is no longer existing.

The reason why this difference needs to be stated is that interlanguage has often been called pidginization by different scholars, a stage in which people acquire the target language in different levels (Veenstra, 2003), commonly in an elementary level. The next stage includes the shift in the target language in which the next generation of speakers acquire the new form of language communication, and both the pidgin and the older language are not learned anymore.

## 2.10 Limonese Creole

In all Central America, especially in the Caribbean coastal towns, there has been a considerable number of speakers of the creole diversity in each country, every one of them having their own history and characteristics. Regarding the Limon province, the encounter of American businessmen and Afro-Caribbean immigrants has molded the linguistic style of the province. These American investors controlled the economic and political sectors in Limon, which contributed to the conservation of the language that the black immigrants from Jamaica used. Since there was very scarce contact between black people from Limon with the rest of Costa Ricans, both Jamaican Creole and English were the languages most used in Limon. It was after the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that Spanish was more widely used in Limon, and then English and Jamaican Creole were reduced in use (Zimmer, 2007). However, by that time Limonese Creole was already a solid existing language used in Limon that had some features of English but mostly from Jamaican Creole. Some researchers have mentioned that Limonese Creole was originated by the contact of American investors and bosses with black slaves brought to Costa Rica to work on the railroad and the attempts of these last ones to communicate (Herzfeld, 1992). The most probable scenario was of individuals of black origin hired to work on the railroad who already spoke Jamaican Creole, who also had a decent understanding of the English spoken by the white foreigners in charge of the railroad construction logistics. The mixture of the Jamaican Creole with English, Spanish, Chinese, and even the languages of some native Indian tribes in the Limon province molded what has been known as Limonese Creole, which was long used as the native language for some generations (Zimmer, 2007). Linguistic and cultural factors (such as the origin of Limonese Creole from Jamaican Creole, and also the influence of the religious services), along with social and economic aspects (including the human

development results regarding poverty and unemployment) will be considered for the linguistic analysis in this research.

### 2.11 Phonology of Limonese Creole

Phonemes are known as the abstraction of a speech sound or of a group of speech sounds which have the same function by the speakers of that particular language or dialect.

Regarding the phonological system of Limonese Creole there are different arguments from three different researchers:

- Portilla (1993) proposes a phonological system of eight vowels, four diphthongs and twenty-one consonants.
- Herzfeld (2002) presents a system of five vowels, six diphthongs, a double vowel, and twenty-five consonants.
- Zuñiga (2014) states that the Limonese Creole has six vowels (five simple ones and a long one), twenty-one consonants, and four diphthongs. This is shown below:

		labiodental	bilabial	Dentoalveolar	alveopalatal	velar	glotal
oclusivas	sd.		p	t		k	
	sn.		b	d		g	
Africadas	sd.				tʃ		
	sn.				dʒ		
Fricativas	sd.	f		s	ʃ		h
	sn.	v		z	(ʒ)		

Nasales			m	n	ɲ	ŋ	
Lateral				l			
Retrofleja				ɫ			
semicons.			w		j		

	Anterior	central	posterior
altas	i (i:)		u (u:)
medias	e		o
baja		a a:	

Not one of these positions has been granted any consideration as definite; however they are all cited as they are the most elaborated works on Limonese Creole phonology presented so far. Yet the knowledge of phonemes acquainted to the creole language makes it clear to acknowledge it as a separate language that can somehow be sided in the learning of a second language which has similarities in the phonemic part.

## 2.12 Standard English Phonology

The fact that English is used all around the world, and that there are numerous variations in its different structures, the type considered in this paper is the standardized form that the Ministry of Public Education promotes according to its study programs. The following list shows the account for phonemes in Costa Rican Standard English:

- Twenty-five consonants; eleven vowels; and seven diphthongs.

English is really a stable language, and the differences between its varieties nowadays usually involve vowels; yet it does not necessarily mean that this work would be restricted to vowels only.

Phonological interference is a common type of interference, its most prominent manifestation being a “foreign accent”. In this study, it is shown how Limonese Creole speakers, who lack of the standard English phonemes considered in this study, would then replace them with their native segments as a form to fill that linguistic gap.

### **III. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Type of research**

The pertinent selection of the method is essential in a research project. The exact selection of the approach or method is based on the research questions structured by the researcher. Seliger and Shohamy (1995) state that descriptive research combine qualitative and quantitative research. Because of the data collection instruments and techniques used in this particular research (such as questionnaires, interviews and surveys), and considering that the description of collected data from and characteristics of the target population are imperative to obtain accurate information, a descriptive research design is elemental. Therefore, classroom observations and no manipulation of the research setting and population lead to a qualitative approach. Yet this approach is only partial. On the grounds that the majority of the data collected is first hand, that this research starts with a preconceived hypothesis (language transfer of Limonese Creole to English), and that it provides measures of frequency, in this case use of Limonese Creole phonemes when trying to produce in English, a quantitative approach is also necessary.

Qualitative and quantitative research approaches have been commonly referred to as opposite. Miles and Huberman (1994) mention that qualitative research helps to understand by discovering key attitudes, feelings, or reasoning from people, whereas quantitative research is used to assess, measure, compare and predict. Integrating qualitative and quantitative research approaches, on the other hand, show more profits from the use of both methods of what is called a “mixed approach”. The primary assertion of this mixed method is that it allows a more complete use of the information rather than analyzing it separately (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). As for this research of Limonese Creole interference to English in the phonetic field, a descriptive research matches the mixed method approach in as much as it combines characteristics from both the quantitative and qualitative methods (observation and questionnaires as mentioned above, for example).

### **3.2 Subjects**

The primary sources of information in this research include fifth grade regular students at IEGB Limon 2000 who are native Limonese Creole speakers. Purposeful sampling was used (also known as convenience sampling), which means that the sampling was not done at random (Morse, 1991; Patton, 2002), but rather selected by the researcher mainly because these students were available at the time of the data collection process. Also, the three English teachers at IEGB Limon 2000, its Principal, and a parent were part of the data collection process.

The population is the group of people that have the characteristics that are investigated in the study. For the goals of this paper, the selection of the sampling had to be very specific, and closely related to the research question and design.

Some disadvantages that purposive sampling has (which may include bias according to Corrina et al, 2008) are the following: the school type is not the same as the other schools in the Limon area; target students are different from the rest of the students; and that teachers who were given questionnaires are not the only English speakers at school.

The setting of the research was in the Limon province where Limonese Creole has its majority of speakers in Costa Rica. IEGB Limon 2000 is located in Liverpool, a community thirteen miles north of Limon downtown, and its inhabitants are mainly Costa Ricans. Families are formed by a mixture of races, which means that black people would marry Caucasian or indigenous partners.

The five students selected for this research have studied English formally in elementary school for at least five years, and speak Limonese Creole fluently at home and at school. Their ages range from ten to thirteen, and they are all Afro-Caribbean. The socio-economic situation of the target students is dramatic, only one student has professional parents (one student even has a parent incarcerated). These five students attend to school during the morning shift, from Monday through Friday.

Regarding the size of the subject population, Seliger and Shohamy (1995) state that a small sampling does not really affect the research outcomes and it depends on other variables such as research design or topic which are the focus of the investigation.

As the researcher needed to obtain results that are reliable and valid, the use of triangulation came of great use especially considering that this specific study involved a descriptive approach. Cohen and Manion (2000) define triangulation as an "attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more

than one standpoint." The mixed methodology used in this paper helps to sustain the integration of qualitative and quantitative methods of research, for the use of more than one approach of data collection increases the degree of validity and confidence of the findings (Gorard, 2004). The observations carried out at school and in the community allowed the researcher to gather evidence about the use of Limonese Creole phonemes by the target students but also limited him to record his impressions of what the environment showed, because he was an observant-participant. In order to confirm that the data was accurate, some questionnaires handed to students and teachers provided information that was useful to build up on the initial findings. Late interviews to different authorities in the educational and sociological field contributed to consolidate the data collected through the other instruments applied previously.

### 3.3 Analysis of information

The chart below shows how the analysis was done. It includes the information gathered; the instruments used, and the relative proportion of the sample:

Variable	Conceptual definition	Operational definition	Instrumental definition
Independent variable			
Language transfer	Language transfer refers to using the knowledge of one language to another (Brown, 2000)	Do Limonese Creole speaking students use their native language when trying to produce orally in English?	Classroom observation: descriptive data
Dependent variable			
Phonemic proficiency	It refers to the summary of the pronunciation production of students.	Do visual and auditory stimuli elicit prompt natural responses to use target language orally?	Use of flashcards to elicit words in English from the Limonese Creole students



Independent variable			
Frequency of transfer	Frequency of transfer means if the occurrence of transfer is high	Is there a high frequency in transfer in phonetics ?	Use of flashcards to elicit words in English from the Limonese Creole students
Dependent variable			
Oral production	Ability to communicate with others	Is the oral production frequently affected by transfer?	Use of survey such as questionnaire Also use of flashcards
Independent variable			
Language transfer	Language transfer refers to using the knowledge of one language to another (Brown, 2000)	Does language transfer affect English as a foreign language by imposing native's language phonemic traits?	Personal survey: Individual opinion from specialists
Dependent variable			
Second language learning	Process to learn a second language	Is the learning process of English as a foreign language affected by the students' native language?	Surveys to teachers and authorities in education and sociology
Independent variable			
Perspective of authorities	Personal opinion	What is the opinion of language authorities about the teaching of Limonese Creole?	Survey to language authorities
Dependent variable			
Teaching of Limonese Creole	Formal teaching of Limonese Creole	Should Limonese Creole be taught in schools in Limon?	Survey to English Regional Advisor and to sociologist

Table 1. Conceptualization, operationalization, and instrumentalization of the variables.

### **3.4 Data Collection Instruments**

The data used in this research varies as it is a descriptive type of approach, or mixed method. As stated by Seliger and Shohamy (1995), data includes every kind of activity or behavior which is observable by the researcher in a second language setting, and is meaningful for the focus of the present study, and agrees with the variables identified. The collection of data should be objective and systematic: objective meaning that it should not be influenced by the collector; and systematic meaning that every subject should be treated equally.

The primary data sources of this research include the students of fifth grade who are Limonese Creole speakers. For this target population, observations, flash cards, and surveys were used to collect the necessary information to answer the research questions. Surveys were also passed on to the three different English teachers at IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School. In addition, one questionnaire was applied to the Principal of the school, and another questionnaire was asked to the Regional Supervisor. In regards to parents (especially considering the age of the students), an interview was structured to get their opinion on the use, teaching, and learning of Limonese Creole and English languages.

#### **3.4.1 Observation**

Observational method (also referred to as field observation) is divided into two categories: naturalistic observation and laboratory observation. For clear reasons, the naturalistic observation used in this study was carried out both inside and outside the classroom, so that the researcher was able to view the subjects in their natural environment, which provides more

validity to the study (Seliger and Shohamy, 1995). The researcher then took a non participant role, and the observations were documented accordingly.

The observations were divided into four periods in which students were in the English class. Besides, students were observed during breaks and also at official assemblies carried out in the school. It is relevant to mention that target students were not observed only hanging among themselves, but also when interacting with teachers at the school, especially Afro-Caribbean teachers.

During these observations, the researcher tried to follow how the students would communicate with the other children, and also how they would address or be addressed to any other member of the school community.

### **3.4.2 Audio - visual aids**

Audio-visual aids have existed for long time yet their usage was not as common in the classroom as one can expect (Prostano and Prostano, 1982). More recently, the advent of technology has moved from slides to video recordings used in class (Hallet and Faria, 2006). Audio-visual aids are also called “instructional material”, and the objective of using them is to try to make the learning experience as real as possible.

The visual aids used in this study were flashcards. Flash cards are a set of pictured paper cards of varying sizes that are flashed one by one in a logical sequence. They can be self made or commercially prepared and are made up of chart or drawing paper, plain paper using colors or ink on them for drawings (Neelu, 2010). Students were presented first flashcards which showed isolated single words for them to pronounce; then some illustrations of household or school

objects were showed to them to elicit their pronunciation in English; and finally complete sentences including questions for them to answer.

The vowel, diphthong and consonant phonemes to be used in the instruments for language comparison between Creole and English are (in boldface): the vowels **ə** as in sun; **æ** as in cat; **ɔ** as in dog or daughter; and **ɪ** as in sit. The diphthongs **ɛɪ** as in cake; **ɑʊ** as in house; **oʊ** as in home; and **ɔɪ** as in point. And the consonants **θ** as in thank; **ð** as in this or that; **t** as in tall; and **g** as in garden.

The purpose of working with the students in the classroom using visual and auditory aids (which are shown in the annexes section) was to elicit spontaneous responses from them so that they could use language as natural as possible. Images, words, and phrases were selected from the program of studies of first grade by the Ministry of Public Education, and they contained images, isolated words and complete sentences for the students to react to. The material used included English phonemes that were not present in the Limonese Creole phonological system, yet there were no expected answers so the researcher would record whatever pronunciation that the students produced.

### **3.4.3 Survey**

Surveys are methods of research in which participants are asked to answer questions through interviews or questionnaires. These questions should be elaborated appropriately so that the instrument is valid and reliable, and they should be clear and easy to understand (Seliger and Shohamy, 1995). The questions to be used could be open-ended, closed-ended, or rating-scale questions (Jackson, 2009). The questionnaires used in this study aimed to find out the perspective of students, teachers, parents, principal, and supervisor in regards to the use, teaching

and learning of Limonese Creole and English in general, not only at school. The questionnaires were all printed, and participants were provided a few days to return them.

The only interview used was a semi-structured one with a parent (the rest of parents were unable to show at school) in order to obtain information that could not be obtained by mere observations, and also to have the participant answer in a way that was somehow expected while trying to maintain a respectful environment. Therefore, the interview was not recorded.

### **3.5 Description of procedures**

The instruments used were collected over a period of two months. Previous to the visitations, the researcher contacted the target school (IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School) and formally requested permission to carry out the observations and the application of the instruments. To facilitate this process, the researcher mentioned a letter from the UNA describing the purpose of the research. The English Regional Advisor was also contacted by the researcher prior to visit the target school in order to make an appointment for an eventual interview.

Once all permissions were cleared, the researcher went on to visit the target school, and turned in the above mentioned letter and the consent form to obtain permission to work with the students. Immediately after, the researcher started the field work by doing some observations in the school and specifically in the classroom. The following visits were used to apply all the instruments to the complete target population. The interview to Mr. Donald Allen was executed in San Jose at a workshop about Caribbean Culture at the National Museum.

### **3.6 Reliability**

As important as validity, reliability also assesses the quality of the procedure to collect data in a research project. . An advantage of the use of validity is that the researcher can test the instruments prior to real application so that modifications are made if necessary (Seliger and Shohamy, 1995).

The flash card instrument for visual and oral aids used in this research added more items to help students dodge the filtration of information among students, which according to Seliger increased the reliability of the instrument.

### **3.7 Validity**

Validity is a very important principle in this descriptive study. It was applied to the data collected that answered the research questions. Validity is divided in two categories: internal and external. Internal validity confirms that the design of the study is correct; it also helps assure that the instruments used were clear. External validity is the range in which the results of the research are similar to other studies done in other places, and may then be generalized to other scenarios.

As stated earlier, triangulation of the results is a way to reinforce the validity of the findings. Triangulation endorses that the method used is right by examining the outcomes from different view. The use of at least three different instruments for collecting the data (questionnaires, interviews, and observations) enhances that validity can be reached through triangulation.

### **3.8 Scope of the research**

Even though Limonese Creole is spoken by nearly 70,000 people in Costa Rica, this study is specific to the IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School because of the Limonese Creole

population there. It is possible, however, that replication in another school having Limonese Creole students can be done. This study involves a school community where Limonese Creole speakers attend to school regularly, and show proficient communication skills in the Creole language only (especially considering that the target students are native Spanish speakers also).

### **3.9 Limitations**

The event that impacted or influenced the results or their interpretation in a research project is defined as limitations. They are worth the appraisal and interpretation of their impact. The fact that most of teachers in IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School are Afro-Caribbean subjects, and that among teachers Limonese Creole is the preferred language to be used, leads to a position of doubt regarding the effectiveness of the English class at that school versus the language heard from teachers at the same place. It was noticeable, nevertheless, that students would hardly answer in Limonese Creole when addressed by their teachers, replying in Spanish or with non-verbal language instead.

Some other limitations in a minor scale were sample size; no prior research studies on the topic; the geographical and weather conditions; and the extra-curricular activities which interfered with the regular schedule of classes such as teachers' meetings; union meetings; or artistic rehearsal.

## **IV. Data analysis and interpretation**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In a descriptive research, the way of presenting the data is usually through descriptive statistics, or in other words, a quantitative way to describe the information collected. In the

descriptive research, the objective is to describe a sample (simply describe what the data shows), rather than to use the information collected to infer about the population represented by the sample (Seliger and Shohamy, 1995). Those summaries may be presented visually as in tables or graphs, and can be part of a larger analysis, or fair enough for a specific research.

Statistics in a descriptive study are useful to transform large amounts of information in a sensible simple way. For the purpose of this research, the data collected about English and Limonese Creole phonemes would be represented with smaller indicators compared to the amount of tasks executed. This principle would be simply represented in the tables and graphs next.

#### **4.2 Anonymity of the participants**

The anonymity of the participants in this research is ensured considering various factors, yet two of them are emphasized. First, the age of the students which was really remarked by the IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School Principal's Assistant; and secondly the direct request by the adult participant to protect her or his identity. Another reason to not reveal the identity of the target population who helped on this research as participants is that this was a descriptive research; therefore there is not much of recognition for the ownership of the results of the investigation.

To protect the identity of the research participants, for readers other than the participants themselves identity cannot be identifiable as theirs (Heath and Luff, 1995). For the students their identity shows in the style of letters and numbers, and regarding the teachers the distinct feature is the numbers. As there is only one School Principal, one parent, and one Regional Supervisor their names have been removed and their titles are used instead. In the case of the sociologist



Donald Allen, he did not have any inconvenience for being recorded while interviewed or for the use of his name.

The students' identity is represented by the symbols K1, D1, S1, B1, and R1. The English teachers are represented by the symbols ET1, ET2, and ET3.

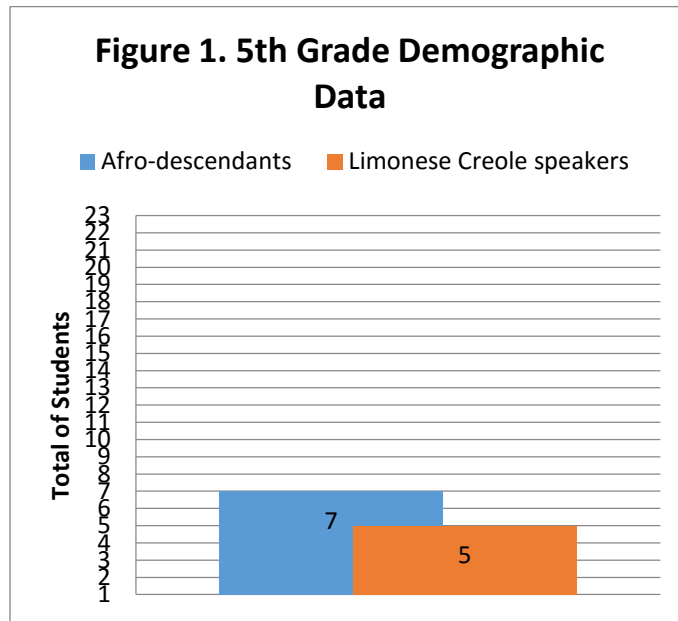
### **4.3 Description of the sample**

For this investigation, the researcher used different techniques to collect data. Observations were carried out in the classroom and in the vicinities of the facilities were carried out to catch the language used by the students' participants. Surveys in the form of questionnaires and interviews were employed to obtain some facts and impressions from all the target population. Application of visual and auditory material in the form of images and sentences read to students were used to elicit their closest to natural pronunciation in Standard English as taught in the classroom.

### **4.4 Data Collection Techniques**

The students who participated in this research were five Limonese Creole native speakers. They represent a total of twenty-three students in that particular fifth grade class which is divided by the different categories in the following chart:

**Figure 1. Demographic Data**



**4.4.1 Variables**

**4.4.1.1** Language interference of Limonese Creole to English present in the phonological domain in an EFL classroom

**Observation**

An observation is made through the human senses to obtain information, including the surroundings of the setting. Therefore, the researcher in this study tried to observe the many occasions in which Limonese Creole was used by the target population regardless of the event (class, break, or students’ assembly to name a few). The following descriptive data shows the amount of times in which the participants use Limonese Creole when talking in the school:

Observations	1	2	3	4
Samples	“i” for “he”	/sidon/ for	/sa/ for “sir”	/nuo/ for

	/doar/ for “door”	“sit down”	/nou/ for “now”	“know”
		/fies/ for		/niam/ for
	/bɔt/ for “but”	“face”	/ier/ for “here”	“eat”
		/kɔt/ for		
	/fuor/ for “four”	“cut”	/dag/ for “dog”	
		/buord/ for		
	/iet/ for eight	“board”		
		/brada/ for		
	/farti/ for “forty”	“brother”		

- Students talked among themselves in the English class using Spanish but when addressing to the teacher they used Standard English as taught by the teacher, especially in short sentences, such as short answers like “Yes” or “Patty” as the unit being studied was about food. Sometimes Limonese Creole phonemes were inserted in their utterances, for example “He (is) at the door” using the segment /ɔa/ instead of /ɔ/ for the word “door”. The Limonese Creole language uses a long vowel phoneme /ɔa/ instead of one that is less long: /ɔ/ (Portilla, 1993.)
- Students who are Limonese Creole speakers would hang out together outside the classroom (observed on three different days) and they would either use Spanish or

Limonese Creole to address one another, or a mixture of both. In no occasion were they heard by the researcher using Standard English outside the classroom.

- The English teacher used Standard English to address to the students but some Limonese Creole phonemes were used such as in the case of the word “forty” in which the /ɔ/ was replaced by /ɑ/.
- The teachers who are Afro-descendants talked to each other in Limonese Creole, and would address to Limonese Creole speaking students in Limonese Creole. However, students would not answer using Limonese Creole but in Spanish instead or by non verbal signs such as nodding.

### **Questionnaire for teachers**

Question six requested teachers to mention some substitution that Limonese Creole speaking students use when producing in Standard English. Since all three English teachers responded with examples, which means that transfer in the phonological domain happened in all of their classes (which also answer the first research question), the following examples are cited:

- T1 mentioned “com mir” (/kɔm mir/ for “come here” as an expression from students who speak Limonese Creole, which shows the absence of the phonemes /oʊ/, /ə/ and /h/.
- T2 noted that Limonese Creole speaking students say “fi” instead of “for”.
- T3 wrote down that students who speak Limonese Creole also say “fi” meaning the word “for”. Also, that the Limonese Creole speakers do not conjugate the third singular person to add either an “s” at the end or any other form in that regard, moreover, there is no

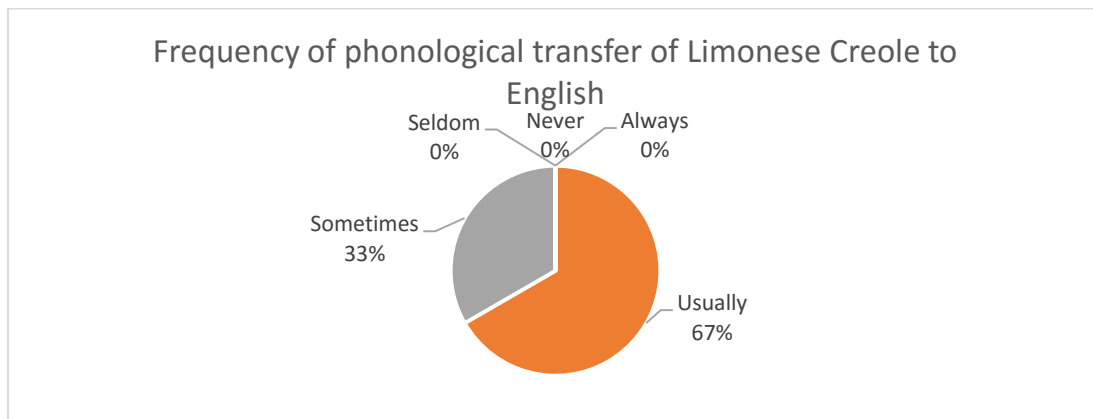
regular ending “-ed” for the past tense form. In addition, this teacher added the use of the word “them” to refer to they, and even pointed out the phoneme /d/ instead of /ð/.

#### 4.4.1.2 Frequency of occurrence of Creole phonemes in the production of oral Standard English

##### Questionnaire for teachers

The following chart shows the responses from teachers regarding the frequency of phonological transfer of Limonese Creole to English by their Afro-descendant students:

**Figure 2. Frequency of phonological transfer of Limonese Creole to English**

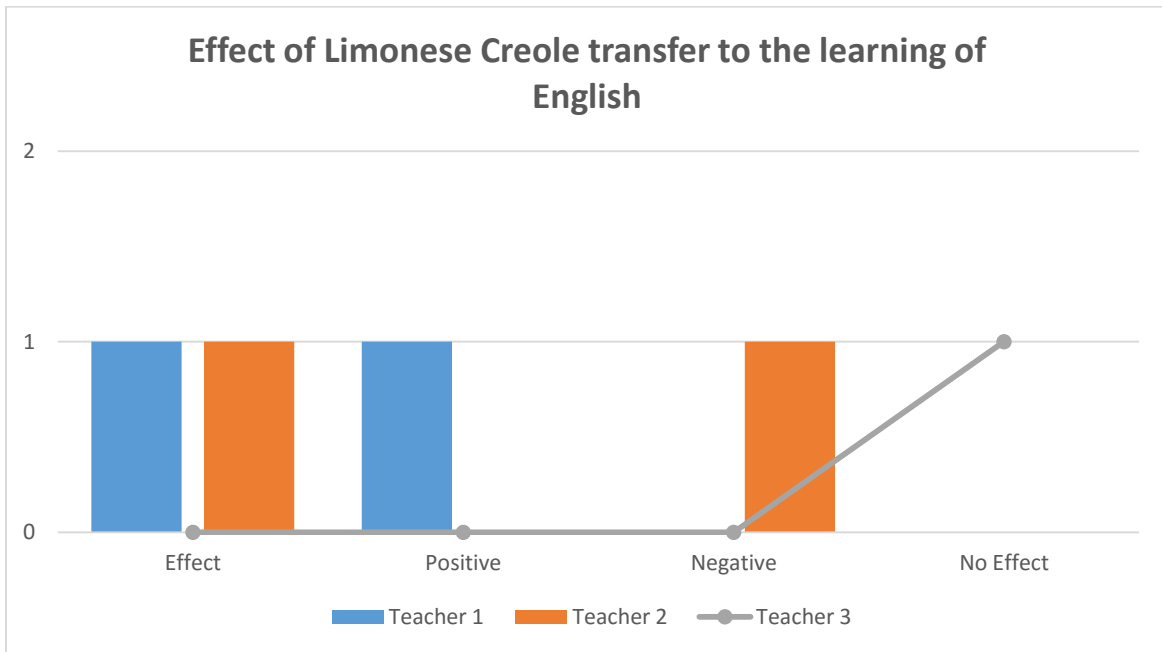


Two out of the three teachers responded that it usually (once a week) occurred, whereas one responded that it sometimes (every other week) happened.

#### 4.4.1.3 Language interference and English teaching and learning processes

The last question addressed to English teachers at IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School was related to the effect of Limonese Creole in the learning of Standard English. Figure nineteen shows their responses:

**Figure 3. Effect of Limonese Creole transfer to the learning of English**



Two out of the three English teachers responded that being proficient in Limonese Creole had an effect in the learning of English, yet one of them added that such effect was positive, while the other teacher wrote that the effect was negative. The other teacher left the question unanswered.

### **Interviews**

Two different perspectives were found in the analysis of the interviews regarding the effect of Limonese Creole in the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. The English Regional Advisor (who is not Afro-descendant) acknowledged the co-existence of Limonese Creole and English, and due to its original roots of English, the effect is not negative but rather positive.

The answer given by the school principal regarding her language abilities pointed towards the use of the word “English” instead of Limonese Creole or any other word related to such language, which means that the school’s principal did not make a difference between English and Limonese Creole. The same perspective was stated by Mr. Allen, who also called Limonese Creole the “English language passed from generations rooted in Britain.

#### **4.4.1.4 Perspective of Limon authorities on the importance of learning English and Creole**

##### **Interview**

For this research question, two points of view were considered: that from the English Regional Advisor, and the one from the sociologist. The standpoint of the parent was not contemplated because of her standpoint of Limonese Creole not having written form or grammar.

The English Regional Advisor affirmed that it would be interesting to teach Limonese Creole to non Afro-descendants (not specifically did he mention a domain). The sociologist Mr. Allen stated that such an enterprise required much more study than what has been done so far. In addition, he mentioned that Afro-descendants had a feeling of keeping the Limonese Creole language for themselves or any other native speaker of a different ethnic group.

The rest of the data is presented next, and it supports the validity of the instruments used in the research.

#### **4.4.2 Questionnaires**

Of the total of nine questionnaires distributed, five were given to the students, three to the English teachers, and one to the School Principal. All of them completed the questionnaires, and the information will be presented separately by their occupational titles.

The data gathered through the questionnaires was subjected to frequency count. This means that the answers of the subjects in the questionnaires were added up to find the frequency of occurrence. As these answers are quantified, they are represented in the form of percentages. The use of tables may contain one or more variables in a single table.

#### 4.4.2.1 Questionnaires to students

To begin with, the questionnaires addressed to students are analyzed. The first question asked was about the ages of the students. Please see figure two which describes the ages of the target students (Limonese Creole speakers).

**Figure 4. Students age in complete years**

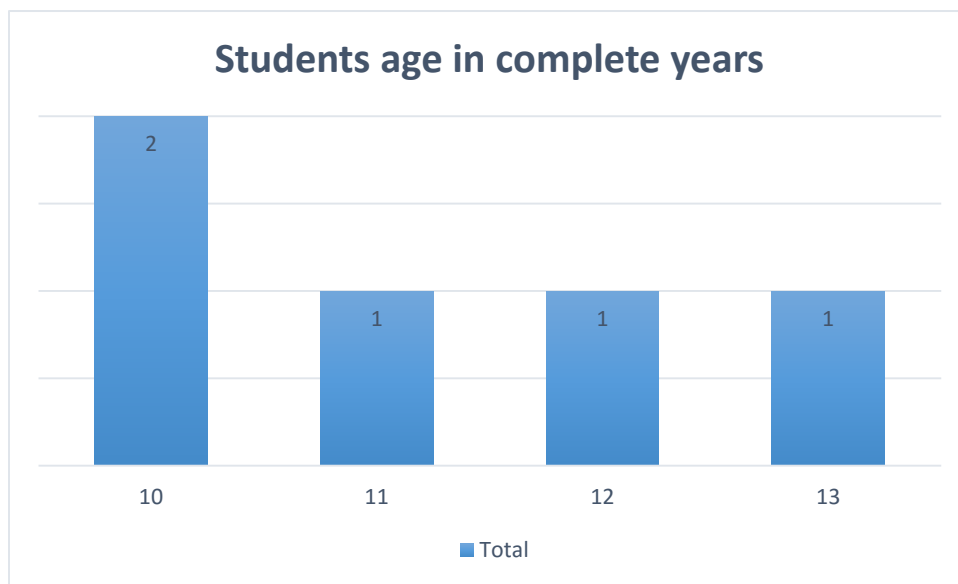
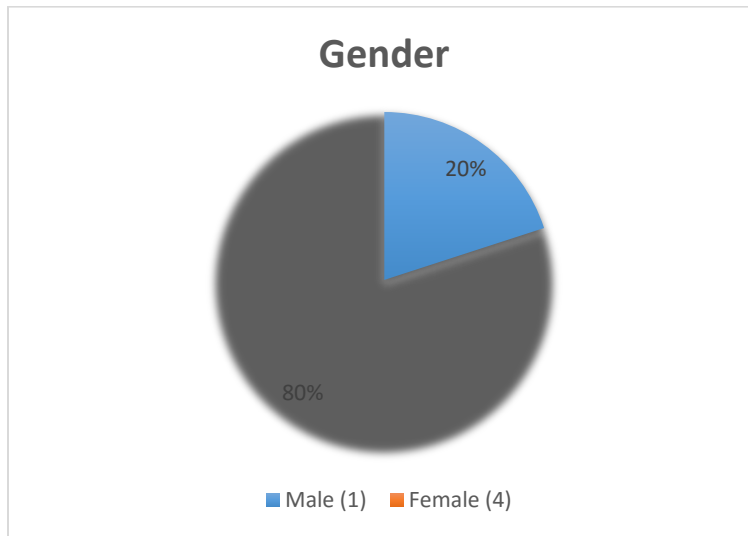


Figure two presents the age distribution of the five respondents. The age range of the respondents was from 10 to 13 years of age. Two of them were ten year olds, one was eleven, another twelve, and the oldest student from the sample was thirteen years old.

Four out of the five students were female; see figure three for that.

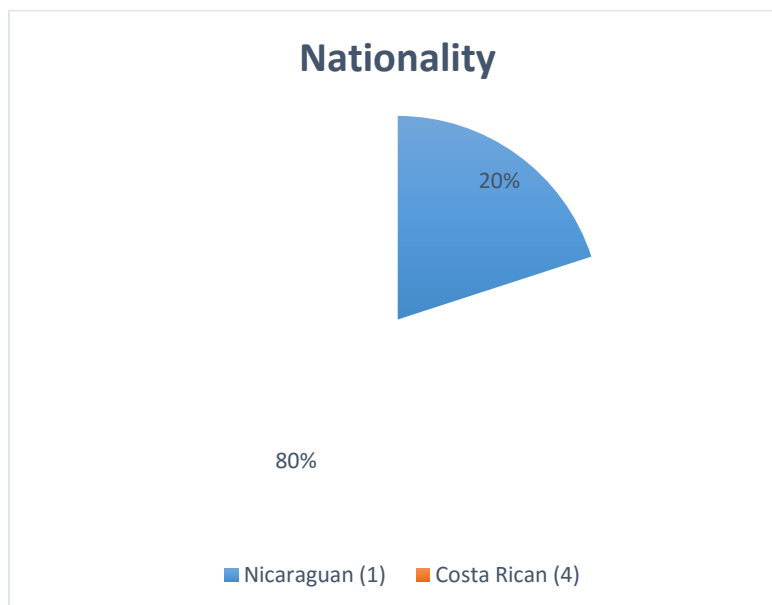


**Figure 5. Gender**



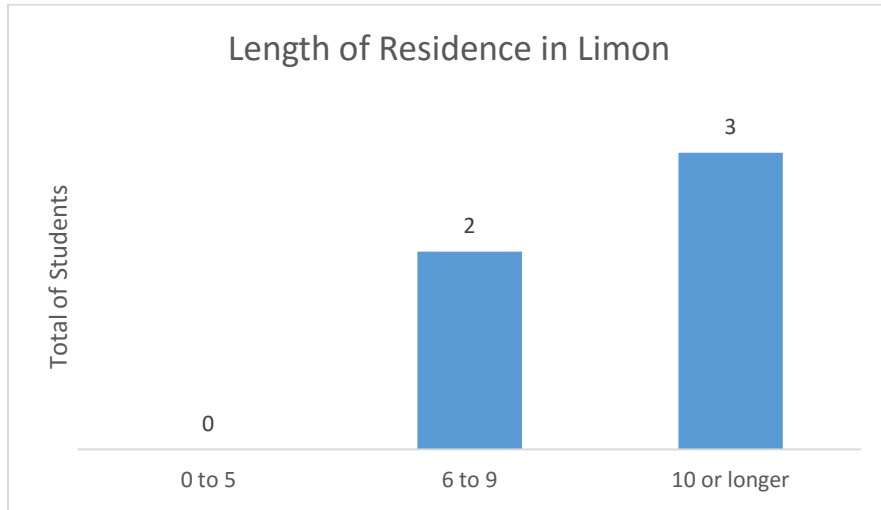
Also, four of them are Costa Ricans, and one of them is Nicaraguan. That information is shown in figure four:

**Figure 6. Nationality**



Question three asked about the length of residence in the Limon province. See figure five for that:

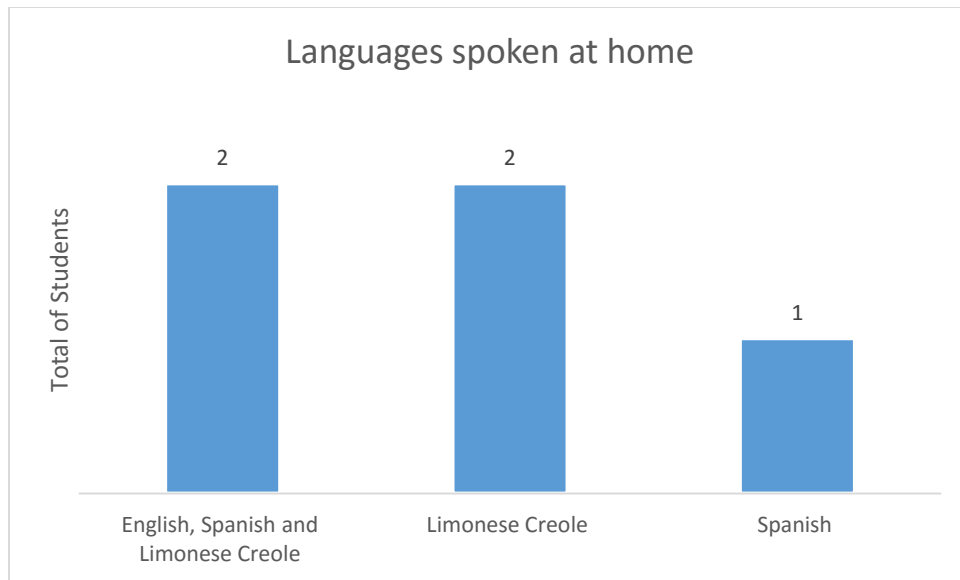
**Figure 7. Length of Residence in Limon**



The information in that chart shows that two of the target students have lived in Limon from six to ten years, and three of them have lived there for ten years or longer.

Regarding the next question, students' responses about the languages they speak at home is shown in figure six below:

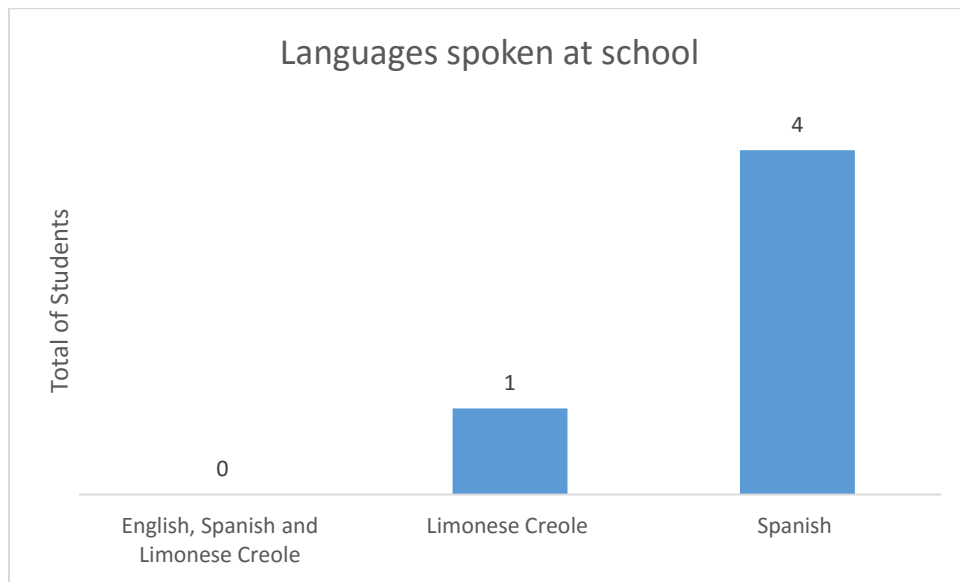
**Figure 8. Languages spoken at home**



This table shows that two of them speak English, Spanish and Limonese Creole at home (at this point it is important to mention that Limonese Creole is referred to as English for some of its speakers, so a matter of semantics could have affected the understanding of the question.) Two other students responded that they speak Limonese Creole at home, and one target student responded that at home they speak Spanish (this is explained by the mixture or combination of ethnics at home, where one of the parents is a Limonese Creole speaker but the spouse or partner is not, so the common language of communication is Spanish in this particular case.)

Question five requested information about the language that the target students speak at school. Figure seven below shows the results:

**Figure 9. Languages spoken at school**



Clearly, four out of five students responded that they speak Spanish at school with their peers, but only one of them uses Limonese Creole instead.

Question six asked for the languages that they used out of the school with their friends.

Figure eight presents the results as follows:

**Figure 10. Languages spoken with friends (out of the school)**

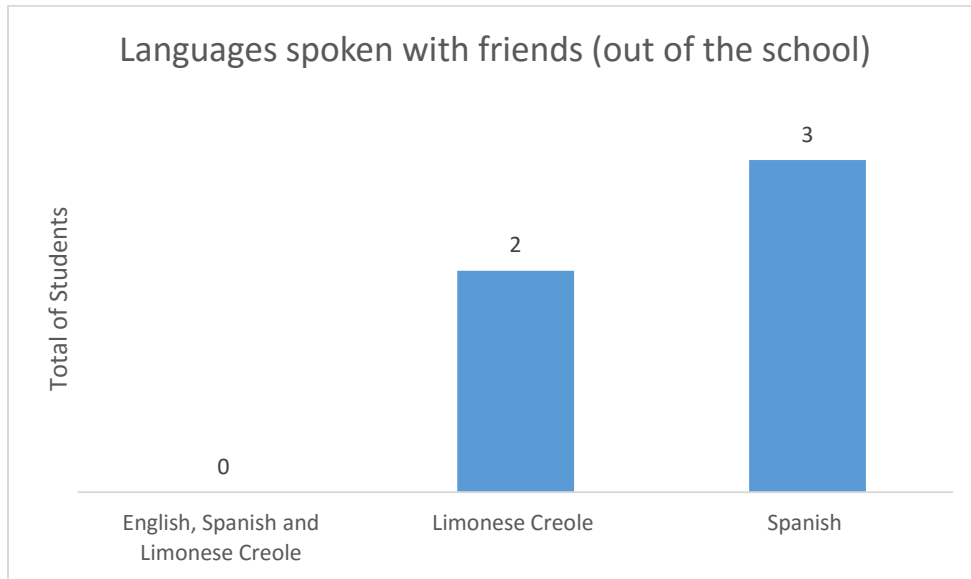
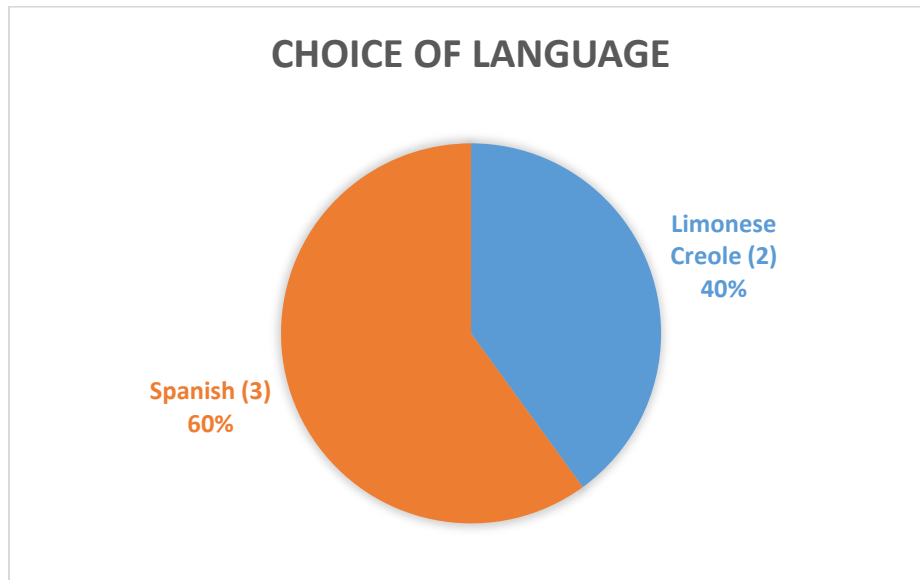


Figure eight shows that three out of the five target students use Spanish when addressing to their friends out of the school while two of them responded that they use Limonese Creole.

In regards to which language the target students feel more comfortable with when speaking, most of them answer that it was Spanish. Please see figure nine for that:

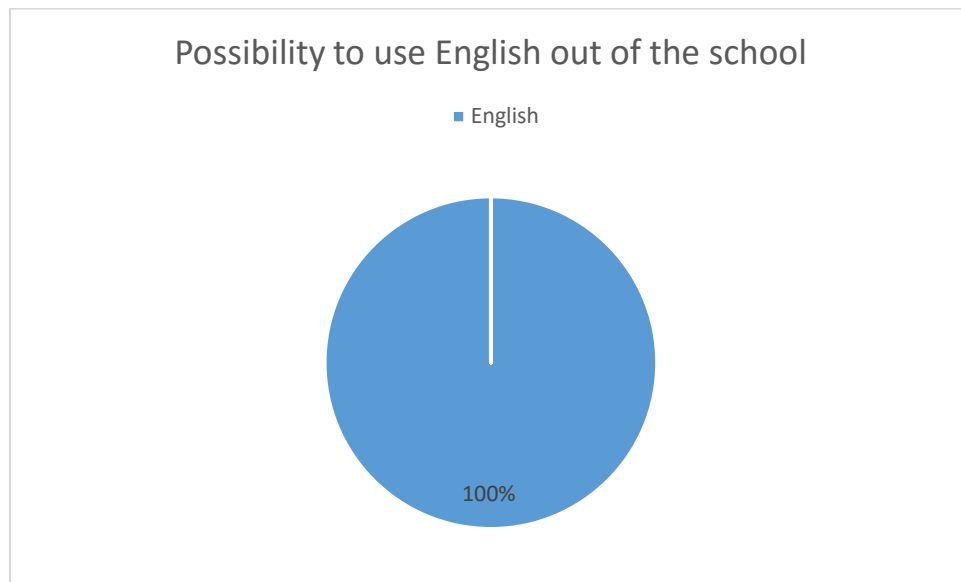
**Figure 11. Choice of Language**



In figure nine it can be read that three out of the five students prefer to use Spanish while the other two students would rather use Limonese Creole as their language of preference.

Question eight refers to the possibility to use English out of the school. Figure ten shows the results:

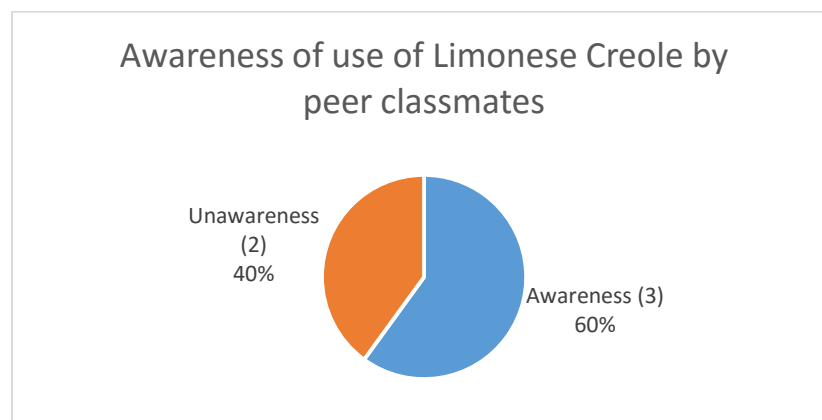
**Figure 11. Possibility to use English out of the school**



Even though all of the students responded positively, it is again pertinent to remember that they might use the word English to refer to the Limonese Creole language.

The next question requests observation from the target students about the occurrence of using Limonese Creole by their peer classmates when trying to produce in English. Please see the next figure:

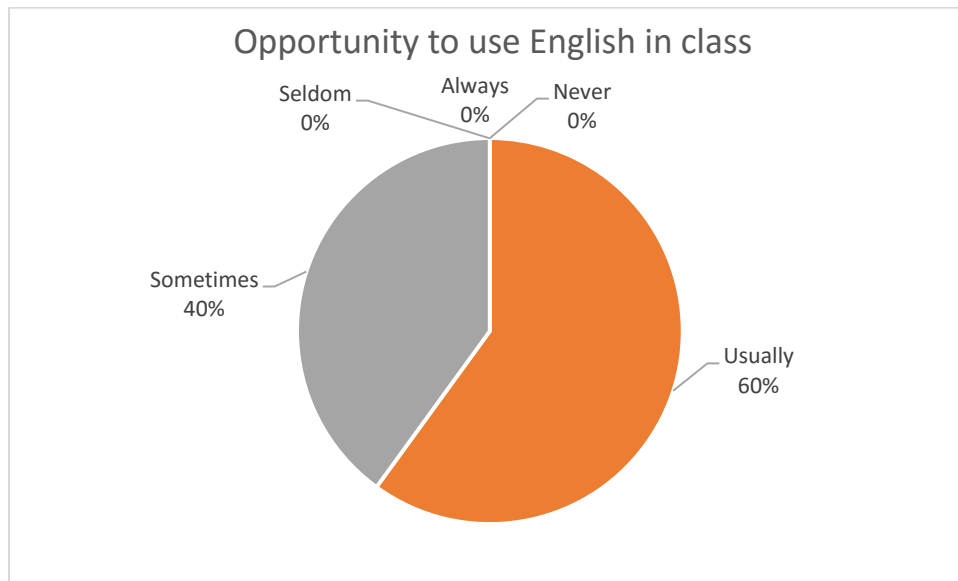
**Figure 12. Peer perception of transfer of Limonese Creole**



Out of the five students, three acknowledged the use of Limonese Creole from their classmates when trying to speak in English. On the other hand, the other two students responded negatively.

The final question in this questionnaire addressed to students who are able to use Limonese Creole is related to the frequency to use English in class. Then again, since the use of English in class is expected all the time, a misunderstanding of the concept of the word “English” referring to a language might have affected the reliability of the item. The results showed positively as seen in figure twelve:

**Figure 13. Frequency of the use of English in class**



Three out of five students responded that they can use English in a usual fashion (at least once a week), while the other two students responded that sometimes they can use English in class (at least once a month). It is relevant to notice that the target students may consider Limonese Creole as English when answering the questionnaires, which does not really reflect the use of Standard English in the classroom, making the result of the item questionable.

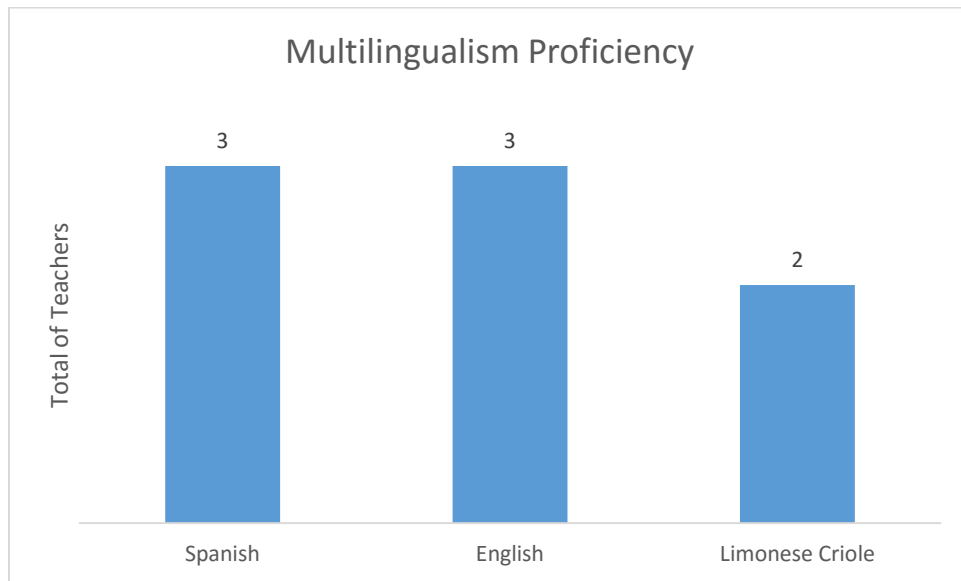
#### 4.4.2.2 Questionnaires to teachers

In this section, questionnaires to English teachers were analyzed and the results described accordingly.

The first question refers to the grades taught by the teachers. In this question the researcher only included I and II cycles (first grade to sixth grade); there is one teacher questioned who works with the III cycle students (seventh grade to ninth grade). The results show then that there are two English teachers who work with all the grades in I and II cycle.

The rest of the questions in this questionnaire can be answered for all the three English teachers indistinctively. Question two requested teachers to mention the languages that they speak or at least understand. Please see figure below for that matter:

**Figure 14. Multilingualism Proficiency**





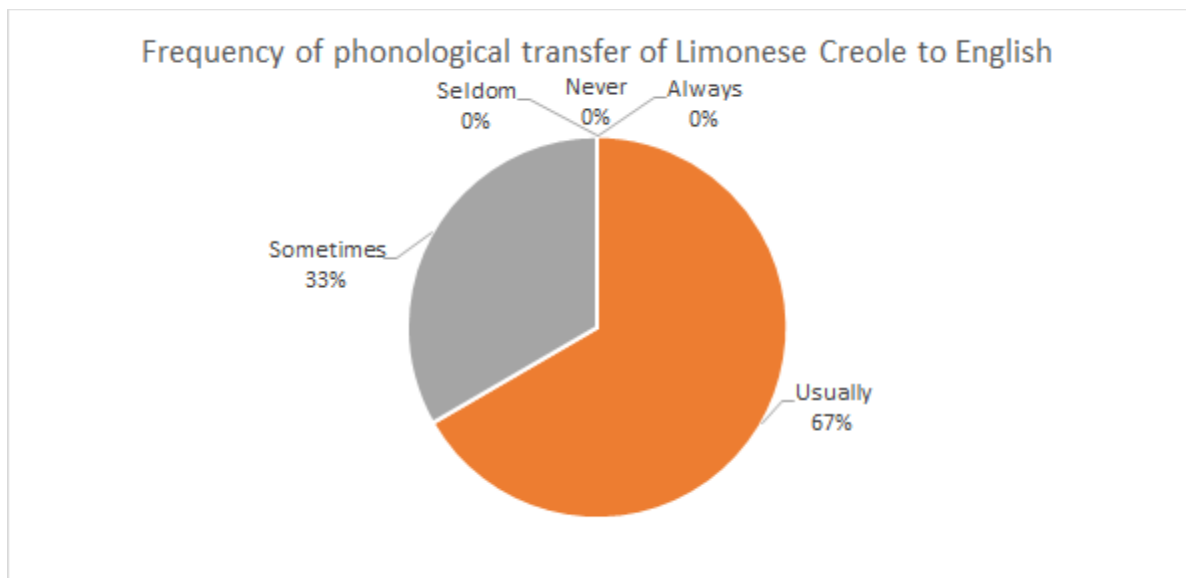
Two out of the three teachers answered that they are proficient in Spanish, English and Limonese Creole. The other teacher responded to being able to speak Spanish and English but not Limonese Creole.

In question three teachers are asked if there are Limonese Creole speakers among their students. All of the teachers responded affirmatively.

When asked about the language that students would rather use in class when not working, all teachers responded that it was Spanish.

Regarding the frequency of transfer of Limonese Creole to English by their students, teachers responded differently. Please see figure fifteen for that:

**Figure 15. Frequency of phonological transfer of Limonese Creole to English**



**Strategies used by teachers to correct students' first language interference errors.**

Speech production (in the pronunciation domain specifically in this study) cannot be treated equally for adults and for children. Even though elementary school children already have

stable pronunciation skills, it still differs from adult speech in articulating differences. Before correcting, the teacher has to note if the error produced shows incoherence; if it affects the overall message; or if the communication breaks down. If the output is understood, at this age it is better to allow the communication process to carry on without interrupting (Cook, 2013.)

Question number seven requested the strategy used to correct transfer errors only to determine if such strategy was used. The next figure shows the results:

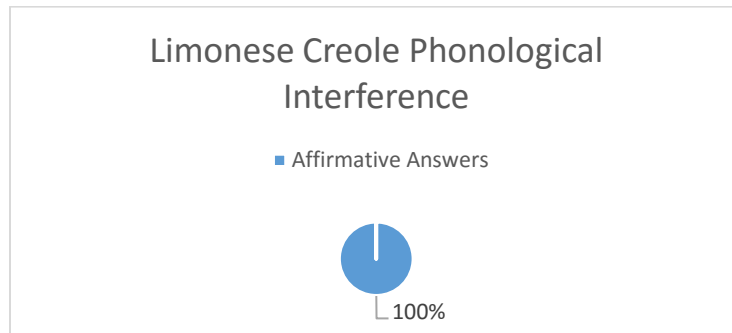
**Figure 16. Strategy to correct transfer errors**

Strategy to correct transfer errors					
Strategy	Frequency				
	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Recast	1	2			
Explicit correction	2	1			
Clarification request		1	2		
Metalinguistic feedback		1			2
Elicitation	1	1	1		
Repetition	1				2

In general, the prior figure shows that even though there are correction strategies applied, those errors cannot be conclusive that they come from Limonese Creole. As for the observations noted by the researcher, the English teacher did not correct any students when showing interference from Limonese Creole.

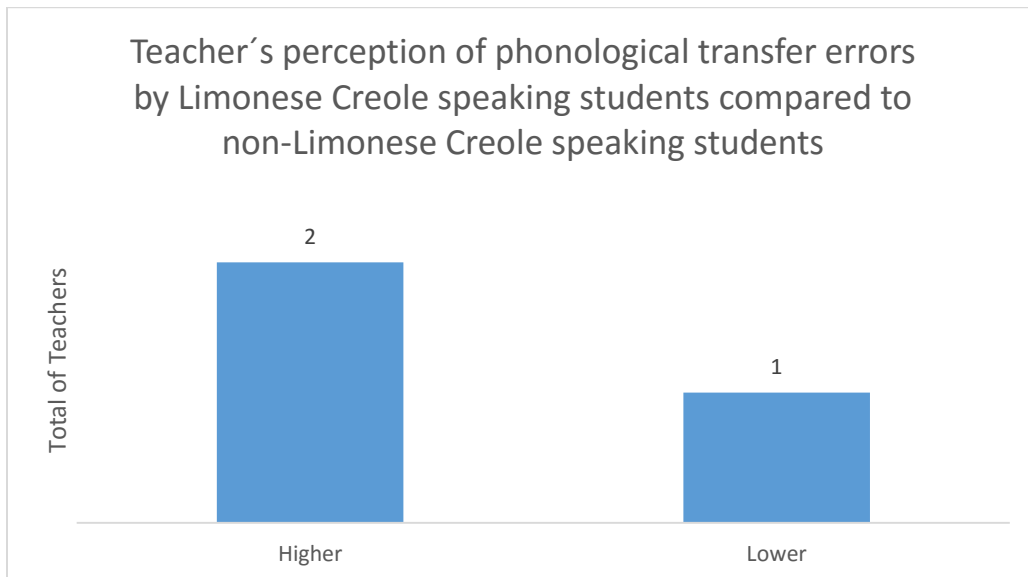
When the English teachers were asked about their opinion on communication being affected by Limonese Creole interference in the pronunciation field, they all three answered affirmatively as shown in figure sixteen:

**Figure 16. Perception of Limonese Creole interference by English Teachers**



The English teachers were asked if the frequency of transfer errors in the pronunciation field produced by Limonese Creole speaking students is higher compared to the same phenomenon but produced by non-Limonese Creole speaking students. Please see the below figure that illustrates their answer:

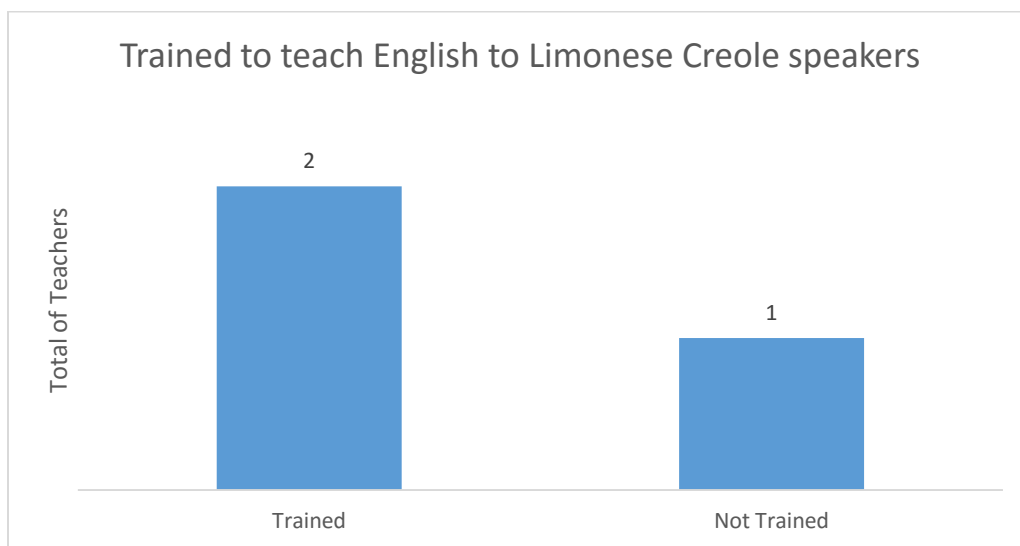
**Figure 17. Frequency of transfer pronunciation errors by Limonese Creole speaking students and non-Limonese Creole speaking students**



It is important to note that even though the English teachers stated differently, Limonese Creole and Spanish do share some phonemes and both lack some of the phonemes used in Standard English. In order to better state the perception, a following question was addressed.

Question ten requested their response when asked if the English teachers had received any sort of training to teach English to Limonese Creole speakers. The figure below illustrates the results:

**Figure 18. Teachers training to teach English to Limonese Creole speakers**



As seen illustrated above, two out of the three English teachers mentioned that they had received some training in regards of the teaching of English to Limonese Creole speakers, while the other teacher responded negatively. Since the questionnaires were anonymous, it is hard to determine if the teacher who stated that no training to teach English to Limonese Creole speakers has been received, which does not point the length that this teacher has worked with this population, or the ethnicity of the subject either.

### **4.4.3 Interviews**

To adjunct the results and to fill possible gaps left in the questionnaires, the interview technique was used. Semi-structured interviews were used in order to find out the perspective of two important participants in the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language.

Semi-structured interview is often related to qualitative research. According to Bernard (1988), semi-structured interview is a good option when there is little to no possibility to carry out the interview in other circumstances. One of the advantages of this type of data collecting method is that it provides first-hand reliable data. It also allows the interviewees to express their opinions in their own terms.

This part of the investigation was conducted through individual interviews, one to a parent of one of the target students at IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School. The other interview was administered to the English Regional Supervisor in Limon.

#### **4.4.3.1 Interview to a parent**

Even though invitations were sent to all parents (of the five Limonese Creole speaking students who performed as participants) to approach IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School to carry out the interviews, only one of them showed for the conversation. The mother of K1 decided not to record the interview, and it was so respected

When asked about the language that they as family used at home, she responded that they would use English (meaning Limonese Creole) if all of the speakers are able to use it; she cleared that even though they all are able to use Limonese Creole proficiently, the code mixing was involuntary and inevitable (“that’s how we talk” she said), thus the use of Spanish in

between sentences is frequent and overlooked. This parent also quoted that “estos chicos no quieren aprender Ingles porque les da pereza” (meaning that the younger generations do not want to learn Limonese Creole because they are lazy).

Regarding the transfer of Limonese Creole to Standard English as taught in the classroom, this parent mentioned that it was a matter of habit; she also said that Limonese Creole was English for them (Limonese Creole users), and even added that “the British people had no problem understanding” [what they said]. This mother mentioned, on the other hand, that Limonese Creole was good enough to use in the Limon province, but not acceptable if heading out of Limon. She even told a story of one of his children applying to work in a cruise but was sided out because of the “English he used”. Furthermore, this parent said that her children were not corrected as Limonese Creole had neither written form nor grammar.

Finally, this parent said that “(Limonese) Creole is more than a language that people from San Jose cannot understand”. She added that it related to culture, food, and music but she remarked that it was a “stronger feeling of identity when closer to Limon”.

#### **4.4.3.2 Interview to the English Regional Advisor**

The interview to the English Regional Advisor was carried out in his office, and fortunately it was recorded. Some contact through e-mail had taken place before the field work started, so the English Regional Advisor knew some of what it was about.

First, the English Regional Advisor was told about the objectives, setting, and population of the research. Then, he remarked the time that he had spent as English Regional Advisor in Limon, which was six months. During that period of time, he had the opportunity to visit

different English classes imparted by teachers representing diverse ethnic groups, yet he remarked that Afro-descendants are the minority group.

The English Regional Advisor indicated that regarding the Afro-descendant teachers of English and their English proficiency, some of them speak English remarkably well; others have a strong British accent (and he added that these last type argue that it is the English that they acquired). The majority of the Afro-descendant teachers of English keep their accent if they are Limonese Creole speakers, he said, which makes it difficult to understand them. However he pointed out that it might be something that happens unconsciously.

The English Regional Advisor said that for an Afro-descendant teacher it is inevitable to include Limonese Creole features in the speech used in class, and remarked that it is a phenomenon that happens to everybody (to show interference from one's native language). He quoted an English teacher pronouncing toucan differently (/tiukan/) but acknowledged that to language interference. The English Regional Advisor commented that the student to whom the pronunciation was addressed understood what the teacher said so there were not any communication problems.

Regarding the phonological transfer of Limonese Creole to English, specifically by the English teachers, the English Regional Advisor recognized that transfer would occur in every class where the teacher is not native in the target language, and that the impact could not be considered negative.

In a different palaver, the English Regional Advisor mentioned that non Afro-descendant students did not want to learn English because that was a "black issue". He quoted students who looked at him when he first arrived and showed surprise to see a non Afro-descendant speaking

English. On a different anecdote, the English Regional Advisor referred to Afro-descendant students who expressed that the non Afro-descendant teacher did not speak English. He even quoted “Usted no sabe hablar ingles, mi mama si sabe hablar ingles” (you cannot speak English, my mother does know English). The pronunciation for the word water in Limonese Creole /wata’/ was also quoted as an example by the English Regional Advisor of the before discourse.

On a last note, the English Regional Advisor mentioned that the Afro-descendants who participate in the Limonese Creole culture are jealous of their heritage and would not wish to share that with other ethnic groups.

#### **4.4.3.3 Interview to sociologist Donald Allen**

Mr. Donald Allen is a recognized sociologist involved in the rescue of the Afro-Caribbean culture in general, not only in Costa Rica. He was president of “Asociacion Proyecto Caribe, Costa Rica”, and author of several documents regarding Afro-descendant history.

Mr. Allen was asked two questions: one regarding the interference of Limonese Creole in the teaching of English in elementary schools, and another question related to the implementation of Limonese Creole as a Second Language subject in elementary schools in Limon.

Mr. Allen considers that there is not such a thing as language interference. He strongly believes that Limonese Creole is the form of English that some part of the population in Limon speaks, and that is completely valid as English language. Mr. Allen added that Limonese Creole comes from British origins and although it has changed by the influence of other languages, mainly Spanish, it is still English. The fact that British and American people show differences in lexis and pronunciation does not prevent them both to be called English language. He wanted to



emphasize that a real linguist would accept that culturally English is not the same in spite of known features such as geography. An example of his own that Mr. Allen cited was related to the word “face” that his son pronounced as /fies/. He reasoned arguing that they are simply “formas de pronunciarlo” (ways to pronounce it). Mr. Allen was clear in that a person should know when to use a particular language depending on the context given.

Regarding the use of Limonese Creole by ethnics other than Afro-descendants, Mr. Allen very strongly stated that he respected those who acquired the Limonese Creole language, but those who learned it won’t speak it the same way. He mentioned that some of the Afro-descendants who speak Limonese Creole may feel that outsiders could be invading their space (and they are not doing it well.)

Even though there have been some efforts and also some initiative from authorities from the Ministry of Public Education to include Limonese Creole as a regular subject in Limon elementary schools, it is important to remember that language is a tool used by its speakers, and that particular usage is what makes it what it is, for some of its users a language with no grammar, or a language in decadence. It surely cannot be a language for research only.

#### **4.4.4 Images and flash cards for aural and visual stimuli**

This part of the research deals with activities designed to elicit spontaneous pronunciation from the target students (Limonese Creole speaking students). As previously mentioned in the Methodology section, this part is divided in three different exercises. Every one of them is referred to separately first, and then added up for a general description.

The first exercise consisted of presenting students with a set of twelve different words (there were three different sets of words to avoid prediction and information leaking), each of

those words containing a particular phoneme in English which does not exist in Limonese Creole, yet it had been supposedly taught since first grade: the vocalic phonemes /θ/ or /ʌ/, /æ/, /ɔ/, and /ɪ/; the diphthongs /aʊ/, /oi/, /oʊ/ and /ei/; and finally the consonant phonemic sounds /θ/, /ð/, /t/ and /g/. The level of success was dramatically low compared to the simplicity of words and the amount of attempts. The results are shown grouped up in figure twenty.

The second exercise corresponded to images presented to the target students; each image illustrated items that were familiar to them and which also were included in the I Cycle program of study. The students had then to say the word that could best identify the item illustrated. The challenge in this part was not that they did not know the word (which happened indeed) but that the students gave it a different word coming from Limonese Creole. An example of such substitution was the illustration of a cat, to which some of the students referred to as “puss”. Figure twenty illustrates the results of the attempts clearly.

The third exercise attempted to have students read a sentence and also to respond to simple questions, all of them were presented in a written form to overcome failure to understanding a foreign accent from the researcher. This exercise turned out to be the most difficult for them as reading phrases was a very hard task for most of the target students; some phrases could not be read at all by the students. All these attempts and (fail and successful) are shown in figure twenty.

**Figure 19. Amount of total of attempts to produce in English and number of successful attempts**

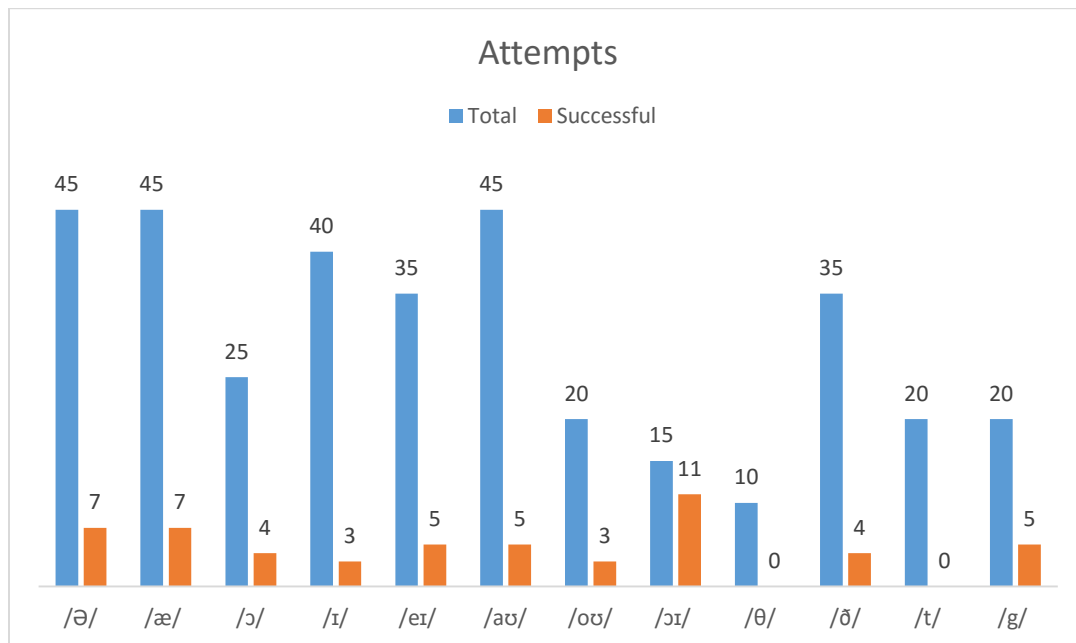
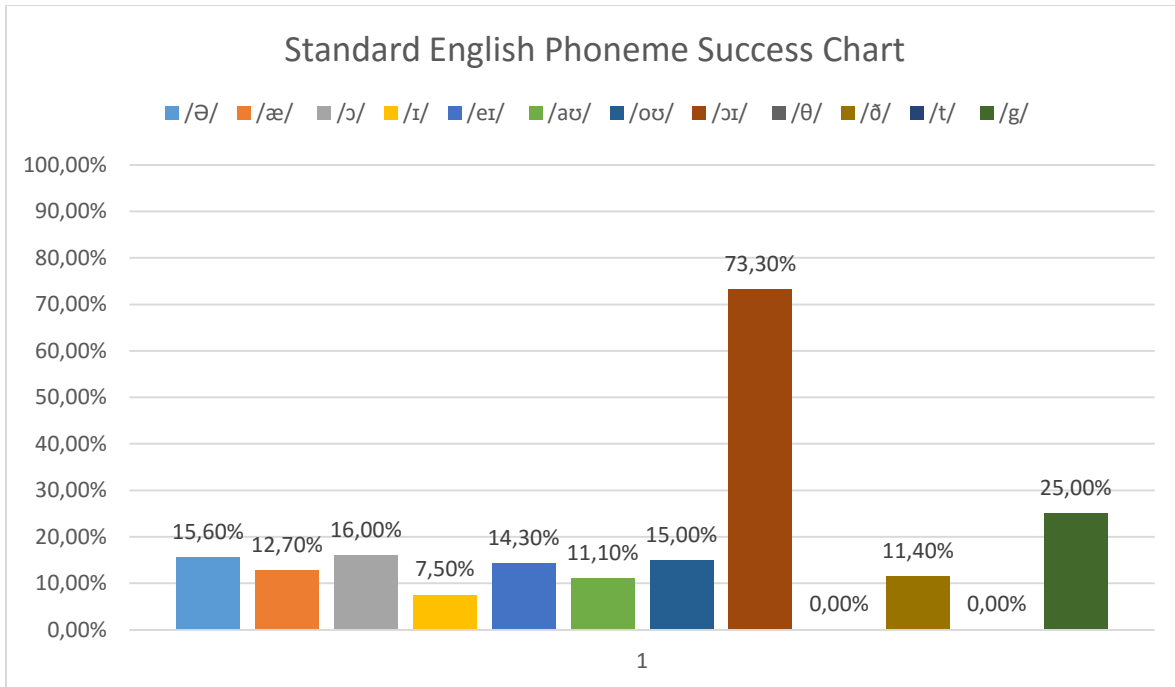


Figure twenty shows the amount of attempts that students had in total (the five students grouped all together) and the amount of successful attempts. Some English phonemes reached 0% of success, and only one phoneme (/ɔɪ/) reached a high level of success (7 out of 11.)

Regarding the performance for every English phoneme in detail, figure twenty-one shows the percentages obtained after all attempts for every English phoneme were added up. Please see figure below for specifics:

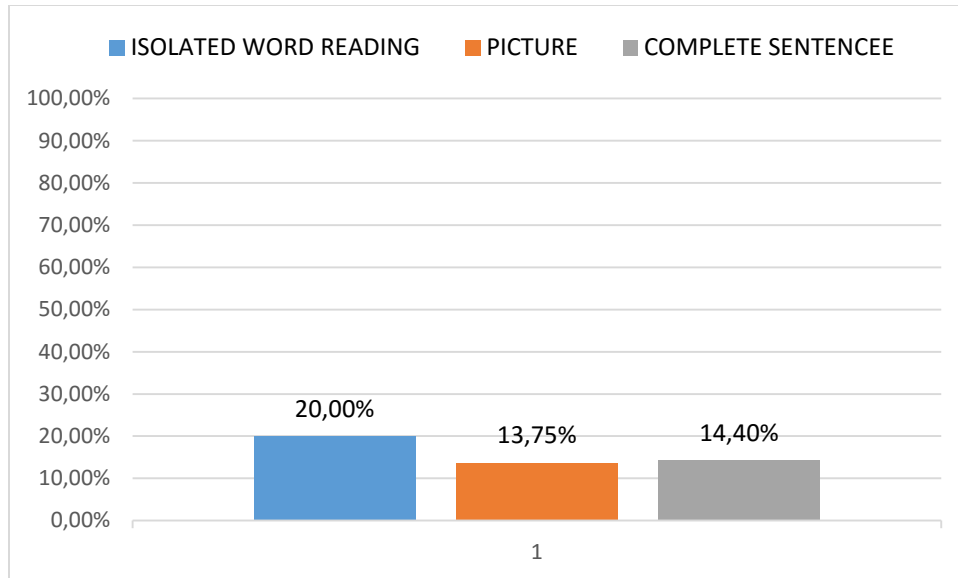
**Figure 20. Percentage of success for each separate English phoneme.**



The target students (those who are Limonese Creole native speakers) reached a very low percentage of success in almost all phonemes. As a matter of fact, the case of the phoneme (/ɔɪ/) was the only one phoneme that reached an acceptable level of success.

Representing every different exercise to see the level of difficulty of each of them, and also to see how successful all the five target students were at each exercise helps to see some consistency in the low level of success at trying to pronounce the English phonemes. Figure twenty-one shows the percentage of success for each exercise separated:

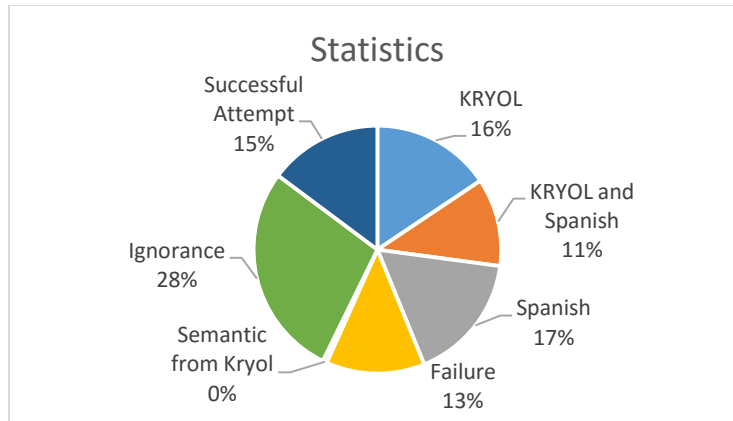
**Figure 21. Percentage of success according to each separate exercise.**



Thus, figure twenty-two shows that the percentage of success ranged between 13.75 and 20.00, which points out that the level of difficulty of the three different exercises was not in extreme separation from one another.

The results of the exercises cannot all be attributed to Limonese Creole interference, as some of the production from the target students clearly showed that it was far from using phonemes from their Limonese Creole native language. Figure twenty-two better explains the analysis on this interpretation:

**Figure 22. Possible causes for failure at attempting to pronounce in English.**



It is not the purpose of this research to present any assumptions from statistical analysis and the presentation of the results. However, it is important to note that the different factors that affected the sample do exist, some of them considerably important outliers. To mention them briefly, the outliers that affected the result of the instruments applied in this research were: lack of knowledge by the students (they did not know the word “feather”); use of Limonese Creole lexis instead of English (“puss” instead of “cat”); reading challenges (they read as it was written in Spanish or argued that they could not read the word or phrase).

## V. Conclusions

Limonese Creole has existed for about 150 years, and it is not recognized as a language in Costa Rica by its Political Constitution. As most of languages, it is part of a bigger frame called culture, in this case the Creole culture in Limon. But also, as most languages do, they are influenced by many factors which have an effect on the evolution of the language. As Standard English and Limonese Creole encounter, quantitative and qualitative data was gathered to have a perspective of the type of phonological language interference that Limonese Creole native speakers in fifth grade produce in English in the classroom.

This research used different types of methods to collect the data in order to answer the research questions. Keeping that in mind, the conclusions are presented accordingly and described accordingly.

Research question 1: What are some examples of language interference of Creole to English present in the phonological domain in an EFL classroom at fifth grade in IEGB in Limon?

The answer to this question is not limited to one instrument used to collect information, but by having different perspectives instead:

First, the questionnaires given to the English teachers included a specific question in which they were asked to cite some examples in which the pronunciation from Limonese Creole caused language transfer in the learning process of Standard English. Their responses to this question included the following examples:

*/comir/* used instead of the phrase “come here”. This example showed the absence of the schwa phoneme which does not exist in the Limonese Creole phonology system.

*/mout/* used instead of */maʊθ/* which showed the use of */t/* and not */θ/* which does not exist in Limonese Creole.

*/dem/* used instead of */ðem/* because the */ð/* phoneme does not exist in Limonese Creole.

Second, the printed cards which showed images to students also indicated language transfer of Limonese Creole to Standard English. The following are two clear examples:

When showed an image with a door, two out of the five students pronounced it as /dʊər/ and another one as /dʊor/. Here the language interference comes from Limonese Creole as it replaces the phoneme /ɔ/ for /ʊɑ/ or /ʊo/.

Also, when students saw an image of a window, three out of five students pronounced it as /windo/ because Limonese Creole uses /o/ instead of /ou/.

Research question 2: What is the frequency of occurrence of Creole phonemes in the production of oral Standard English in an EFL classroom at fourth grade in IEGB in Limon?

Considering that the sample of Limonese Creole speaking students was small but very representative, the results obtained with the aural and visual instruments are quite valuable. The following shows the frequency of occurrence of Limonese Creole phonemes in the production of oral Standard English:

According to the answers of the three teachers in the questionnaires given to them at IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School, Limonese Creole speaking students did show language transfer regularly (usually or sometimes, see appendix for teachers' questionnaire).

In the first part of the aural and visual stimuli for the elicitation exercise, the target students showed interference in twelve out of sixty (20%) attempts that were clearly attributed to Limonese Creole interference. Fifteen out of sixty attempts (25%) were not correctly pronounced in Standard English, yet they might have been caused by interference from Limonese Creole or Spanish.

In the second part of the aural and visual stimuli for the elicitation exercise, the target students showed interference in eleven out sixty attempts (18,3%) in which the language



interference of Limonese Creole was without any doubt evident. Six out of the sixty attempts were not correctly pronounced in Standard English; however the language interference can be connected to either Spanish or Limonese Creole.

In the third part of the aural and visual stimuli for the elicitation exercise, students showed interference in forty three out of two hundred and forty-five attempts (17,5%). Twenty-two out of two hundred and forty-five attempts could not be definitely linked to Limonese Creole or Spanish interference.

Research question 3: How does language interference of Creole to English affect the teaching and learning of the English language in the classroom?

The first part of question three has to do with the perception of the school English teachers, its Principal, the English Regional Advisor, and the sociologist Donald Allen.

Even though the three English teachers agreed in the questionnaires that language interference of Limonese Creole to Standard English as taught in the classroom affect the communication process, they disagree in the type of effect, as one teacher stated that the effect was positive, while another claimed that the effect was negative. The third teacher declared that there was an effect due to language interference of Limonese Creole, but it was not positive or negative.

The school Principal did not show any objection allowing members of the school community using Limonese Creole while in the school, and she even declared that she used both Limonese Creole and English with the teachers. This estimation directly encouraged the freedom of using any language at any time, which therefore includes the English classroom. In addition,

the fact that a portion of Limonese Creole speakers called that particular language English led to an understanding that they already knew English as they called it.

The English Regional Advisor stated that there is not any effect in the learning and teaching of English as taught in the classroom since that was a situation present in all classes in Costa Rica, and he mentioned the case with Spanish speaking teachers of English, and the fact that they also showed language interference and students turned out unaffected by the first language transfer.

Mr. Allen strongly asserted that Limonese Creole is a type of English in its foundation (he stated that it has been passed from generations in Limon but originated in England), and so the percentage of closeness is high enough (97%) to believe that Limonese Creole could have a negative effect in the English class at school. Mr. Allen added that Limonese Creole speakers know the context in which they should use Limonese Creole or Standard English (both in the use of phonemes and the choice of words); however he did not mention a percentage of awareness in the use of the language in the proper scenario.

Research question 4: What is the perspective of English authorities and the Creole speakers on the importance of learning English and Creole in school for the Limonese community?

The parent interviewed stated that since Limonese Creole had no grammar or written form, it cannot be taught appropriately in school; it is passed orally from parents or older family members to children. She did mention that such particularity would lead Limonese Creole to eventually disappear.

The English Regional Advisor judged to have worked very little time in his current position to have an opinion about that. He did mention however that Limonese Creole speakers are “very jealous” of their language and that they would not allow foreigners of the Limon province to use Limonese Creole with them in a conversation.

Mr. Allen also believed that Limonese Creole native speakers would not feel comfortable with people out of their cultural context or environment using Limonese Creole, that it would be some “invasion de su espacio” (invading their space). He did note that if the Limonese Creole is a native speaker, no problem existed regardless the ethnic origin.

Based on the results obtained from the instruments used, the level of interference in the phonological field of Limonese Creole to English as learned in the classroom in IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School in the fifth grade is too low to be significantly considered a negative issue. In addition, other variables showed a higher effect on the production of the sample population than Limonese Creole interference did.

The opinion of the people in charge of the Educational system in the Limon province showed significant similarity to conclude that even though there is language interference of Limonese Creole to English, the effect is not meaningful to consider a change in the pace of the educational process regarding the phonological domain of both languages.

Considering the opinion of two different subjects interviewed, there is an agreement on the opinion that Limonese Creole native speakers are very intimate with their language (and culture), and including a project to include its teaching in schools as another subject needs more study.

## **VI. Recommendations**

The influence of one's native language in the learning process of a second language has been widely studied, and research about it has improved the teaching techniques used all around the world. For the specific case of the Limon province, where several languages are used by an important portion of the population, language interference could be a step on considering diverse factors that have a direct effect in the English as a foreign language learning process.

English as a foreign language is a subject taught in both elementary and high schools with the idea of enriching students with a tool to get a better quality of life. It is possible to offer some recommendations to be considered by teachers of English as a foreign language whose jobs place them in a multilingual geographical area such as the Limon province.

First, it is very relevant to establish if phonological interference of Limonese Creole to Standard English as taught in the classroom affect the communication process. If the message is conveyed and understood accordingly, then there is no need for further concern. If the message intended is not successful, then transfer is one of several factors that need to be considered as a cause of the communication breakdown.

Deciding if the occurrence of language interference happening frequently affects the perception of students about the linguistic structure of Standard English (in this case phonologically) is a judgment that the English teacher has to consider for the benefit not only of the students but also of the fulfillment of the program of studies. That is why the second recommendation is that the resolution of what happens in the classroom (such as language interference) needs to be contextualized; it is the students as individuals, their culture and set of values and beliefs which must be respected in its entirety. If the language interference factor had

a very big impact due to its frequency of use (as to make it unintelligible to other English speakers), then some correction strategies would have to take place.

Considering that many of the teachers in general use Limonese Creole in all the school facilities at IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School (when addressing to Afro-descendant members of the school community), it is evident to expect students to consider Limonese Creole as a language of reference for communication, and the fact that the English teachers speak Limonese Creole is a reinforcement of that phenomenon. At the level of proficiency observed in this research (fifth grade), students are unable to notice if the phonemes that they were using come from Limonese Creole or English; it is just the ones they use and come naturally for them. Maturity in their language learning process (including self-reflection and contact with the target language) may lead students to state the differences that both languages have in the phonological field, and take or request actions for their own benefit. That is the third recommendation in this research, to have a contextualized perspective of how transfer can affect, and allow Limonese Creole speakers grow in their target language proficiency to make a decision (after all transfer can be a positive or negative thing.)

Finally, even though there have been some efforts from different institutions to rescue or revitalize Limonese Creole as a language as part of the culture of Afro-descendants in Limon, this Afro-descendant community has different perspectives on that enterprise. Extracts from the interviews lead to understand that some Limonese Creole users are fine with how it has evolved, and are fine with their younger generations using languages that allow them to find opportunities that can improve their quality of life, such as further studies or job applications. It is the point of view of some other Limonese Creole speakers and authorities in the Limon province related to education that clearly shows it is an action to take by Limonese Creole native speakers, not

outsiders or intruders. It is the suggestion of the researcher to keep involving Limonese Creole speakers to create a consensus in order to call it legit, or else to let the natural course of language evolution take place.

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## Annexes

### 8.1 Lesson Observation Form



### Lesson Observation Form



Objective of the observation: To recognize the strategies used by the teacher to correct students' transfer errors

Research question: Is corrective feedback used in the classroom?

School:	Teacher:	Date:
Observer:	Group:	No. of Students:

Objective of the lesson:

Welcome and beginning

Action	Outstanding	Good	Needs Improvement	Inadequate
--------	-------------	------	-------------------	------------

Appropriate exchange of Greetings				
Students get set to work				
Attendance is checked				
Materials are asked				

Presentation

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Re-cap on work from previous lesson				
Objectives reinforced				
Starter activity used				

Practice

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Teacher explanations are clear				
Effective use of questions and answers				
Opportunities for effective and equal students talk				
Teacher and students exchange orally in English				
Students grouping is effectively structured				
Activities are appropriate to the needs of the students				
Effective use of different learning strategies				

The curriculum is implemented				
Transfer errors are observed and noticed				
Corrective feedback is appropriately implemented				
Students use correction treatment effectively				
Unexpected classroom events are handled accordingly				
Appropriate and good quality resources used				
Class is effectively ordered				
Time management is effective				

Production

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Achievement takes place and is linked to original learning objectives				
Homework is set				
Students dismissed in an orderly fashion				



**Comments on Classroom Environment**

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**Strengths of the Lesson**

**Areas for Development**

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Form modified from EPD for NQTs 2010/11 and



Objective of the observation: To identify instances of Limonese Creole phonemes used by students who are Limonese Creole native speakers-

Research question: Is Limonese Creole used in the classroom?

School: IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School	Teacher: Daisy Hartley	Date: September 22nd
Observer: David Fernandez Elizondo	Group: 5-1	No. of Students: 21

Objective of the lesson: Applying different forms of expressions to communicate with others.

**Welcome and beginning**

Action	Outstanding	Good	Needs Improvement	Inadequate
Appropriate exchange of Greetings		X		
Students get set to work		X		
Attendance is checked		X		
Materials are asked			X	

Presentation

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Re-cap on work from previous lesson			X	
Objectives reinforced			X	
Starter activity used			X	

Practice

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Teacher explanations are clear		X		
Effective use of questions and answers		X		
Opportunities for effective and equal students talk		X		
Teacher and students exchange orally in English			X	
Students grouping is effectively structured			X	
Activities are appropriate to the needs of the students		X		
Effective use of different learning strategies			X	
The curriculum is implemented		X		
Transfer errors are observed			X	

and noticed				
Corrective feedback is appropriately implemented				X
Students use correction treatment effectively				X
Unexpected classroom events are handled accordingly	X			
Appropriate and good quality resources used		X		
Class is effectively ordered		X		
Time management is effective		X		

Production

Action	Outstanding	Good	Needs Improvement	Inadequate
--------	-------------	------	-------------------	------------

Achievement takes place and is linked to original learning objectives		X		
Homework is set	_____	_____	_____	_____
Students dismissed in an orderly fashion		X		

<b>Comments on Classroom Environment</b>
Regarding the use of Limonese Creole, it was used by both the regular teacher and the English teacher. The

phonemes detected by students who are Limonese Creole speakers were not corrected. Some examples are the numbers /fuor/ for “four”, /iet/ for eight, and /farti/ for “forty”. Also “i” for “he”, /dɔɑr/ for “door”, and /bɔt/ for “but”

<b>Strengths of the Lesson</b>	<b>Areas for Development</b>
Teacher promotes communication. Affective filter is low. Students pay attention.	Proficiency is low for a fifth grade. Most of participation is from Limonese Creole speakers.

Form modified from EPD for NQTs 2010/11 and



Objective of the observation: To identify instances of Limonese Creole phonemes used by students who are Limonese Creole native speakers-

Research question: Is Limonese Creole used in the classroom?

School: IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School	Teacher: Daisy Hartley	Date: October 13th
Observer: David Fernandez Elizondo	Group: 5-1	No. of Students: 23

- Objective of the lesson: Asking and giving information using familiar and concrete language.

**Welcome and beginning**

Action	Outstanding	Good	Needs Improvement	Inadequate
--------	-------------	------	-------------------	------------

Appropriate exchange of Greetings	X			
Students get set to work		X		
Attendance is checked	X			
Materials are asked		X		

Presentation

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Re-cap on work from previous lesson		X		
Objectives reinforced		X		
Starter activity used		X		

Practice

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Teacher explanations are clear		X		
Effective use of questions and answers	X			
Opportunities for effective and equal students talk			X	
Teacher and students exchange orally in English			X	
Students grouping is effectively structured		X		
Activities are appropriate to the needs of the students		X		
Effective use of different learning strategies			X	
The curriculum is implemented		X		
Transfer errors are observed				X

and noticed				
Corrective feedback is appropriately implemented				X
Students use correction treatment effectively				X
Unexpected classroom events are handled accordingly	_____	_____	_____	_____
Appropriate and good quality resources used		X		
Class is effectively ordered		X		
Time management is effective		X		

Production

Action	Outstanding	Good	Needs Improvement	Inadequate
--------	-------------	------	-------------------	------------

Achievement takes place and is linked to original learning objectives		X		
Homework is set	X			
Students dismissed in an orderly fashion		X		

**Comments on Classroom Environment**

Regarding the use of Limonese Creole, it was used by both the regular teacher and the English teacher (the regular teacher remained in the classroom the whole time). The phonemes detected by students who are Limonese Creole speakers were not corrected. Some examples are /sidon/ for “sit down”, /fies/ for “face”,



/kɒt/ for “cut”, /buɔrd/ for “board”, and /brada/ for “brother”.

<b>Strengths of the Lesson</b>	<b>Areas for Development</b>
Teacher promotes communication. Students use English more. Students pay attention.	Students’ vocabulary is very limited. Their answers are usually short.

Form modified from EPD for NQTs 2010/11 and



Objective of the observation: To identify instances of Limonese Creole phonemes used by students who are Limonese Creole native speakers-

Research question: Is Limonese Creole used in the classroom?

School: IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School	Teacher: Daisy Hartley	Date: October 16th
Observer: David Fernandez Elizondo	Group: 5-1	No. of Students: 20

- Objective of the lesson: Connecting actively new information to information. previously learned.

**Welcome and beginning**

Action	Outstanding	Good	Needs Improvement	Inadequate
--------	-------------	------	-------------------	------------

Appropriate exchange of Greetings		X		
Students get set to work		X		
Attendance is checked		X		
Materials are asked			X	

Presentation

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Re-cap on work from previous lesson			X	
Objectives reinforced			X	
Starter activity used				X

Practice

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Teacher explanations are clear		X		
Effective use of questions and answers		X		
Opportunities for effective and equal students talk		X		
Teacher and students exchange orally in English				X
Students grouping is effectively structured				X
Activities are appropriate to the needs of the students		X		
Effective use of different learning strategies				X
The curriculum is implemented		X		
Transfer errors are observed			X	

and noticed				
Corrective feedback is appropriately implemented				X
Students use correction treatment effectively				X
Unexpected classroom events are handled accordingly	X			
Appropriate and good quality resources used				X
Class is effectively ordered		X		
Time management is effective				X

Production

Action	Outstanding	Good	Needs Improvement	Inadequate
--------	-------------	------	-------------------	------------

Achievement takes place and is linked to original learning objectives				
Homework is set		X		
Students dismissed in an orderly fashion		X		

Comments on Classroom Environment
Regarding the use of Limonese Creole, it is used by both the regular teacher and the English teacher. The phonemes detected by students who are Limonese Creole speakers were not corrected. Some examples were

/sa/ for “sir”, /nou/ for “now”, /ier/ for “here” and /dag/ for “dog”

<b>Strengths of the Lesson</b>	<b>Areas for Development</b>
Teacher promotes communication. Affective filter is low. Students pay attention.	Proficiency is low for a fifth grade. Most of participation is from Limonese Creole speakers.

Form modified from EPD for NQTs 2010/11 and



Objective of the observation: To identify instances of Limonese Creole phonemes used by students who are Limonese Creole native speakers-

Research question: Is Limonese Creole used in the classroom?

School: IEGB Limón 2000 Elementary School	Teacher: Daisy Hartley	Date: October 27th
Observer: David Fernandez Elizondo	Group: 5-1	No. of Students: 19

Objective of the lesson: Identifying the main point or important information in the text.

**Welcome and beginning**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Appropriate exchange of Greetings				
Students get set to work				
Attendance is checked				
Materials are asked				

Presentation

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Re-cap on work from previous lesson				
Objectives reinforced				
Starter activity used				

Practice

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
---------------	--------------------	-------------	--------------------------	-------------------

Teacher explanations are clear				
Effective use of questions and answers				
Opportunities for effective and equal students talk				
Teacher and students exchange orally in English				
Students grouping is effectively structured				
Activities are appropriate to the needs of the students				
Effective use of different learning strategies				
The curriculum is implemented				
Transfer errors are observed and noticed				
Corrective feedback is				

appropriately implemented				
Students use correction treatment effectively				
Unexpected classroom events are handled accordingly				
Appropriate and good quality resources used				
Class is effectively ordered				
Time management is effective				

Production

Action	Outstanding	Good	Needs Improvement	Inadequate
--------	-------------	------	-------------------	------------

Achievement takes place and is linked to original learning objectives				
Homework is set				
Students dismissed in an orderly fashion				

Comments on Classroom Environment
The students from 5-1 were soon moved to the lunch room as classes were interrupted due to a scheduled rehearsal by teachers. They were escorted by both the regular teacher and the English teacher. A few phonemes were detected by students who are Limonese Creole speakers though. Some examples were /nuo/ for “know” and /niam/ for “eat”. Target students remained though for the



instruments to be administered.

<b>Strengths of the Lesson</b>	<b>Areas for Development</b>

Form modified from EPD for NQTs 2010/11 and



## 8.2 Questionnaires for English teachers



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Course: Investigación en Segundas Lenguas  
Student: David Fernández Elizondo



The data gathered with this instrument will be used in a research paper at the Master's Program in Second Languages and Cultures at Universidad Nacional with the purpose of investigating language interference of Creole to English in an elementary school in Limon, specifically in the phonological domain. This survey is anonymous and guarantees absolute confidentiality. Thank you very much for your participation in this survey.

Objective of the survey: To analyze instances of oral production in Creole speakers learners of English to identify frequency of language transfer of Creole pronunciation into English.

Research questions: How often does language interference of Creole to English occur in the phonological field?

1. What grade(s) do you teach?

First      Second      Third      Fourth      Fifth      Sixth

2. From the languages written right below, choose the ones that you speak or understand.

English      Spanish      Creole

3. Are there any Creole native speakers among your students?

Yes      No

4. What language do students preferably use among themselves in the classroom when not performing tasks or drills addressed by the English teacher?

English      Spanish      Creole

5. According to your experience, what is the frequency of transfer errors in pronunciation that exists from Creole into English among Creole native speaking students?

- Always (every class)       Usually (once a week)       Sometimes (every other week)
- Seldom (once every two weeks or longer)       Never (no transfer at all)

6. Which are some common transfer errors from Creole done by students when pronouncing words in Standard English? For example “dem” instead of “them”, or /d/ instead of /ð/ n general.

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7. Do you believe that language interference of Creole to English in pronunciation from your fifth grade students affects the communication process?

- Yes       No

8. What is the frequency of pronunciation transfer errors produced by Creole speaking students as compared to the transfer errors in pronunciation produced by non-Creole speaking students?

- Higher       Same       Lower

9. Have you received any training concerning the teaching of EFL/ESL to native Creole speakers?

- Yes       No

10. Do you think that the use of Creole may affect students’ competence in Standard English? If so, please answer affirmatively, and indicate if the effect is positive or negative.

- Yes. The effect is positive       Yes. The effect is negative       No effect at all.

11. Do you think that the use of Creole may affect students’ competence in Standard English? If so, please answer affirmatively, and indicate if the effect is positive or negative.

- Yes. The effect is positive       Yes. The effect is negative       No effect at all.



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Student: David Fernandez Elizondo



*Norma: All creole*

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1. What grade(s) do you teach?

- First     Second     Third     Fourth     Fifth     Sixth

*All creole*

2. From the languages written right below, choose the ones that you speak or understand.

- English     Spanish     Creole

3. Are there any Creole native speakers among your students?

- Yes     No

4. What language do students preferably use among themselves in the classroom when not performing tasks or drills addressed by the English teacher?

- English     Spanish     Creole

5. According to your experience, what is the frequency of transfer errors in pronunciation that exists from Creole into English among Creole native speaking students?

Always (every class)       Usually (once a week)       Sometimes (every other week)

Seldom (once every two weeks or longer)       Never (no transfer at all)

6. Which are some common transfer errors from Creole done by students when pronouncing words in Standard English? For example "dem" instead of "them", or /d/ instead of /ð/ in general.

th / p / pronunciation      Third person singular / s/ with the verb.  
dem / them      for / fi      me / my      Past tense / Present tense of Verb.

7. What strategy do you use to correct native Creole speaking students when error transfer in pronunciation occurs? And, which is the frequency in which the strategy is used? Choose all that apply

Recast: reformulating the sentence.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Explicit correction: signaling the learner about the error, and then presenting the correct form.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Clarification request: asking for explanation.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Metalinguistic feedback: the teacher asks a question, or makes a comment, or provides information related to the formation of the student's utterance, without providing the correct form. The student then thinks about how the language functions.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never



Elicitation: the teacher tries to get the correct form from the student by asking questions, pausing to let the student complete the sentence, or asking the student to reformulate the sentence.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Repetition: repeating the sentence incorrectly.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

8. Do you believe that language interference of Creole to English in pronunciation from your fifth grade students affects the communication process? *III cycle*

Yes       No

9. What is the frequency of pronunciation transfer errors produced by Creole speaking students as compared to the transfer errors in pronunciation produced by non-Creole speaking students?

Higher       Same       Lower

10. Have you received any training concerning the teaching of EFL/ESL to native Creole speakers?

Yes       No

11. Do you think that the use of Creole may affect students' competence in Standard English?  
If so, please answer affirmatively, and indicate if the effect is positive or negative.

Yes. The effect is positive

Yes. The effect is negative

No effect at all.



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1. What grade(s) do you teach?

First

Second

Third

Fourth

Fifth

Sixth

2. From the languages written right below, choose the ones that you speak or understand.

English

Spanish

Creole

3. Are there any Creole native speakers among your students?

Yes

No

4. What language do students preferably use among themselves in the classroom when not performing tasks or drills addressed by the English teacher?

English

Spanish

Creole

5. According to your experience, what is the frequency of transfer errors in pronunciation that exists from Creole into English among Creole native speaking students?



- Always (every class)      Usually (once a week)      Sometimes (every other week)  
 Seldom (once every two weeks or longer)      Never (no transfer at all)

6. Which are some common transfer errors from Creole done by students when pronouncing words in Standard English? For example "dem" instead of "them", or /d/ instead of /ð/ in general.

"me" instead of "I", "fi" instead of "for"

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7. What strategy do you use to correct native Creole speaking students when error transfer in pronunciation occurs? And, which is the frequency in which the strategy is used? Choose all that apply

Recast: reformulating the sentence.

- Always      Usually      Sometimes      Seldom      Never

Explicit correction: signaling the learner about the error, and then presenting the correct form.

- Always      Usually      Sometimes      Seldom      Never

Clarification request: asking for explanation.

- Always      Usually      Sometimes      Seldom      Never

Metalinguistic feedback: the teacher asks a question, or makes a comment, or provides information related to the formation of the student's utterance, without providing the correct form. The student then thinks about how the language functions.

- Always      Usually      Sometimes      Seldom      Never

Elicitation: the teacher tries to get the correct form from the student by asking questions, pausing to let the student complete the sentence, or asking the student to reformulate the sentence.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Repetition: repeating the sentence incorrectly.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

8. Do you believe that language interference of Creole to English in pronunciation from your fifth grade students affects the communication process?

Yes       No

9. What is the frequency of pronunciation transfer errors produced by Creole speaking students as compared to the transfer errors in pronunciation produced by non-Creole speaking students?

Higher       Same       Lower

10. Have you received any training concerning the teaching of EFL/ESL to native Creole speakers?

Yes       No

11. Do you think that the use of Creole may affect students' competence in Standard English?  
If so, please answer affirmatively, and indicate if the effect is positive or negative.

Yes. The effect is positive

Yes. The effect is negative

No effect at all.





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1. What grade(s) do you teach?

First     Second     Third     Fourth     Fifth     Sixth

2. From the languages written right below, choose the ones that you speak or understand.

English     Spanish     Creole

3. Are there any Creole native speakers among your students?

Yes     No

4. What language do students preferably use among themselves in the classroom when not performing tasks or drills addressed by the English teacher?

English     Spanish     Creole

5. According to your experience, what is the frequency of transfer errors in pronunciation that exists from Creole into English among Creole native speaking students?

Always (every class)       Usually (once a week)       Sometimes (every other week)

Seldom (once every two weeks or longer)       Never (no transfer at all)

6. Which are some common transfer errors from Creole done by students when pronouncing words in Standard English? For example "dem" instead of "them", or /d/ instead of /ð/ in general.

com mir instead of come here.  
/mɔ:θ/ instead of /mɑ:θ/

7. What strategy do you use to correct native Creole speaking students when error transfer in pronunciation occurs? And, which is the frequency in which the strategy is used? Choose all that apply

Recast: reformulating the sentence.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Explicit correction: signaling the learner about the error, and then presenting the correct form.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Clarification request: asking for explanation.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Metalinguistic feedback: the teacher asks a question, or makes a comment, or provides information related to the formation of the student's utterance, without providing the correct form. The student then thinks about how the language functions.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Elicitation: the teacher tries to get the correct form from the student by asking questions, pausing to let the student complete the sentence, or asking the student to reformulate the sentence.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Repetition: repeating the sentence incorrectly.

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Always       Usually       Sometimes       Seldom       Never

8. Do you believe that language interference of Creole to English in pronunciation from your fifth grade students affects the communication process?

Yes       No

9. What is the frequency of pronunciation transfer errors produced by Creole speaking students as compared to the transfer errors in pronunciation produced by non-Creole speaking students?

Higher       Same       Lower

10. Have you received any training concerning the teaching of EFL/ESL to native Creole speakers?

Yes       No



11. Do you think that the use of Creole may affect students' competence in Standard English?  
If so, please answer affirmatively, and indicate if the effect is positive or negative.

Yes. The effect is positive

Yes. The effect is negative

No effect at all.



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 Estudiante: David Fernández Elizondo



Las respuestas a este cuestionario serán usadas como parte de un trabajo final de investigación en la Maestría en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas de la Universidad Nacional sobre la interferencia del Creole en la pronunciación del idioma ingles en clase.

Este cuestionario es anónimo y se garantiza completa confidencialidad. Muchas gracias de antemano por su colaboración.

Pregunta de investigación: ¿Se usa el inglés en forma oral en la clase de la maestra Herron? (Is English used orally in the English classroom?)

1. ¿Cuál es su edad?

- Nueve      Diez      Once      Doce      Trece      Catorce

2. ¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?

- Costarricense      Panameño      Nicaragiense  
Otro      Especifique \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Cuántos años ha vivido en la provincia de Limón?

- 0 - 5      6-10      10 o mas

4. ¿Cuál idioma hablan en su casa? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

- Ingles      Español      Kryol      Otro

5. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus amigos en la escuela? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

- Ingles      Español      Kryol      Otro



6. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus amigos fuera de la escuela? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés                       Español                       Kroyol                       Otro

7. ¿Con cuál idioma se siente más cómodo a la hora de hablar?

Inglés                       Español                       Kroyol                       Otro

8. ¿Tiene usted la oportunidad de hablar en inglés en algún otro lugar que no sea la escuela?

Si     No

9. ¿Nota usted que sus compañeros usan Creole al hablar en inglés?

Si     No

10. ¿Cada cuánto tiempo tiene la oportunidad de hablar en inglés en clase?

Siempre (todos los días)                       Casi siempre (al menos una vez por semana)

Algunas veces (al menos una vez al mes)                       Casi nunca (solamente en exámenes)

Nunca



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*Deyssem*

Las respuestas a este cuestionario serán usadas como parte de un trabajo final de investigación en la Maestría en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas de la Universidad Nacional sobre la interferencia del Creole en la pronunciación del idioma inglés en clase.

Este cuestionario es anónimo y se garantiza completa confidencialidad. Muchas gracias de antemano por su colaboración.

1. ¿Cuál es su edad?

Nueve     Diez     Once     Doce     Trece     Catorce

2. ¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?

Costarricense     Panameño     Nicaragüense

Otro    Especifique \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Cuántos años ha vivido en la provincia de Limón?

0 - 5     6-10     10 o mas

4. ¿Cuál idioma hablan en su casa? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés     Español     Kroyol     Otro

5. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus amigos en la escuela? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés       Español       Kryol       Otro

6. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus amigos fuera de la escuela? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés       Español       Kryol       Otro

7. ¿Con cuál idioma se siente más cómodo a la hora de hablar?

Inglés       Español       Kryol       Otro

8. ¿Tiene usted la oportunidad de hablar en inglés en algún otro lugar que no sea la escuela?

Sí       No

9. ¿Nota usted que sus compañeros usan Creole al hablar en inglés?

Sí       No

10. ¿Cada cuanto tiempo tiene la oportunidad de hablar en inglés en clase?

Siempre (todos los días)       Casi siempre (al menos una vez por semana)

Algunas veces (al menos una vez al mes)       Casi nunca (solamente en exámenes)

Nunca



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Este cuestionario es anónimo y se garantiza completa confidencialidad. Muchas gracias de antemano por su colaboración.

1. ¿Cuál es su edad?

Nueve     Diez     Once     Doce     Trece     Catorce

2. ¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?

Costarricense     Panameño     Nicaragüense

Otro    Especifique \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Cuántos años ha vivido en la provincia de Limón?

0 - 5     6-10     10 o mas

4. ¿Cuál idioma hablan en su casa? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés     Español     Kryol     Otro

5. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus amigos en la escuela? Marque todas las que sean ciertas



Inglés

Español

Kryol

Otro

6. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus amigos fuera de la escuela? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés

Español

Kryol

Otro

7. ¿Con cuál idioma se siente más cómodo a la hora de hablar?

Inglés

Español

Kryol

Otro

8. ¿Tiene usted la oportunidad de hablar en inglés en algún otro lugar que no sea la escuela?

Sí

No

9. ¿Nota usted que sus compañeros usan Creole al hablar en inglés?

Sí

No

10. ¿Cada cuanto tiempo tiene la oportunidad de hablar en inglés en clase?

Siempre (todos los días)

Casi siempre (al menos una vez por semana)

Algunas veces (al menos una vez al mes)

Casi nunca (solamente en exámenes)

Nunca



UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL  
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Escuela de Literatura y Ciencias del Lenguaje  
Maestría en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas  
Curso: Investigación en Segundas Lenguas  
Estudiante: David Fernández Elizondo



Las respuestas a este cuestionario serán usadas como parte de un trabajo final de investigación en la Maestría en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas de la Universidad Nacional sobre la interferencia del Creole en la pronunciación del idioma inglés en clase.

Este cuestionario es anónimo y se garantiza completa confidencialidad. Muchas gracias de antemano por su colaboración.

1. ¿Cuál es su edad?

Nueve     Diez     Once     Doce     Trece     Catorce

2. ¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?

Costarricense     Panameño     Nicaragüense

Otro    Especifique \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Cuántos años ha vivido en la provincia de Limón?

0 - 5     6-10     10 o mas

4. ¿Cuál idioma hablan en su casa? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés     Español     Kroyol     Otro

5. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus amigos en la escuela? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés       Español       Kryol       Otro

6. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus amigos fuera de la escuela? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés       Español       Kryol       Otro

7. ¿Con cuál idioma se siente más cómodo a la hora de hablar?

Inglés       Español       Kryol       Otro

8. ¿Tiene usted la oportunidad de hablar en inglés en algún otro lugar que no sea la escuela?

Sí       No

9. ¿Nota usted que sus compañeros usan Creole al hablar en inglés?

Sí       No

10. ¿Cada cuanto tiempo tiene la oportunidad de hablar en inglés en clase?

Siempre (todos los días)       Casi siempre (al menos una vez por semana)

Algunas veces (al menos una vez al mes)       Casi nunca (solamente en exámenes)

Nunca





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1. ¿Cuál es su edad?

Nueve     Diez     Once     Doce     Trece     Catorce

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Costarricense     Panameño     Nicaragüense

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0 - 5     6-10     10 o mas

4. ¿Cuál idioma hablan en su casa? Marque todas las que sean ciertas

Inglés     Español     Kryol     Otro

5. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus amigos en la escuela? Marque todas las que sean ciertas



Inglés       Español       Kryol       Otro

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Inglés       Español       Kryol       Otro

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Inglés       Español       Kryol       Otro

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Sí       No

9. ¿Nota usted que sus compañeros usan Creole al hablar en inglés?

Sí       No

10. ¿Cada cuanto tiempo tiene la oportunidad de hablar en inglés en clase?

Siempre (todos los días)       Casi siempre (al menos una vez por semana)

Algunas veces (al menos una vez al mes)       Casi nunca (solamente en exámenes)

Nunca

#### 8.4 Questionnaire to School Principal



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1. ¿Cuál materia es su especialidad?

---

2. ¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?

---

3. ¿Cuántos años ha vivido en la provincia de Limón?

---

4. ¿Cuál(es) idioma(s) habla usted?

---

5. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus colegas en la escuela?

---

6. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted fuera de la escuela?

---

7. ¿Con cuál idioma se siente más cómoda a la hora de hablar?

---

8. ¿Tiene usted la oportunidad de hablar en inglés con las maestras de la escuela?

---

9. ¿Nota usted que sus subalternos usan Creole en la escuela dentro y fuera del aula?

---



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1. ¿Cuál materia es su especialidad?

Inglés.

2. ¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?

Costarricense

3. ¿Cuántos años ha vivido en la provincia de Limón?

40 años.

4. ¿Cuál(es) idioma(s) habla usted?

Español e Inglés.

5. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted con sus colegas en la escuela?

Español e Inglés.

6. ¿Cuál idioma habla usted fuera de la escuela?

Español e Inglés.

7. ¿Con cuál idioma se siente más cómoda a la hora de hablar?

Ambos.

8. ¿Tiene usted la oportunidad de hablar en inglés con las maestras de la escuela?

Si a diario.

9. ¿Nota usted que sus subalternos usan Creole en la escuela dentro y fuera del aula?

Si siempre.

## 8.5 Consensus Form

Limon, 13 de octubre del 2015

Directora, Estudiantes y Docente Daisy Hartley  
IEGB Limon 2000

Dirección:

Estimados miembros de la Escuela IEGB Limon 2000:

Mediante la presente se les informa que durante el mes de octubre del presente año, se estará realizando en su institución un trabajo final de graduación (TFG), perteneciente al programa *Maestría Profesional en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas con Énfasis en Inglés como Lengua Extranjera para Alumnado Adulto*, de la *Universidad Nacional*. Este estudio se enfoca en el uso del Inglés criollo (patua) en el aprendizaje del inglés. La información recolectada a través de observaciones de clase, encuestas al alumnado y cuestionarios al profesorado se llevará a cabo en un marco de confidencialidad y anonimato, tomando en cuenta que ustedes tendrán el papel de participantes, mas no de informantes conforme a la metodología del estudio.

Las dinámicas investigativas no representarán una carga académica extra en el avance de las lecciones. Por el contrario, se ha diseñado un plan de investigación el cual no afecte el avance de los estudiantes o docentes.

Finalmente, cabe destacar, que la Universidad Nacional promueve la investigación por parte de su equipo docente para brindar fuentes de información que permitan mejorar prácticas en el ámbito del aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera. El estudio a realizarse en su grupo cumple con estas características.

Favor firmar el acta adjunto de recibido como forma de consentimiento a participar en el estudio.

Cordialmente,

David Fernández Elizondo  
Maestría Segundas Lenguas y Cultura  
Universidad Nacional



Limón, 13 de octubre del 2015

Directora, Estudiantes y Docente Daisy Hartley  
IEGB Limón 2000

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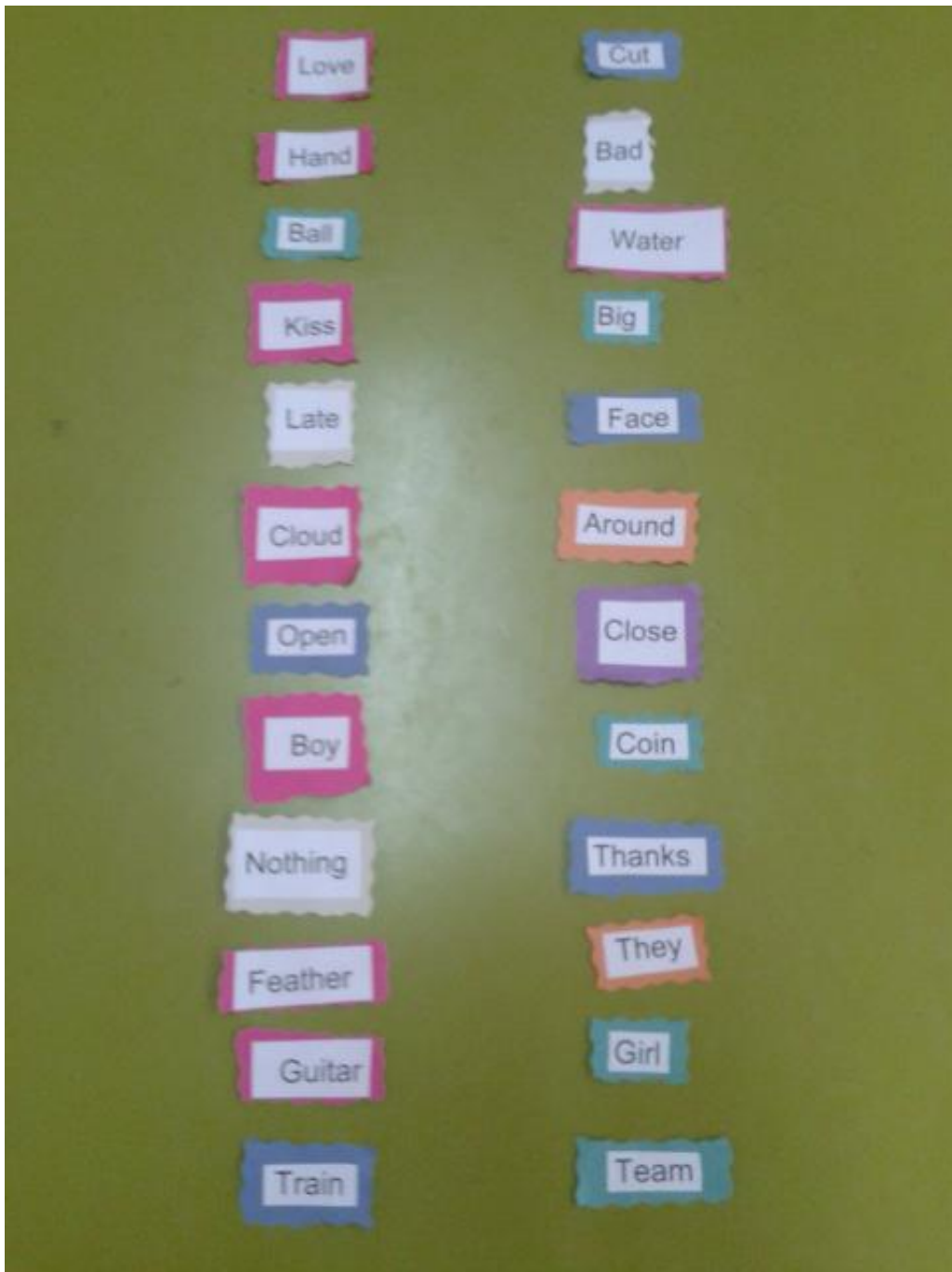
Cordialmente,



David Fernández Elizondo  
Maestría Segundas Lenguas y Cultura  
Universidad Nacional



8.6 Flashcards  
Isolated words



Images



## Sentences and questions

