Arab World English Journal

INTERNATIONAL PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL ISSN: 2229-9327

Exploring First Language Use in Non-Formal Foreign Language Education: A Mixed-Method Approach

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Abstract

In Foreign Language Teaching, investigating the multiple variables that intervene in first language use is essential to uncover learning processes and design optimal teaching practices. Past studies have mainly focused on identifying teachers' reasons for their first language use, while research on learners' views is scarce. This mixed-method case study aims to provide a comprehensive description of first language use in a foreign language classroom through the examination of its pedagogical functions and the corresponding views held by the teacher and his students. This article adds to the scholarly body of knowledge about the role of first language use in Foreign Language Teaching with the yielding of constructive insights from non-formal education–a non-previously researched context. Specifically, this study was conducted in "Mar Menor" Center of Adult Education (Southern Spain). The main research questions address the quantification of the pedagogical functions of first language use generated by the instructor in certain classes and the comparison of his views with those of his students, concerning L1 use in general teaching and his sessions. Data comprised classroom observations, teacher's stimulated recalls, students' diaries and questionnaires addressed to both sets of participants. The results revealed the multifunctional nature of the teacher's first language use and a fairly degree of alignment between his views and those of his students. This study underscores the importance of fostering learners' agency. Furthermore, its findings can potentially inform Foreign Language Teaching by deepening the understanding of the myriad of factors and perspectives involved in first language use.

Keywords: Classroom observation, English as a Foreign Language, first language use, non-formal education, students' views, teacher's views

Introduction

Probably one of the thorniest issues in the history of Language Learning and Teaching has been whether and to what extent the learning of a new language can benefit from the inclusion of the students' first language (L1) as a teaching tool (Hall & Cook, 2012; Shin et al., 2020). This controversy is clearly reflected in the allusions to L1 use as "the skeleton in the cupboard" (Prodromou, 2002, p. 6), "the elephant in the room," or "the gorilla in the room" (Levine, 2014, pages 332 and 346 respectively), with constant pendulum swings for and against. The importance of this topic is immense since it subsumes virtually all the questions of (Instructed) Second Language Acquisition/(I)SLA (Macaro, 2014). These questions converge on the role of attention and consciousness in the process of learning a new language.

As shall be detailed in the literature review below, past research has tried to identify the teachers' purposes and underlying reasons for using the L1, mostly utilizing self-reported data. The effects of L1 use on the knowledge of a new language have also been studied. Surprisingly, however, research about learners' perspectives is less abundant, and there are no studies dealing with state-run non-formal education. In this context, instructional management is not regulated by any official laws; thus, teachers have considerable leeway to proceed as desired in their daily classroom praxis. Furthermore, the issuing of official certificates of assessment or performance is often not compulsory. Classes are voluntarily attended by adult learners who want to complement or expand their academic training to enhance their opportunities for work development and promotion. These courses are located within the framework of subsidized life-long learning programs, which are strongly endorsed by worldwide organizations such as UNESCO (2023).

The present article reports a case study aimed to fill the aforementioned research gaps to provide a comprehensive description of L1 use in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Spanish elementary-level teaching group. The findings of this case study will contribute to the scholarly body of knowledge about the role of L1 use in a non-researched context: that of non-formal education. Specifically, this case study can provide valuable insights into the myriad of factors determining how and why the L1 is used, as observed in real classes and the preferences expressed by instructors and students toward this use. Therefore, this research is expected to inform (Foreign) Language Teaching directly and, indirectly, ISLA. Its objectives are threefold: i) to determine the functions for which the (male) teacher resorts to the L1 (shared by himself and his students); ii) to identify this teacher's perspective on L1 use in general EFL teaching and concerning real examples from his own teaching practice, and so uncover the underlying reasons why he resorted to specific functions, and iii) to compare this instructors' views with those of his students. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the functions of L1 use enacted by a teacher in an elementary-level adult EFL class within a state-run non-formal education context?
2. How much does the teacher use each L1 function?

3. What similarities and differences are there between this teacher's and his students' perspectives about L1 use in general EFL teaching and concerning the L1 functions enacted by this instructor in his classes?

4.

Literature Review

This section will be structured in three parts. The first one includes a clarification of the terminology concerning the topic of this study. Secondly, the theoretical framework surrounding the two positions regarding L1 use in the foreign language teaching classroom will be briefly covered. The third subsection will comprise a concise account of the past empirical research on L1 use and the existing research gaps.

A Note on Terminology

In this study, we will indistinguishably refer to "own language" as L1 or "first language," which is shared by the participants in a language teaching classroom. In contrast, the "new language" to be learned (Hall & Cook, 2012) or the "additional language" (Anderson, 2022) will be variously referred to as "foreign language," "target language" and L2 (regardless of the status of this additional language, that is, whether it is the students' second or third foreign language). Concerning L1 use per se, two options have been used lately: the sociolinguistic term "codeswitching" (Macaro, 2001, 2005) and the term "translanguaging," whose popularity emerged with research on bilingual education policy in the United States, specifically focusing on Hispanic minoritized children (García, 2009). Whereas the analysis of codeswitching is executed from a linguistic perspective, translanguaging "regards the concept of named languages such as English, German, Dutch, etc. as primarily socio-political and highlights the human capacity to transcend the boundaries between named languages in meaning making" (Wei, 2021, p. 167). Moreover, the borders between codeswitching and translanguaging practices in the classroom are blurred (Bonacina et al., 2021). Due to the aforementioned issues, and as was the case in Macaro's latest publication (Molway et al., 2022), we shall resort to the terms "L1 use" or "first language use" for our study: how and why L1 is used from a pedagogical perspective in a non-formal foreign language education context with an official L1 shared by all the participants.

The Pendulum Swing For and Against First Language Use in Foreign Language Teaching

In the literature, two main stances reflecting the controversy surrounding the debate on L1 use in Foreign Language Teaching can be distinguished. Firstly, the position that supports the monolingual principal or L1 banning, reinvigorated by the Language Teaching field since the nineteenth century (Hall & Cook, 2012; Lee, 2018). This exclusion of the first language by the Direct Method, the Audiolingual Method, the Total Physical Response Method, the strong version of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-based Language Teaching was premised on the grounds that L1 use interferes with L2 learning, and that language teaching should prepare learners to operate in a similar fashion to native speakers in monolingual environments; therefore,

it should ensure maximum opportunities for L2 exposure and production. The absence of a specific role for L1 use was also promoted with the work of SLA researchers such as Krashen (1981), Long (1996) and Swain (1995), who highlighted the role of input, interaction and output for successful L2 learning (Molway et al., 2022).

The second stance argues that complete and systematic exclusion of the students' L1 is counterproductive from several theoretical perspectives (Lee, 2018). In psycholinguistic terms, Cook (2016) advocates changing the view of L2 learners from deficient monolinguals to multicompetent learners, a stance also endorsed by the Council of Europe (2001, 2020) with its defence of plurilingualism. Furthermore, some cautious L1 use has been argued to render the L2 input more comprehensible and thus foster intake and L2 learning (Turnbull, 2001). Vygotskian socio-cultural theory also supports the fact of resorting to the learners' L1 in the L2 teaching classroom. First language is regarded as an ideal cultural tool to mediate cognitively complex thinking and facilitate the process of idea construction (Hall & Cook, 2012). Also, from an ecological angle of language learning and teaching, L1 use represents an example of (pedagogical) scaffolding which can foster learners' agency by, for example, making them engage in critical language reflection (Van Lier, 2011). Ultimately, sound L1 use may be considered a teaching strategy framed within the principles of Positive Psychology (Jin et al., 2021). It can help students counteract negative emotions generated by the lack of understanding in the L2 and/or the potential lack of efficacy of the target language to build an empathetic atmosphere in the foreign language classroom.

As can be seen, the previously described second stance, adopted in this study, seems to concur with Levine's (2014) resolution that "the aim of our pedagogy should thus be to optimize L2 use through a principled approach to L1 use" (p. 337).

Empirical Studies on First Language Use in Language Teaching

Especially since the 2000s, the specialized literature has witnessed an array of empirical studies which has primarily focused on i) the identification and quantification of the purposes for which teachers use L1, mainly extracted from questionnaires rather than classroom observation data; ii) teachers' general perspectives about L1 use and its specific purposes in general foreign language teaching (either obtained from interviews or, more frequently, questionnaires), rather than in connection with real cases from their classes; and iii) effects of L1 use on different areas of L2 knowledge. Such research has been conducted in different countries with classes of dissimilar educational stages, students' age groups and proficiency levels. For reviews, see Neokleous et al. (2022) and Shin et al. (2020).

In a nutshell, past findings from the scarce classroom-based studies available revealed a variety of teachers' functions underlying their L1 use, with the academic category being the most frequent one, specifically translation, metalinguistic explanation, etc. (e.g., 62% in Jeanjaroonsri, 2022; 73.3% in Moafa, 2023, and 59% in Sali, 2014). The second most frequent category is the classroom management function, related to clarifying task instructions, managing discipline and

administrative issues, etc., followed by the interpersonal function, targeted at establishing a caring affective atmosphere by praising and encouraging students, etc. Overall, despite the complex mixture of multiple variables exerting influence on teachers' L1 use–multilingual or shared-L1 contexts, teachers' native or non-native status (the latter being the most overwhelmingly frequent category), their beliefs and expertise, student teachers vs. in-service instructors, students' variables (age, proficiency and motivation), institutional requirements, etc., there seems to be a generalized agreement among teachers that the L1 emerges as a "lesser evil"-strategy to aid students' learning. This pattern especially applies in the case of teaching low-level proficiency students (e.g., Bruen & Kelly, 2017; De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Izquierdo et al., 2016; Jeanjaroonsri, 2022; Khelalfa & Kellil, 2023; Millán, 2017; Moafa, 2023; Romli et al., 2021; Sobkoviak, 2022; Temesgen & Hailu, 2022). The few studies examining learners' perspectives point to similar views (Kang, 2008; Tsagari & Giannikas, 2020), while some (higher-level) students favor more L2 exposure and interaction (Macaro & Lee, 2013; Ye, 2023). Regarding the effects of L1 use on L2 knowledge and learning, most of the previous research seems to agree on their beneficial or, at least, non-detrimental nature in L2 grammar, vocabulary and writing (De La Fuente & Goldenberg, 2020; Shabaka-Fernández, 2023).

A careful examination of the previous literature reveals the following research gaps and methodological omissions:

1) First of all, very few studies have implemented stimulated recalls with teachers to learn about the reasons underlying concrete real cases of L1 use generated by themselves in their classes (cf. De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Millán, 2017; Temesgen & Hailu, 2022; Zainil & Arsyad, 2021). Ascertaining teachers' views on how and why they use L1 in certain specific instances of their regular class teaching can provide a more precise account of the role of L1 use in the teaching group studied and a valuable opportunity to stimulate teachers' reflective practice.

2) Studies considering learners' perspectives (Brevik & Rindal, 2020; Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Macaro & Lee, 2013; Wang, 2020) are more scarce than those dealing with instructors' views. As Wang (2020) claimed, "Their [learners'] feedback and comments, personal experiences, as well as their classroom language practices are all valuable data that can help us re-examine the monolingual myths in language teaching" (p. 9).

3) Most studies focused on learners' perspectives have resorted to one-shot questionnaires and interviews to inquire about their preferences for L1 use. Except for Brooks-Lewis (2009), who focused on undergraduate students, to our knowledge, no previous studies have relied on learner diaries as an instrument to obtain more personalized data from the students and to stimulate their agency in the learning process.

4) The juxtaposition of teachers' and students' perspectives in the same study is unusual (cf. Jeanjaroonsri, 2022; Kang, 2008; Tsagari & Giannikas, 2020, and Ye, 2023). This aspect is crucial to fine tune our global understanding of what and why happens in specific teaching groups, given the local, contextualized nature of classroom

instruction (Tekin & Garton, 2020).

5) To the best of our knowledge, there are no studies that have jointly examined the functions of L1 use–as identified in classroom observation–with the teacher's and students' views about L1 use in general foreign language teaching and concerning real cases of L1 functions occurring in their classes. Furthermore, there are no studies which have implemented the method triangulation employed in this study to extract both the teacher's and students' views: the teacher's stimulated recalls, students' diaries and questionnaires addressed to both sets of participants.

6) And finally, there is no research on state-run non-formal education for foreign languages within the framework of adult life-long learning programs. Surprisingly, this is an underrepresented area in research despite its growing importance worldwide. For instance, in 2016, 41.4% of the European Union's adult working-age population (25-64 year-old) attended non-formal education modules (European Commission, 2021), while recommendations for supporting and regulating non-formal education in the Arab States are being successfully implemented, examples being Saudi Arabia and Oman (UNESCO, 2020).

Thus, our case study intends to fill in the aforementioned research gaps as well as conduct the necessary methodological improvements identified.

Method

In order to answer the three research questions, the authors opted for case study research since it is a form of inquiry in which data are collected from a small number of participants for in-depth observation and analysis. The unit of study was one teaching group consisting of a teacher and his students from an EFL module in a non-formal education context. Additionally, this case study relied on a mixed-method approach, which is premised on the idea that "the integration of qualitative and quantitative data yields additional insight beyond the information provided by either the quantitative or qualitative data alone" (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 52).

Participants

This case study took place in "Mar Menor" Center of Adult Education, located in southern Spain. Spanish Centers of Adult Education are usually state-run institutions that offer formal education options (preparation for the attainment of the Certificate of Compulsory Secondary Education and the University Entrance Exam for learners over 25 and 45 years-old), as well as non-formal education alternatives such as courses on Spanish for Immigrants and English as a Foreign Language, computer workshops, etc.

This case study involved a teaching group selected by convenience sampling. Its students attended an elementary EFL yearly module (A2 according to Council of Europe, 2001). The participant teacher was a 38-year-old Spanish male EFL specialist with eleven years of teaching experience in state-run adult education institutions. The student data for this article were collected from the seven students of the group, which comprised five female and two male learners (71.4%

and 28.6% respectively). Their age ranged from 21 to 58 years-old (mean = 39.9; SD = 15), and all of them were Spanish-native speakers. Table One in Appendix A includes their remaining sociodemographic and academic characteristics, as well as their language experience, in correspondence with the answers to a questionnaire administered at the end of the data collection period (see Instruments section).

The textbook selected by the teacher as the course material was *Speak Out Elementary Student's Book* in its second edition (Eales & Oakes, 2016). This textbook series reflects the weak version of CLT (Howatt, 1984).

Research Instruments

Six different data collection instruments were used:
1) Five observation grids from each classroom observation, which also included field notes from each observed class.
2) Five audio recordings of classroom observations and their corresponding transcriptions.
3) Five stimulated recall sessions with the teacher.
4) One teacher's questionnaire (with closed-ended questions).
5) One students' questionnaire (with closed-ended questions).
6) Four diaries to be filled in by the students individually.

Method triangulation occurred with instruments one and two, which helped to obtain more accurate detection and quantification of the L1 functions, while the same type of triangulation generated by the remaining quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments allowed for a richer comparison between the teacher's and his students' views about L1 use. Likewise, findings from the teacher's stimulated recall sessions and his questionnaire potentially helped to cross-validate the functions for which he used the L1 as identified in the classroom observations. Thus, dependability was hopefully enhanced. Further measures adopted to increase the trustworthiness of the qualitative data (Riazi, 2017) regarding dependability and credibility will be indicated in the remaining text of this Method section when appropriate. As for transferability, the authors have tried to describe all the data in a way as detailed as possible in the present text.

Classroom Observation Audio recordings, Grids and Field Notes

The second researcher observed and recorded five complete instructional sessions during two weeks in the second term of the module. Such sessions covered Unit 7 in *Speak Out Elementary* (2016), whose topic was holidays. The total time of these five classes was 457 minutes, with a mean duration of 91.4 (min.-max.: 81-98; SD = 6.9).

To foster credibility, every effort was made to mitigate the phenomenon of the "observer's paradox" (Labov, 1972, as cited in Mackey & Gass, 2012). This accounts for the selection of audio recording instead of video recording due to the former's allegedly less obtrusive nature.

There was a preliminary class observation grid adapted from previous studies (e.g., De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Sali, 2014, etc.). It consisted of macrofunctions which included microfunctions. The reader is referred to Table Two in Appendix B for the list of the final macro-

and micro-functions identified. For each microfunction, an original L1 or L1-L2 example followed by its complete rendering into English is included. The L1 Spanish segments appear in italics to differentiate them from the L2 ones.

Teacher's and Students' Questionnaires

The students and their teacher were asked to complete a successfully piloted questionnaire. These questionnaires were devised based on the data from the classroom observations and the teacher's stimulated recalls to render them as relevant as possible to the two sets of participants.

Both questionnaires coincided in their structure. The first section introduced the general topic of the questionnaire to the participants and provided reassurance on the anonymous nature of their responses. The second section inquired about their sociodemographic and academic characteristics (see Table One in Appendix A). The third part included the same close-ended items for both sets of participants. Such items tapped into their perspectives on the functions of L1 use enacted by the teacher during his in-class interaction with the students, in a 4-point Likert scale (where 1 = totally useless, 2 = not very useful, 3 = useful, and 4 = totally useful).

Teacher's Stimulated Recalls

Five stimulated recall sessions were implemented corresponding to the five observed audio-recorded classes. Following the transcription of the L1 episodes in each class, the researchers selected the most frequent and representative microfunctions within each macrofunction. The second author conducted the stimulated recall interviews, all of which were audio-recorded, with consent, for a more accurate analysis. The duration of the stimulated recall sessions ranged from 25 to 46 minutes (M = 33.4 minutes, SD = 8.1). See Appendix C for a sample of the oral instructions (translated from the original Spanish).

Students' Diaries

The authors considered diaries (also referred to as "journals" or as one type of journal; Rose et al., 2019) to be an ideal research instrument to tap into students' opinions on L1 use, given that diaries not only allow learners to reflect autonomously, but also more profoundly and more freely than with other instruments such as questionnaires or in-person interviews.

Four diary entries that covered the five sessions were assigned to be optionally completed by the students. Seventeen diaries (all hand-written) were returned: five for the first diary entry and four for each of the second, third and fourth diary entries. The total word count of this corpus is 2,205. The language of the writing guides was Spanish except in those instances which reproduced the teachers' use of L2 English. Similarly to the teacher's stimulated recalls, the students were allowed to write in Spanish to facilitate the report of their reflection. See Appendix D for an example of the writing guide of a diary entry (translated from the original Spanish into English).

Research Procedures

This section describes the two following aspects: the structure of the different stages involved in the implementation of the case study and the procedure for data analysis of each research instrument.

Structure of the Stages Involved in the Case Study

The data collection process spread over three weeks, as can be seen in Table Three (Appendix E). Before the first day, permission to conduct the study had been obtained from the Head of the Center and consent to participate had been affirmed by the teacher once informed about its basic purpose and procedures. The second researcher guaranteed both the Head and the instructor the anonymous treatment of all the data collected and the security measures adopted for their preservation. On Day 1, the same information was conveyed to the students. They were also notified that their behaviour during the classes as well as their anonymous diaries and questionnaires were not to be assessed in any way. Also, they were reassured that their completion of the last two instruments was optional.

As can also be observed in Table Three (Appendix E), each stimulated recall interview took place 48 hours after its corresponding instructional session, which is the maximum threshold recommended by Bloom (1954) to ensure the reliability/dependability of the data (as cited in Gass & Mackey, 2016). Regarding the diaries, there was a period of seven to eight days between the observed session and the corresponding assignment of the diary, which could have arguably augmented the learners' memory decay (Rose et al., 2019). However, prompted by their experience in previous classroom research, the authors prioritized not overwhelming the students with too many tasks from the very onset of the data collection process.

Data Analysis

Concerning data from the classroom observation, as a first step, the lessons were transcribed following Analysis of Discourse (Long, 2015). Secondly, the procedure to identify the oral stretches by the teacher that included L1 episodes relied on whether such stretches reflected a single thematic thread or not. Thirdly, to identify the underlying functions of the L1 episodes, both researchers engaged in a preliminary joint round of deductive and inductive thematic analysis (Terry et al., 2017) to unify codifying criteria. Similarly to Tekin and Garton (2020), the researchers noted the difficulty of assigning some L1 episodes to a single microfunction due to the multifunctional nature of L1 use. They decided to select the primary function and to count each L1 episode only once. Fourthly, after this joint round of preliminary analysis, an inter-rater reliability process was conducted in an attempt to cater for confirmability (Riazi, 2017). Twenty percent of the sample of L1 episodes was randomly selected, and each researcher analyzed it independently. The Kappa value was 0.924 (95% CI: 0.913-0.932). The remaining 80% was divided into two halves, and each author was randomly assigned one half for analysis. Finally,

descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) was applied to obtain the total number of microfunctions in each macrofunction.

As for the teacher's stimulated recalls, their content was transcribed verbatim. These texts and those generated from the students' diaries were analyzed inductively by both researchers through various recurrent readings to find similar or different patterns. The fact that the stimuli provided in the stimulated recalls and the diaries were neatly framed within specific macrofunctions helped focus the analysis and identify patterns more precisely.

For the analysis of the data from the close-ended items of the teacher's and students' questionnaires, descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) was computed. All the statistical analyses in this study were performed with IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, version 27 (IBM Corp., Armonk, N.Y., USA).

Results

In this section, the results for each data collection research instrument will be reported separately.

Classroom Observation

Table Four in Appendix F shows the results of the frequencies and percentages of the three macrofunctions and their microfunctions in descending order of values. As can be seen, the academic macrofunction was the most frequently used one, followed by the procedural and rapport-building macrofunctions. The frequencies of the microfunctions are also detailed in Table Four.

Questionnaires

For all the close-ended items which tapped into the participants' views about the usefulness of the L1 microfunctions, the teacher selected the "totally useful" option only. The students' views were more varied than their teacher's, but the general pattern is that they regarded their teacher's use of L1 Spanish as useful. Table Five in Appendix G includes the results of the students' answers. Given the concentration of responses in the same levels, the results were grouped in two sets: answers from levels 1 + 2 and 3 + 4.

Teacher's Stimulated Recalls

The teacher's stimulated recalls provided rich insights into the varied reasons for the multifunctionality of his L1 use. Likewise, they confirmed the high degree of usefulness he assigned to L1 functions in his answers to the questionnaire. See Table 2 in Appendix B for the original L1 or L1-L2 wording of the examples included in the following account, where the translated L1 Spanish segments appear in italics.

Concerning the academic macrofunction, the teacher often cited the need to use L1 Spanish to ensure his students' comprehension of the L2–a strategy that was followed many times by a comprehension-checker particle such as "right?" or "OK?" This agrees with the highest frequency of this macrofunction in the classroom observation data. For instance, in one case after his students had read a text silently, he told them:

Teacher: "*Well, we already know two things from the text. That, according to him, that is the most fabulous route in the world, huh?* 'The greatest.' *'The greatest.' And second, that it crosses seven different countries, right?"*

The teacher commented at the corresponding stimulated recall session that he had resorted to the L1 "to check if the students had really understood the text well. If I had said it in English, they would not have self-corrected their understanding of the text after a first individual reading and an activity." The teacher also acknowledged that "perhaps if these students had had a higher level of English, I would have expressed myself in English at this moment." Certainly, the students' low level is a factor that accounted for his L1 use in many microfunctions. Nevertheless, it should be noted that, in the debriefing phase at the end of the data collection, he insisted to the second researcher that he conceived his use of the L1 as "a last resort," and that he only applied it when he perceived that the students had not managed to understand something in the L2.

In addition to the aforementioned reason, the instructor's judgment of the complexity of the content being dealt with, as derived from his previous teaching experience, justified his use of the L1 to explain language forms; for example, when he presented and translated vocabulary:

Teacher: "OK, rows? Do you know what a row is? *It's like 'filas'* [Spanish word for rows], *like columns in this case.*"

The teacher valued the efficiency and saving-time bonus of using the L1, as he explained concerning the previous example: "There was no possibility of saying the same thing in English without having to resort to a time-consuming and complex explanation for them."

Such a saving-time advantage was not usually planned in advance. The teacher acknowledged the usual spontaneous nature of his decision-making process to use the L1, which was guided by his assessment of the student's needs on the spot, as can be seen in the following classroom extract related to the procedural microfunction of giving task instructions. The teacher informed the second researcher that he had perceived from his student's faces that they had not correctly understood what they had to do. Therefore, he quickly decided to opt for an L1 explanation:

Teacher: "And this says, 'Read the introduction to the article about the 'Silk Route Tour' and answer the questions.' *What is it telling us to read, to read what?"*

Conversely, the instructor consciously used his L1 due to an a priori decision in the procedural microfunctions of informing about administrative issues and structuring the lessons. For instance:

Teacher: *"Have you all signed, please?"*

The teacher indicated that he always conveyed attendance checks in Spanish, as "I don't consider it to be part of the English class itself" and "they [the students] were already collecting their things to leave the classroom, and it made sense to use Spanish at that moment." Likewise, the instructor was convinced of the benefits of using the L1 to structure the lessons for the sake of clarity.

Finally, the teacher was definitively aware of the need to make his students feel comfortable in a non-threatening atmosphere. Besides treating his students with respect, he sometimes opted to include humor in the L1:

Teacher: *"I have sometimes thought about it, about participating, right? And thinking of people to participate with. It's funny, a teacher and his student, OK? The student practices the English that the teacher has explained to him, right? In Pekín Express,*

the teacher leaves him abandoned to his fate [students laugh], *so he is forced to find his way."*

This example reflects the teacher's eagerness to connect his students' interests and background knowledge with the learning of English, as well as to persuade them about the real-world, practical facet of this process. He did so in this case by referring to a famous TV contest in Spain.

Students' Diaries

Overall, the students' reflections confirmed their answers to the questionnaire. Also, they supplied very insightful data about these perceptions, as will be illustrated next with several literal fragments translated into English from the original Spanish.

The students largely supported the use of L1 Spanish for many academic microfunctions (mainly concerning explanations, feedback and cross-linguistic analyses). Most of them appreciated the value of L1 use to reduce the difficulties imposed by their limited level of proficiency; for example:

"Regarding the use of Spanish as a supporting complement to English in grammar explanations, I think it is appropriate for this purpose, especially when dealing with low-level students like us" (Student 4).

The importance of L1 use in some academic microfunctions is such that it was indirectly claimed as a strategy to counteract dropout rates:

"From my point of view, a Spanish grammar explanation is always positive. In fact, many students drop out from English lessons because they can't understand the contents in English" (Student 3).

Some students, echoing their teacher, welcomed the time-saving consequence of his resort to the L1 for explanatory purposes:

"In the specific case of the comparative and superlative, I appreciate that the teacher explains that in Spanish since, if he did it in English, it would be more complicated for us at this level, and it would take us much more class time" (Student 6).

The same benefit was mentioned by the students for the feedback academic microfunction:

"When the teacher solves a student's doubt by using some Spanish, this involves saving class time that can be dedicated to other activities, and the class can continue its course. It also helps us to learn more effectively from our mistakes" (Student 3).

Another student creatively summarized the value of L1 use for academic purposes from a learner's perspective:

"I hope there comes a moment when we can understand full explanations in English; for the meantime, I believe Spanish is a useful crutch that helps us in our language learning process" (Student 2).

The students did not refer to any procedural microfunction except for the usefulness of L1 to clarify task instructions. They did write at length about the rapport-building macrofunction, which they strongly supported, to the extent that it was regarded as another crucial variable to contribute to solving the dropout phenomenon (similarly to the academic microfunction of presenting/explaining grammar, as indicated before).

"Humor is always useful in class. It can be used to relieve mental stress from the language learning effort, and the student can also see that there is no hostility from the teacher to the students. In this sense, it is helpful as a teaching tool, to alleviate or solve

the psychological shock which causes such high dropout rates in some English courses" (Student 1).

Discussion

The first and second research questions respectively concerned the identification and quantification of the functions of the teacher's L1 use. From a broad perspective, our findings contribute to the existing literature on the functions of L1 use in Foreign Language Teaching in general and in Spanish classrooms; from a narrower angle, our findings are also significant since, to the best of our knowledge, this issue had not been studied in the increasingly frequent context of non-formal education.

It should be considered that the critical comparison of the results of the quantification of L1 use unveiled in this study with those of the past literature becomes a daunting task. The reason is due to the multitude of specific L1 functions detailed above and the differences with prior studies concerning crucial methodological aspects such as students' age and proficiency level, variations in the terminology of the L1 macro- and micro-functions and, especially, the usual absence of quantification of L1 functions (e.g., Millán, 2017; Sobkowiak, 2022; Temesgen & Hailu, 2022; Ye, 2023; Zainil & Arsyad, 2021). Owing to the latter aspect, only those studies that quantified the frequencies of the L1 functions detected in classroom observation will be referred to to discuss the second research question.

Overall, the general tendency that appears to transpire from the results of the first and second research questions when compared with those of past studies is that the variables of "non-formal context" and "students' level" do not seem to entail dramatic or clear-cut discriminant differences in most of the macro- and micro-functions identified.

Specifically, the three macrofunctions detected underlie academic, procedural and rapport-building purposes (Brevik & Rindal, 2020; Sali, 2014; Sobkoviak, 2022; Temesgen & Hailu, 2022, which focused on secondary-school classes in Norway, Turkey, Poland and Ethiopia respectively; cf. Romli et al., 2021, centered on Malay secondary education). Also in congruence with past studies, the academic macrofunction was ranked first. The higher frequency of the academic microfunction in this study (ensuring L2 comprehension) was idiosyncratic in comparison with previous studies, where this microfunction either overlapped with elicitation (Sali, 2014) or it was exclusively focused on texts (Romli et al., 2021), but it did not appear in isolation. Future research dealing with different linguistic levels in non-formal education could examine the extent to which this microfunction is distinctive or not in such a context. The presentation and explanation of grammar and vocabulary, which were the third and fourth most frequent academic microfunctions in the present case study, are largely concurrent with the previous literature regardless of students' educational level; for example, in university settings (Moafa, 2023) and secondary education (Brevik & Rindal, 2020, who included translation in "scaffolding" as separated from "metalinguistic explanation;" Izquierdo et al. 2016; Romli et al., 2021; Sali, 2014). Despite its scarce presence (the lowest one in this study), the academic microfunction "discussion of cultural topics" stands out as an original finding in our data since cultural issues are not distinctively present in the previous literature (cf. "drawing upon shared cultural expressions" in Sali, 2014, which was ranked the tenth most frequent microfunction). Given the attested benefits of plurilingualism, pluriculturalism and intercultural competence in speeding up linguistic and cultural learning (Council of Europe, 2001, 2020), it is surprising that L1 use remains either absent or scant in classroom observation research. Perhaps in this study, however, the limited proficiency of the

students influenced the teacher's attitude towards the cultural sphere, which became superseded by the purely linguistic dimension (e.g., in the description of cities and tours, giving directions in the street, etc.).

Regarding the procedural macrofunction, the results of this case study largely resemble the previous literature concerning the fact that the delivery of task instructions in the L1 was the most frequent microfunction in this category, ensuring clarity (in parallel with the secondary-school classes in Brevik & Rindal, 2020 and Sali, 2014, as well as with the undergraduate classes in De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Jeanjaroonsri, 2022 and Moafa, 2023). Conversely, structuring the lesson, the second most frequent procedural microfunction in this case study, is hardly mentioned in past research as an explicit individual microfunction. The specific context of this case study (non-formal education) can arguably be accounted for as an explanatory variable for this dissimilarity with previous studies. Future research could help to confirm or nuance this finding. Finally, both categories of using humor and creating a supportive classroom atmosphere were more abundant than some microfunctions from the other macrofunctions, similar to Jeanjaroonsri (2022) and Sali (2014). Thus, this result seems to point to the importance of the social/affective sphere as one important motive for L1 use in a class of non-advanced learners, regardless of their age. However, in the secondary-school classes observed by Brevik and Rindal (2020), the empathy/solidarity function was scarce (2%). Future research could aim to determine the specific significance of the rapport-building macrofunction in low-level classes across various contexts.

The results of the third research question revealed an interesting general coincidence between the instructor's views and those of his students in the items of the questionnaire, the teacher's stimulated recalls and the students' diaries. While this pattern seems to be in line with past studies focused on low-level students (Brooks & Lee, 2009; Bruen & Kelly, 2017; Macaro & Lee, 2013; Ye, 2023), the main contribution of this study regarding the previous literature is not only rooted in the innovation of the context being researched (non-formal education), but also in the method triangulation following its mixed-method approach, as will be discussed next.

The teacher and his students considered that L1 use helped to uncover similarities and differences between the L1 and the L2, to facilitate speed and efficiency in the comprehension of grammar and vocabulary, as well as to create a stress-free and enjoyable classroom atmosphere. More specifically, the teacher fully agreed with all the L1 functions indicated in the questionnaire. In general, though less homogenous, his students' responses were fairly similar to their teacher's except for the procedural microfunction of administrative information, which they did not consider very useful (contrary to Kang's [2008] young learners and Macaro and Lee's [2013] young and older learners, both studies set in South Korea). The method triangulation implemented allowed for a plausible explanation: as the teacher admitted in the stimulated recalls, he did not ascribe such moments to "proper" learning time, which might have been perceived by his students (either consciously or unconsciously). The importance of resorting to the L1 in low-level proficiency students was corroborated by the teacher and his students. The former's view, manifested in the stimulated recalls, revealed the "unavoidable" nature of L1 use in this respect, a judgment widely attested in the previous literature with instructors teaching learners of different ages and educational levels (Bruen & Kelly, 2017; Jeanjaroonsri, 2022; Khelalfa & Kellil, 2023; Moafa, 2023; Romli et al., 2021; Tsagari & Giannikas, 2020; etc.). As revealed in their diaries, the students of this case study agreed with the teacher's favorable view regarding the academic functions (similar to Kang's [2008] and Macaro and Lee's [2013] elementary-school learners, Ye's [2023] secondary-school learners and Brooks-Lewis' [2009] undergraduate students). Both sets of

participants also appreciated the practical advantage of L1 use as a saving-time strategy. Arguably, the student's profile in this research–workers with hardly any time to attend classes and study, usually with no previous academic training–accounts for this novel finding in contrast with previous empirical literature. The students' profile likely led to another new advantage of L1 use in this study: the potential prevention of dropouts, as mentioned in some diaries.

The significance of the L1 rapport-building macrofunction for an optimal development of foreign language classes was supported by the instructor and his students. The former praised the value of L1 use for the insertion of humorous comments and for showing empathy to his students, an opinion which coincides with other teachers' views in different educational levels (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Jeanjaroonsri, 2022; Sali, 2014; Sobkoviak, 2022, etc.). All the students' diaries reflected an enthusiastic endorsement of the rapport-building macrofunction, in agreement with Brooks-Lewis (2009), Jeanjaroonsri (2022), Wang (2020) and Ye (2023).

A relevant differentiating finding of this case study is that the teacher did not allege several variables which have been reported to influence instructors' L1 behavior in other studies (Millán, 2017; Neokleous et al., 2022; Shin et al., 2020): teacher training, native or non-native status, external sources such as institution type, colleagues, teacher associations or specialized literature in L2 acquisition. He did not allude to the textbook as a defining aspect of his teaching practice either (cf. Brooks-Lewis, 2009; Bruen & Kelly, 2017), which could arguably be considered an indirect sign of a non-subservient attitude towards it. Certainly, the overwhelmingly prevalent element that guided this teacher's varied and multifunctional use of the L1 was his students' needs (De La Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Kang, 2008; Sali, 2014; cf. Tsagari & Giannikas, 2020), coupled with his teaching experience, which points to the crucial importance of immediate or direct classroom context-mediated factors (Tekin & Garton, 2020).

Interestingly, this teacher openly acknowledged the benefits of the L1 functions he drew upon in spontaneous (Sobkowiak, 2022) and in less frequent, specific, planned instances (related to the procedural microfunctions of administrative information and lesson structuring). Perhaps his desire to comply with his students' needs was rooted in his guilt-free attitude toward using the L1, contrary to a relatively widespread tendency in the literature (e.g., Tsagari & Giannikas, 2020).

A fascinating finding of this case study is that the instructor's positive or non-guilt motives and perspectives on L1 use seem to be supported by an array of different theories, which evidences the richness of his stance. From a cognitive perspective, the teacher potentially attempted to mitigate the limitations of his students' working memory (Bruen & Kelly, 2017; Macaro, 2005) with his use of the L1 to ensure L2 comprehension and facilitate or accelerate the learning of complex aspects of grammar, vocabulary and phonetics. Indeed, L1 use seemed to stand as a productive strategy to alleviate the cognitive load imposed mainly by the students' low proficiency level, a factor highlighted by the students in their diaries. Within an ecological and sociocultural perspective of language teaching and learning (Van Lier, 2011), the use of L1 for academic purposes, as well as for clarifying task instructions and structuring the lesson, can be regarded as an example of "pedagogical scaffolding." Indeed, the teacher's skillful L1 use generated potential affordances (or learning opportunities), which the students seemed to recognize and exploit as revealed in their diaries. Moreover, as Jin et al. (2021) asserted, students with a self-perceived low proficiency level are usually more anxious, which may lead to negative emotions and deprived learning. The L1 rapport-building microfunctions appeared to contribute to nurturing beneficial emotions, which allegedly supported students' learning, as also reflected in their diaries. Therefore, the teacher's L1 humorous comments and his conveyance of empathy

and solidarity in cases of lack of understanding of content went in line with Positive Psychology (Jin et al., 2021).

Overall, the teacher's attitude aligned with Macaro's (2001) "optimal position." Indeed, his reflections evidenced appreciation for the beneficial consequences of L1 use, mainly due to his students' non-advanced or emerging proficiency level. However, following a generalized pattern of the previous literature (Bruen & Kelly, 2017; Moafa, 2023; Neokleous et al., 2022; Tsagari & Giannikas, 2020), in the debriefing phase, the teacher also explicitly admitted that he used the L1 as "a last resort," which arguably underlies his ultimate belief in the need to provide learners with quality L2 exposure and opportunities for interaction as much as possible. In this respect, all the students' voiced opinions in their diaries reflected their approval of explicit learning (explanations, feedback, cross-linguistic analyses, etc.), which does not correspond to the monolingual stance. Also, as previously mentioned, the students extremely valued the role of the L1 in the affective dimension of learning. In other words, their views supported a learner-centered approach, which is in line with their teacher's stance. Importantly, therefore, the diaries emerged as a potentially valuable tool to allow students to exercise their agency and actively engage in language learning (in a comparable way to Brooks-Lewis, 2009).

Finally, two important limitations should be acknowledged in this case study. First, its small sample prevents the generalization of findings to other situations. Second, some memory decay and derived omission of relevant data in the diaries cannot be precluded due to the time span of seven to eight days from the observed sessions to the assignment of students' diaries (a methodological decision consciously undertaken by the authors out of their past classroom-research experience). Nevertheless, the analysis of the students' diaries did not reveal any visible trace of a negative influence exerted by such a time span. Despite the previous limitations, the authors believe that this small-scale study has contributed to expanding scholarly knowledge from empirical and methodological angles. The results of this mixed-method case study are significant as they provide valuable insights about how much and why the L1 is used in non-formal foreign language education (a context not studied before in this respect), together with the classroom participants' perspectives on this instructional tool. Furthermore, the triangulation generated from the different methods (classroom observation, questionnaires with close-ended items addressed to both sets of participants, the teacher's stimulated recalls and students' diaries) has also aided in enriching our understanding of the myriad of factors and perspectives involved in such a complex issue as is L1 use in the foreign language classroom.

Conclusion

This mixed-method case study aimed to provide a comprehensive description of L1 use in a Spanish EFL classroom located in the non-previously researched context of state-run adult non-formal education, both concerning the in-class functions as well as the teacher's and students' perceived degree of usefulness ascribed to L1 use. The three main macrofunctions identified in the classroom observations–academic, procedural and rapport-building–confirmed the essentially scaffolding nature of L1 use. Ensuring L2 comprehension and structuring the lesson emerged as distinctive innovative microfunctions compared with the previous literature. Also, the teacher's and his students' views were fairly comparable as both sets of participants positively assessed L1 use in general EFL teaching as well as most L1 microfunctions emerging in each macrofunction (as reflected in the teacher's stimulated recalls, the students' diaries and the questionnaires completed by both sets of participants). The students' profile likely led to another novel advantage

of L1 use in this study: the potential prevention of dropouts, as mentioned in some diaries. Ultimately, the affordances facilitated by the instructor's skillful and, many times, reactive L1 use seemed to benefit his students' learning from cognitive and affective perspectives and allow for the establishment of a stress-free, supportive atmosphere.

The practical classroom recommendations resulting from this case study, which should be cautiously approached due to its small sample, are rooted in the consideration of teachers' on-the-spot reactions to their students' needs in class. Instructors might use the L1 to provide explanations of form-focused aspects, ensure students' comprehension, respond to their students' comments or questions, clarify task instructions, provide feedback, etc. Guiding students in the structure of the development of the lesson might also be useful. Additionally, any L1 instance that helps build a positive teacher-student rapport seems to be an effective strategy to contribute to the overall aim of facilitating students' learning.

Methodologically, this study has supported the value of stimulated recalls to tap into teachers' cognition, with powerful implications for reflective practice and teacher training and development. The relevance of students' diaries has also been corroborated–as a research tool to obtain insightful learner data and as a productive way of exercising students' agency. Both aspects point to the value of listening to learners as one plausible strategy to optimize teaching.

Finally, an unsurprisingly expected implication of this case study is the impossibility of recommending universal optimal guidelines for L1 use in non-formal (and also formal) educational contexts, especially in terms of quantity. The reason is due to the ecological nature of classrooms (students from different ages, regions, countries, educational levels and contexts, with varied and dynamic motivations, experienced and novice teachers, institutional policies, etc.). Fruitful avenues for further research could be to continue examining L1 use in different non-formal education classes. Thus, a bank of optimal teaching techniques for different L1 purposes extracted from specific local contexts could be devised, subject to constant revision and updating, along with essential information regarding teachers' and students' views on such techniques, and their effects on the learners' attainment of different areas of L2 knowledge. Ideally, as a result, the abstract but useful construct of "judicious" and "principled" L1 use (Macaro, 2005) would turn tangible and informative for both teachers and researchers.

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Appendices
Appendix A
Table 1. *Students' Sociodemographic and Academic Characteristics Plus Language Experience*

Nationality, *n (%)*	
Spanish	5 (71.4)
Ecuadorian	2 (28.6)
Academic qualifications, *n (%)*	
Secondary Education	3 (42.8)
Upper Secondary Education	2 (28.6)
Vocational Training	2 (28.6)
Familiarization with a different language from the native one, *n (%)*	
No	4 (57.2)
Yes	3 (42.8)
Familiarization with additional languages other than native one, *n (%)*	
French	2 (75)

Italian	1 (25)
Proficiency level of additional language, *n (%)*	
Basic/A1-A2 (Council of Europe, 2001)	1 (25)
Intermediate/B1 (Council of Europe,2001)	2 (75)
Amount of English learning (in months), mean (SD)	42 (45.31)

Appendix B
Table 2. *Macro- and Micro-Functions of L1 Use Identified in the Classroom Observation*

ACADEMIC MACROFUNCTION	
Academic microfunction	Example
Presentation/explanation of grammar forms	Teacher: *Pero si queréis poner a la persona que estáis comparando, tenéis que poner* "than" *y la otra persona, o el objeto de la comparación.* "My sister is taller than me": *no lo confundáis y pongáis* "that." *Es un error muy común poner* "that". Teacher: But if you want to mention the person you are comparing, you have to put "than" and the other person or the object of the comparison. "My sister is taller than me". Please don't confuse it and don't put "that." Putting "that" is a very common mistake.
Explanation/translation of unknown vocabulary	T: OK, rows? Do you know what a row is? *Es como "filas", como columnas en este caso.* T: OK, rows? Do you know what a row is? It's like "filas" [Spanish word for "row"], like columns in this case.
Presentation/explanation of L2 pronunciation	Teacher: Fast. *Alargamos un poco la "a".* Fast. *¿Y esta? ¿Dónde está la fuerza? En la "o"*, slow. *A partir de la "l",* slow, *es lo que suena fuerte.* Teacher: Fast. We lengthen the "a" a little. Fast. And this one? Where is the stress? On the "o," slow. After the "l," slow, that's what sounds strong.
Ensuring L2 comprehension	Teacher: *Bueno, que ya sabemos del texto dos cosas. Que, según él, es la ruta más fabulosa del mundo, ¿eh?* "The greatest", "la más grande". *Y, segundo: que atraviesa siete países distintos,* right? Teacher: Well, we already know two things from the text. That, according to him, that is the most fabulous route in the world, huh? "The greatest." "The greatest." And second, that it crosses seven different countries, right?
Activating language background knowledge	Teacher: *OK, ¿os acordáis de este ejercicio que hicimos el otro día? ¿Los dos personajes estos, que teníamos que compararlos? Bueno, teníamos a* Mr. Heavy y Eddy, *y hablamos con* "tired" *o* "strong". *Decíamos:* "Eddy is stronger than Mr. Heavy", "Mr. Heavy is more tired than Eddy", alright? Teacher: OK, do you remember this exercise we did the other day? These two characters that we had to compare? Well, we had Mr. Heavy and Eddy, and we talked about "tired" or "strong." We said, "Eddy is stronger than Mr. Heavy," "Mr. Heavy is more tired than Eddy," alright?

Addressing students' mistakes	Teacher: The last one says: "you..." Student: You can't miss it. Teacher: You can't miss it. What was the meaning in Spanish? Student: *Que no lo pierdas.* Teacher: *No tiene pérdida. No tiene pérdida:* you can't miss it. Teacher: The last one says: "you..." Student: You can't miss it. Teacher: You can't miss it. What was the meaning in Spanish? Student: Don't lose it. Teacher: You can't miss it. You can't miss it. You can't miss it.
Responding to students' contributions (questions, comments, etc.)	(Regarding the formation of the past simple tense of verbs): Student: *¿Siempre se dobla la consonante?* Teacher: *Consonante, vocal, consonante; doblamos, sí.* Alright? Student: Is the consonant always doubled? Teacher: Consonant, vowel, consonant; we double it, yes. Alright?
Cross-linguistic analysis	Teacher: Comfortable. Uncomfortable. *Tenemos un caso de un opuesto que se crea con la* "un". "Un" *es el prefijo negativo. Cómodo, incómodo. La* "un" *equivale al* "in" *en español.* Teacher: Comfortable. Uncomfortable. We have an opposite case that is created with "un." "Un" is the negative prefix. Comfortable, uncomfortable. "Un" is equivalent to "in" in Spanish.
Transmission of useful language learning strategies	Teacher (full intervention in L1 Spanish): We are going to do the exercise that we have done many times, which is to listen to and underline the syllable that sounds the strongest in each word, because it is an initial step to learning the words.
Discussion of cultural topics	Teacher: *Did you know? ¿Lo sabíais? Los yeclanos dicen que tienen un castillo, pero no es un castillo. Es una iglesia, es un...* Student: *Una ermita.* Teacher: *Es como la Fuensanta, como una basílica. Y lo llaman* "castle": *castillo.* Teacher: Did you know? Did you know it? The people from Yecla say they have a castle, but it is not a castle. It's a church, it's a... Student: A hermitage. Teacher: It's like the Fuensanta monument, like a basilica. And they call it "castle": castle.
PROCEDURAL MACROFUNCTION	
Procedural microfunction	Example
Implementing classroom management	Teacher: Oh, my God, it isn't working. Students: *¿No?* Teacher: No. Student: *Tienes que encenderle allí, creo.* Teacher: *No, no. Hay que darle aquí al enchufe, pero no...*

	Teacher: Oh, my God, it isn't working. Students: Isn't it? Teacher: No. Student: You have to turn it on there, I think. Teacher: No, no. You have to plug it in here, but no...
Dealing with administrative issues	Teacher (full intervention in L1 Spanish): *Have you all signed, please?*
Delivering activity/task instructions	Teacher: And this says, "Read the introduction to the article about the 'Silk Route Tour' and answer the questions."*¿Qué nos está diciendo; que leamos qué?* Teacher: And this says, "Read the introduction to the article about the 'Silk Route Tour' and answer the questions." What are you telling us, to read what?
Structuring the lesson	Teacher (all intervention in L1 Spanish): *Well, we're done. Tomorrow, we will correct this, and I'll play the song for you, huh? Among other things.*
RAPPORT-BUILDING MACROFUNCTION	
Rapport building-microfunction	Example
Creating a supportive class atmosphere	Teacher: Do you understand, ... (student's name)? Student: *Hoy estoy espesa...* Teacher: *Bueno, no pasa nada. Mira, te lo explico. Tenemos que hacer lo mismo que hemos hecho ahora, ordenando cuáles serían las instrucciones para dar la dirección a este sitio, a Liverpool 1, que ha sido la segunda historia, ¿eh?* Teacher: Do you understand, ... (student's name)? Student: Today I feel clumsy... Teacher: Well, don't worry. Look, I'll explain it to you. We have to do the same thing we just did now: to order the instructions to give the address of this place, in Liverpool 1, which was the second story, huh?
Using humor	Teacher (full intervention in L1 Spanish): *I have sometimes thought about it, about participating, right? And thinking of people to participate with. It's funny, a teacher and his student, OK? The student practices the English that the teacher has explained to him, right? In Pekín Express, the teacher leaves him abandoned to his fate* [students laugh], *so he is forced to find his way.*

Appendix C
Instructions of Stimulated Recall Interview Addressed to the Teacher
        "We begin with the first "stimulated recall" session of the EFL A2 group. I am now with the teacher of this group, XXX, who has agreed to carry out these "stimulated recall" sessions, which will be recorded to ensure their accurate preservation for later access and analysis.
     XXX, the fragments that you are going to hear next were extracted from the first class of this research study. At the end of each fragment, I will stop the recording and ask you about the thoughts you had at that moment about using the L1. Please try to answer with as much detail as possible about what you remember concerning those specific moments. You should not assess whether the use of the L1 at each moment was appropriate or not, or if you should have acted differently. I inform you that you can stop the recording at any time you consider appropriate to make any observation about what you are listening to or to ask me a question. During the presentation of your thoughts, I will write down what I believe is relevant to the object of the study. Do you have any doubts? Are you ready to start?"

Appendix D
Sample of Instructions of Students' Diaries

Read the following excerpt from the February 24 class. [See Appendix B for the extract of the rapport-building microfunction "using humor"].

The previous excerpt exemplifies the use of humor in class by your teacher, for which he uses Spanish. What is your interpretation of the humorous use of Spanish in each excerpt? Do you remember how you felt in those specific moments in class? Why do you think your teacher uses Spanish in these cases? Do you think that the fact that your teacher uses Spanish for humorous purposes in class makes you feel more relaxed and with greater freedom to express yourself?

Note: There are no right or wrong answers in this activity. The important thing is that you reflect your point of view in as much detail as possible. Thank you in advance for your sincerity, and please let me remind you that this activity is completely anonymous and voluntary.

Appendix E
Table 3. Structure of the Data Collection Process

FIRST WEEK.
Day 1. Class session 0.
   • Researcher's introduction to the students about the basic purpose and procedures of the study.
   • Collection of signed consent forms from the students.
Day 2. Class session 1.
   Classroom observation and audio recording.
   [48 hours afterward: teacher's stimulated recall related to session 1]
Day 3. Class session 2.
   Classroom observation and audio recording.
   [48 hours afterward: teacher's stimulated recall related to session 2]

SECOND WEEK.
Day 4. Class session 3.
   Classroom observation and audio recording.
   [48 hours afterward: teacher's stimulated recall related to session 3]
Day 5. Class session 4.
   • Classroom observation and audio recording.
   • Explanation and assignment of the diary entry corresponding to session 1.
   [48 hours afterward: teacher's stimulated recall related to session 4]
Day 6. Class session 5.
   • Classroom observation and audio recording.
   • Collection of the diary entries filled in corresponding to session 1.
   • Assignment of the diary entry corresponding to session 2.
   [48 hours afterward: teacher's stimulated recall related to session 5]

THIRD WEEK.
Day 7. Class session 6.
   • Collection of the diary entries filled in corresponding to session 2.
   • Assignment of the diary entry corresponding to session 3.
Day 8. Class session 7.
   • Collection of the diary entries filled in corresponding to session 3.
   • Assignment of the diary entry corresponding to sessions 4 and 5.
Day 9. Class session 8.
   • Collection of the diary entries filled in corresponding to sessions 4 and 5.
   • Provision of the link to the students and their teacher for the anonymous questionnaire.
   [48 hours afterward: debriefing with the teacher about the findings from his data].

Appendix F
Table 4. Descriptive Results of the L1 Microfunctions Within Each Macrofunction

	n (%)
1. Academic	416 (73.9)
1.1 Ensuring L2 comprehension	148 (26.3)
1.2 Teacher's responses to students' questions/comments/contributions in L1	101 (17.9)
1.3 Presentation/explanation of grammar	55 (9.8)
1.4 Explanation/translation of unknown vocabulary	34 (6.0)
1.5 Activating prior knowledge	31 (5.5)
1.6 Addressing students' mistakes	17 (3.0)
1.7 Cross-linguistic language analysis	15 (2.7)
1.8 Presentation/explanation of pronunciation	7 (1.2)
1.9 Transmission of useful language learning strategies	6 (1.1)
1.10 Discussion of cultural topics	2 (0.4)
2. Procedural	102 (18.1)
2.1 Delivering activity instructions	68 (12.1)
2.2 Structuring the lesson	19 (3.4)
2.3 Informing about administrative issues	9 (1.6)
2.4 Implementing classroom management	6 (1.1)
3. Rapport building	45 (8.0)
3.1 Using humor	28 (5.0)
3.2 Creating a supportive class atmosphere	17 (3.0)
TOTAL	563 (100)

Appendix G
Table 5. Results from Students' Questionnaire: Usefulness of L1 Microfunctions

Items	Totally useless (1) or not very useful (2), *n (%)*	Useful (3) or totally useful (4), *n (%)*
ACADEMIC MICROFUNCTIONS		
a) Explaining new vocabulary (e.g., false friends).		7 (100)
b) Explaining complex grammar points.		7 (100)
c) Explaining the connections between English and Spanish regarding linguistic elements (grammar, vocab, pronunciation...).	1 (14.3)	6 (85.7)
d) Ensuring L2 comprehension of language forms, texts, etc.	3 (42.9)	4 (57.1)
e) Correcting and explaining students' errors.		7 (100)
f) Providing students with feedback about their in-class contributions.		7 (100)
g) Reminding students of previously studied linguistic elements (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.).	2 (28.6)	5 (71.4)
h) Discussing cultural elements.	1 (14.3)	6 (85.7)

i)	Making recommendations on how to learn more effectively.	2 (28.6)	5 (71.4)
	PROCEDURAL MICROFUNCTIONS		
j)	Giving task instructions.	3 (42.9)	4 (57.1)
k)	Structuring the lesson (opening and closing it, managing transitions from one activity to another).	3 (42.9)	4 (57.1)
l)	Informing students about administrative issues of the module (e.g., attendance registers, exam dates, general announcements, etc.).	5 (71.4)	2 (28.6)
m)	Informing students about classroom management issues (e.g., calling students' attention, assigning homework, etc.).	3 (42.9)	4 (57.1)
	RAPPORT-BUILDING MICROFUNCTIONS		
n)	Motivating students by telling jokes, anecdotes, etc.		7 (100)
o)	Helping students feel more at ease when learning English.	2 (28.6)	5 (71.4)