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**“A Handbook of Phrases Containing the Most Common
‘Cuencanismos’ to Help Foreigners in Cuenca”**

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RESUMEN

Desde hace algunos años, la ciudad de Cuenca ha experimentado un proceso migratorio muy significativo. Muchos ciudadanos de origen Estado-Unidense han viajado a nuestra ciudad para residir en ella. Este proceso ha traído un gran problema para los nuevos residentes ya que deben aprender una nueva lengua para lograr adaptarse. El aprendizaje formal es útil, pero muchas veces es insuficiente, ya que el lenguaje formal es muy diferente al lenguaje informal cotidianamente hablado en las calles de Cuenca.

Por este motivo, el proyecto “*A Handbook of Phrases Containing the Most Common ‘Cuencanismos’ to Help Foreigners in Cuenca*” (Un manual de frases que contiene los Cuencanismos más comunes para ayudar a los extranjeros en Cuenca) pretende crear un manual con los cuencanismos más comunes usados en la ciudad para que los extranjeros entiendan mejor nuestro peculiar dialecto.

Se realizó encuestas a los habitantes de la ciudad para extraer los cuencanismos más comunes, los mismos que a través de un proceso de selección fueron compilados, y con el propósito de medir el nivel de conocimiento de dos grupos de extranjeros radicados en Cuenca. Los resultados fueron los esperados, y a través de un proceso de análisis e interpretación se llegó a la conclusión de que un manual con los cuencanismos más comunes, podría ayudar a nuestros nuevos residentes a entender nuestro dialecto y adaptarse mejor a nuestra ciudad.

Palabras clave: Manual, cuencanismos, modismos, extranjeros, lenguaje formal, lenguaje informal, encuesta, prueba, análisis, interpretación.



ABSTRACT

For some years, the city of Cuenca has been going through a significant migration process. Many American citizens have been travelling to our city to reside in it. This process has brought a big problem for these new residents, as they must learn a second language to fit in. Formal learning is useful, but it is often incomplete since formal language differs a lot from the informal language that is spoken on the streets of our city.

For this reason, the project “*A Handbook of Phrases Containing the Most Common ‘Cuencanismos’ to Help Foreigners*” aims to create, as the name says, a handbook with the most common *cuencanismos* in use, to help foreigners understand our unique speech.

To compile the most common *cuencanismos*, a survey was administered to some local residents of Cuenca. Then, through a selection process, the most common *cuencanismos* were compiled and used to design a proficiency test regarding these idioms, which was applied to two different groups of foreigners, some of Spanish teaching schools and others from various parts of the city. The purpose of the test was to measure foreigners’ knowledge about *cuencanismos*. The results were as expected, and after a process of analysis and interpretation, the conclusion is that a handbook with the most common *cuencanismos* might help our new residents to understand our lexicon more accurately and adapt to our city in a better way.

Keywords: Handbook, most common *cuencanismos*, idioms, foreigners, formal language, informal language, survey, test, analysis, interpretation.



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Adrián Torres



INTRODUCTION

“A Handbook of Phrases Containing the Most Common ‘Cuencanismos’ to Help Foreigners in Cuenca” is a resource created to help foreigners living in Cuenca, who have different problems when trying to communicate in the Spanish Language and when using our unique *Cuencano* lexicon. With the creation of this material, foreigners might increase their capacity to use some of the most common *cuencanismos*, employed by the natives, to communicate better.

By using a series of research techniques and tools, valuable information has been collected for the development of this project which encompasses five chapters. The first chapter is related to the problem, justification, hypothesis, general objective and specific objectives. The second chapter involves the Literature Review, in which different studies were used to develop the importance of idioms for communicative competence purposes. It also includes information related to each one of the topics and subtopics along this section.

The third chapter is about the methodology used during this study. This section provides information about populations, samples, subjects, data collection techniques, data organization technique, data analysis technique, consideration of extraneous variables, and the design of the handbook.

Chapter four presents the survey result, performance test result, the interview analysis, as well as the interpretation of each one of them. Finally, the fifth chapter includes various conclusions and recommendations.



CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

1.1 Topic

This research has been titled; “A Handbook of Phrases Containing the Most Common ‘Cuencanismos’ to help foreigners in Cuenca”

1.2 Description of the problem

Idioms are common among all languages around the globe. Citizens use them everywhere, and Cuencanos are not the exception. However, for those foreigners that come to Cuenca, especially to make it their new place of residence, it might result difficult for them to understand and use some of our expressions; as there is lack of material containing cuencanismos and their equivalents in English.

For this reason, it is necessary the creation of a material containing these cuencanismos with their equivalents and definitions in the English language with some in-use examples, so that our new out-comers have the opportunity to learn, use, and understand some expressions commonly utilize in the city of Cuenca.

1.3 Justification

Communication is a powerful tool that lets us be in contact with people. However, it also exposes us to many situations that may imply some difficulties when understanding a foreign language, especially its idiomatic expressions. Dealing with them can be a headache for people who try to decodify the message



intrinsically contained in that language. It might make certain people feel frustrated, especially because they are not ready to deal with it; and it is even harder when those people are immersed in the country where all those idiomatic expressions are used as part of daily life.

In terms of this investigation, it is really important to consider *cuencano* idiomatic expressions and their equivalents in English due to the fact that all of our *cuencanismos* do not have any literal meaning in English. Our unique lexicon can be heard in markets, streets, parks, etc. where we are accustomed to using it all the time. Good examples are: “*qué pacheco*”, “*eres un mandarina*”, “*qué bestia que eres*”, “*no seas aguafiestas*”, “*yapa*”, and so on. To our citizens it is easy to decodify each of them, but for a foreigner, they might be confusing and extremely hard to understand, no matter how good his/her Spanish is. Therefore, this study has the purpose to help foreigners understand our “way of speaking” closely.

Lastly, this new contribution may help the students of a second language become more interested when learning new idiomatic expressions and discovering how useful they are for real life. Also, it might increase the importance of studying idioms in different contexts, forms, and situations.

As a matter of fact, we cannot forget that idiomatic expressions are part of our society and culture, and they have to look as significant and relevant for everybody. So, this new study will show that communication means not only to be understood, but to value what we really own.



1.4 Research Questions

A few research questions have been developed:

1. Do cuencanismos cause problems in communication, particularly to foreigners who are learning Spanish?
2. Is there a lack of material directed to foreigners who are willing to learn Spanish and especially cuencanismos?
3. Do foreigners know the most commonly used cuencanismos in context?
4. What alternatives do foreigners use to learn, interpret, and understand cuencanismos?
5. Do foreigners consider cuencanismos as an essential part of the process of learning Spanish, especially if they are living in Cuenca?

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 General Objective

To create a handbook of phrases containing the most common *cuencanismos* in order to help English speaking foreigners, who live in Cuenca, understand our peculiar way of speaking.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

1. To compile the most common cuencanismos by means of a survey.
2. To obtain information about the different contexts, for example: schools, bars, restaurants, and others where cuencanismos are commonly used.



3. To give a clear explanation of each one of the most common cuencanismos in the English language by providing their definitions or equivalents and in-use examples of them at diverse contexts.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following Literature Review synthesizes information compiled from reliable database, dictionaries, books, and web resources which were used to develop the importance of idioms to develop a communicative competence. Therefore, we believe that a resource such as a “Handbook of Phrases Containing the Most Common ‘Cuencanismos’ to Help Foreigners in Cuenca” will help foreigners to understand our lexicon. Through the use of this resource, which contains cuencanismos and their definitions in English, foreigners might be able to comprehend and use some of the most common cuencanismos in an appropriate way.

2.1 Background

In recent years, foreigners, the majority of them English speakers, are frequently travelling to our country, mainly to Cuenca, due to the fact that this city has been considered for the past seven years as the ideal place for them to make tourism and in some cases to make it their new place of residence.

Cuenca city is considered like this because of some characteristics, such as, weather, price in groceries, transportation system, cheap lands, houses, and also because of the friendliness of the locals.

With this new out comers living in Cuenca, a new problem appears which has to do all with the language. As far as it is now, each community in the world



has its own language variation besides of the main language they use, and the same occurs in our city.

Cuencanos have a unique variation of language compared with people of other provinces such as *Quiteños*, *Lojanos*, *Guayaquileños*, and others. These variations in language are called vernacular idiomatic expressions. They have their own and only meaning in the specific community they are used.

Since idioms are part of a culture and a sociolinguistic community, a person coming from another one, which is totally different from ours, will have some difficulties trying to figure out the meaning of the different expressions used by Cuencanos.

That is why the field of pragmatics and sociolinguistics in which idioms acquire importance and value for daily communication become important if we think that foreigners may have available some tool that helps them communicate better. Therefore, the idea of creating a handbook with the most important and commonly used idioms will be a contribution in the field.

Moreover, by the creation of the handbook, which will contain the most common cuencanismos and some examples, foreigners might be able to understand and use them appropriately in accordance to the context they belong.

2.2 Culture, Language, Sociolinguistics, and Pragmatics

The way we speak and express our ideas, opinions, and emotions can vary according to the culture we live in, as well as the language we speak. Therefore,



language and culture are essential and fundamental elements in the process of using certain expressions because of the different connotations and meanings they have, as the variation in meanings as well.

In addition, there are two other elements, Semantics and Pragmatics, which have to deal with the uses of some norms of the language within different social contexts; both give us a better idea of how important is to learn the use and function of language within societies.

2.2.1 Culture

H. Douglas Brown defines culture as, “The ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time” (177). Every culture has its own way of identification that makes it different one from another because of the different kinds of customs, beliefs, ideas, and traditions that are accepted and interpreted according to the place they belong. This is the case of idiomatic expressions which emerge from a culture as a necessity to transmit ideas in words or phrases that cannot be easily conveyed by using just a single word.

In addition, Yağız and Izadpanah state that “Idioms appear to be the natural decoders of customs, cultural beliefs, social conventions, and norms” (953). Moreover, idioms are used to express different kinds of emotions settled in phrases or words that have a special meaning for the person who uses them. This way of expressing thoughts are related to the culture and social customs and beliefs that rely in a society. Consequently, idioms and their particular expressive meanings



cannot be literally translated by someone that does not belong to the culture where those expressions are used.

2.2.2 Language

Language and culture are intrinsically connected. Through language, people communicate, in a way, values, beliefs, and ideas of a culture. In accordance with Kramsch, cited in Burbano, “Language is the principal means whereby we conduct our social lives [and] when it is used in context of communications, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways” (24). As it has been mentioned previously customs, beliefs, traditions, and other values represent a specific culture; however, as Burbano mentions, language is the principal medium where culture is reflected (25).

To support this idea of culture and language connection, Holmes, cited in Burbano, states the following contexts:

Saying ‘what’s up?’ to a friend is correct, while saying this to a professor is completely unacceptable, especially in traditional hierarchical societies such as in Japan, where professors or adults in general are not at the same level regarding social status. Speech acts such as invitations, requests, apologies, and compliments which are part of daily interaction call also for reflection; for instance, the utterance ‘Let’s hang out’ should not occur when inviting a superior, and if it does occur there is a serious pragmatic failure (Burbano 26).



According to Yağız and Izadpanah, “Culture has its own language. In fact, the authors state that by using this tool, people can have ideas about how the environment under the impact of culture is expressed, interpreted, and spoken” (955). Indeed, language and culture are two of the powerful tools used to understand the context that is around us; without them, it will be impossible to comprehend what is there, outside; for instance, both depend one another, and they are indispensable for the process of communication. Finally, it is important to remember that language is the principal means whereby a culture is represented in context.

2.2.3 Sociolinguistics

Holmes defines sociolinguistics as the relationship between language and society focusing on the explanation of why we speak differently in different social contexts; in addition, sociolinguistics is interested in recognizing the social function of language, and the ways used to transmit social meaning (1).

Language shows people’s actions, emotions, feelings, signs, among others, that vary from one society to another. This variation in language is also related to the way of how people express themselves to others in different situations or contexts, being these formal and informal. For each one of these situations, different ways of communication appear, and they can vary depending on the occasion or, the person.

It is necessary to point out that by means of language we can ask and give information, express our emotions, create connections with others, demonstrate



our social identity, among others. In addition, the shift between one context and another is showed through people’s emotions and behaviors (Burbano 28). The following example was taken from Holmes in order to demonstrate how people interact naming the person in different settings:

Name	Speaker	When / Where
Robert	Grandparents Teachers Doctor Mother	Home, letters School Surgery, hospital When annoyed
Robbie	Mother, father	Most of the time
Rob	Friends, brother.	Most of the time
Robert Harris	Parents	When very annoyed
Mr. Harris	Strangers	Letters, shops.

Chart 1: “Why do we say the same thing in different ways? – Exercise 2 Answers”
Source: *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*

The examples above illustrate Holmes’s concept of how a particular person, in this case Robert, can be named depending on the situation and the familiarity that exists towards him. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of how interaction and the words used can vary according to the context and the type of relationship between the speakers, and the different variations in emotions and attitudes that exist when interacting with others.



2.2.4 Pragmatics

Horn and Ward state that “Pragmatics is the study of the context-dependent aspects of meaning which are systematically abstracted away from the construction of Logical Form” (1). Pragmatics involves how to interpret what people mean to say in different and particular contexts and how the context influences what is said (Yule 3). This can be seen in some cuencanismos, as follows:

First context: Michael is talking to a woman who is an acquaintance.

Michael says:

- ¡Allí viene tu marido! (Your **husband** is coming!)

The sentence indicates that Michael is telling the woman that her husband is approaching to the place they are at. There is not any other meaning in the sentence.

Second context: Michael is talking to a friend of him named Chris:

- ¡Allí viene tu marido! (Your **husband** is coming!)

In this context, the word **husband** is referring to a third man who is Chris’s best friend, and Michael is making fun of them because of how close they are to each other.

Chart 2: “Examples of Pragmatics”

Source: Pintado and Torres

As seen in the examples, it is not hard to notice that Pragmatics studies the relationship between different linguistic forms and the users of those forms. It analyzes the distance between the participants of the conversation, and how this distance defines what is being said and how much needs to be said.



The ability to use the language appropriately in context is vital for language learners, and, as it has been mentioned, idioms make an important part of it. To master a second language idioms must be learned, but it is even more important for learners to know with whom, where, and when they have to use them.

2.2.4.1 Pragmalinguistics and Sociopragmatics

Going back to the previous topic, to be considered pragmatically competent, a person must have the ability to use the language correctly in different contexts. Now, this idea conveys to two other elements that have to be analyzed separately to make it even more understandable.

On one hand, let us suppose that a foreign language learner has the knowledge of all the elements of language known as illocutions; he/she has memorized all these syntactical constructions with no literal meaning better known as idioms. But, what will happen if the learner does not know when and where to use them? The answer is the learner will not be able to communicate correctly because he lacks Sociopragmatics Competence.

On the other hand, another foreign language learner has been trained on how to use different strategies in language knowledge that helps him/her avoid communicative misunderstandings. He/ she knows how, when, and where to use some language elements, in our case idioms, in an appropriate context, but he/she only knows a couple of idioms. What will the learner's major gap be? The answer is: the learner lacks pragmalinguistic competence.



Analyzing the two previous interrogations, it can be said that for a language learner to be considered pragmatically competent, he/she must have sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic competence, and must use them together as one single element.

2.3 An Overview of Idioms and some Idiomatic Expressions

Do you know what an idiom is? Are they common in the place you live? Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines an idiom as “a group of words whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words” (771). In other words, the complete meaning of an idiomatic expression is based on the sum of the whole phrase (Zarei 9); therefore, it is not possible to understand an idiomatic expression word for word, but rather, it is necessary to interpret the complete phrase. For example, the expression ‘*fat cat*’ does not refer to a cat that is or looks fat, but to a person who is really wealthy or extremely rich. Other examples can be the idiomatic expressions used by Cuencanos like *yapa* that means to get something extra for free, and the expression *hacer vaca* that means to collect money to buy something. These two examples can be easily understood by Cuencanos, but for a person coming from a different country, these expressions can sound strange and difficult to comprehend.

2.3.1 Four Types of Idioms

Having several possibilities of idioms that are considered important by different authors, only four of them have been selected: euphemisms, proverbs, slangs, and idioms containing special words, which are commonly used in every



day conversations, magazines, books, short stories, among others.

2.3.1.1 Euphemisms

The Literary Devices resource defines euphemism as a polite indirect expression that supplants words and expressions considered inappropriate and rude. Euphemism is also an informal expression that loses its authentic significance in order to replace the original meaning of a word. Finally, the use of a euphemism is based on the social context of the speakers and writers where they find it necessary to substitute certain terms that can result disturbing for some people in a particular moment (Literary Devices, Terms, and Elements).

Examples of Euphemisms:

Euphemisms	Examples	Meaning
pardon my French	He's such an idiot, <i>pardon my French.</i>	apologies for swearing (humorous)
powder my nose	I'm just going to <i>powder my nose.</i>	use the toilet
my number was up	I saw the car heading straight for me, and I thought <i>my number was up.</i>	I was about to die (informal)
have bun in the oven	Guess what! I've got <i>a bun in the oven!</i>	I am pregnant. (humorous)

Chart 3: "Common Examples of Euphemisms"
Source: *English Idioms in Use Advanced*



2.3.1.2 Proverbs

They are commonly used around the world, and they have become part of our daily lives. Proverbs are expressions that collect wisdom from diverse nations, ages, and times. They are also thoughts expressed in a metaphorical way. Their origin is obscure due to the lack of written records. Some of them are found in the Bible, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and others (Titeleman 8). The importance of proverbs is merely cultural and universal due to their traditional use in different situations. An important point about proverbs is that most of them have similar or familiar aspects that can help people understand or decodify them.

For example, if a North American, who is learning Spanish in Cuenca, hears the expression *Después de la tormenta viene la calma*, he/she will understand it because of the similitude that exists between that expression and its version in the English language *After the storm comes calm*. Therefore, because of the familiarity and universal use that exist between one proverb and another, it will be possible for a person to identify the meaning of it.

Examples of Proverbs:

Proverbs	Meanings	Proverbs Translated to the Spanish language
<i>After a storm comes calm.</i>	There is always a lull after an upheaval.	Después de la tormenta viene la calma.
<i>It's a dream come true.</i>	One has achieved one's greatest wish.	Es un sueño hecho realidad.



<i>One step at a time.</i>	Cautiously, slowly, gradually	Un paso a la vez.
<i>The truth will (come) out.</i>	The truth cannot be hidden forever. Sooner or later, it will be revealed.	La verdad saldrá a luz.

Chart 4: "Proverbs"

Source: *Dictionary of America's Popular Proverbs and Sayings*

2.3.1.3 Slangs

The Literary Devices resource defines slangs as a group of words that are not considered as part of the formal vocabulary and language and whose use is merely informal. Also, these types of words are principally used in speech rather than in writing (Literary Devices, Terms, and Elements).

2.3.1.3.1 Functions of Slangs

Slangs let people communicate with others through the use of a particular, informal, and creative way of using language. This particular language also allows people identify members of their same subculture. Indeed, some people believe that by using slangs, they can be considered unique because they break norms of the common language. Thus, when a new slang comes out, and becomes popular among people, it is included within the language, but if its popularity is not so significant, it can be forgotten (Literary Devices, Terms, and Elements).

Examples of Slangs:

Slangs	Meanings
Air head	A silly or foolish person.



Bible-pounder	Someone who expounds or follow the Bible in a vigorous and aggressive manner.
Hater	It refers to someone who is jealous or angry towards another person because of their success.
Photo bomb	This is when a person or an object is accidentally or intentionally in a photo and as a result, ruins it.

Chart 5: "Examples of some Slangs"

Sources: Oxford Dictionary of Modern Slang and Literary Devices, Terms, and Elements

Examples of Slangs used in Cuenca:

Slangs	Meanings	Definitions in the English language
A ful	Demasiado ocupado o atareado.	Too busy
Bielar	Tomar una cerveza	To drink a beer
Chendo	Mentira, broma, algo incierto.	It means to joke. Literally translated "just kidding"
Hacer vaca	Recoger dinero con fines de adquirir algo.	To collect money to buy something

Chart 6: "Examples of Slangs used in Cuenca"

Source: La jerga juvenil en la ciudad de Cuenca: el ambiente nocturno



2.3.1.4 Idioms containing special keywords

Idioms can also be derived from words related to animals, colors, parts of the body, clothes, and time whose translation can be funny. Most of these expressions are commonly used by teenagers in order to sound “original” within their social groups. Examples:

Idiom	Category	Meaning
To give someone the green light.	Color	To give permission
Paint the town red .	Color	Have a great time
Fat cat	Animal	Someone who is extremely wealthy.
Sick as a dog	Animal	Someone who is very sick.
At the drop of a hat	Clothing	Without hesitation
Take your time	Time	Don't rush

Chart 7: “Idioms with Key Words”

Source: engVid.com

Examples of some expressions used in Cuenca:

Idiom	Category	Meaning in the Spanish language	Definition in the English language
Hacer vaca	Animal	Recoger dinero con fines de adquirir algo.	To collect money for a purpose.
Leona	Animal	Tener mucha hambre.	To be starving



Picaflor	Animal	Mujeriego	Womanizer
Poncho	Clothing	Condón	A condom

Chart 8: “Examples of some expressions used in Cuenca”
Sources: *La jerga juvenil en la ciudad de Cuenca: el ambiente nocturno*
La violencia del lenguaje en la jerga juvenil de la ciudad de Cuenca

2.4 The Importance of learning Idioms

Spanish, English, and some other languages are changeful. They are always evolving adopting words from other languages, adapting and refreshing grammatical and syntactical rules. Therefore, understanding languages demand more than just knowing the denotative meaning of the words. It also requires its users to understand the connotative meaning of words and phrases, and even to understand the figurative language. Idioms belong to the figurative part of the language, which is fully loaded with “hidden meanings” (Ambrose 1).

The use of idioms has a significant influence in the learning process of foreign and second languages because through them; people are capable of improving their communicative skills beyond the formal level. It is said that every language learner should learn idioms from the language in-study, but, since there are hundreds, not to mention thousands of idioms, it will be impossible for students to learn all of them by heart, especially if they still feel uncomfortable with the new language.

As Ambrose says, “every idiom will not be learned at first, but as learners become more comfortable with the language, they will learn them as a lateral result” (1). Exposition to the new language is one of the keys to learning idioms,



since the more language exposition learners have, the more idioms they will hear and learn.

Idioms may also help the learner encounter “real life speaking situations” where formal language, full of denotative meanings, is insufficient, and the only way to be understood is by using them. Learning the language is a good thing, but being able to manipulate the language to create new ideas with it, is to master a language.

Any language without its idioms would lack creativity and humor. Languages without idioms would be like a 40’s movie, in black and white, because idioms are what give color to languages. Even though they come from languages, idioms give to words the spark they need to shine brightly. Idioms are the souls that make languages look and feel alive.

2.5 Idioms within a Second Language

Acquiring a second language is today more common than what we would have expected a few years ago. Every single day, more and more people from all around the globe pay for language courses or private lessons to learn a new language to enhance their chances of obtaining better employment opportunities or just to be proficient communicators when encountering a situation where the second learned language has to be used.

Getting formal second language instruction is, indeed, a must for people who want to fit in this new changing society, but it also may be their Achilles’ heel.



Informal language and its different areas have been barely studied. Within these various areas, idioms are one of the most important. In fact, idioms may be one of the hardest parts of informal language to learn because of how difficult they are to be understood.

Unlike native speakers, foreigners have a hard time when learning idioms because they have to focus on several of their characteristics to make them known. They have to cover a series of features that will lead them to comprehend these units more accurately.

2.5.1 Meaning

According to Kundrata, “All idioms have both literal and figurative meaning; however, in some cases, the literal meaning is illogical because idioms do not often follow standard rules of syntax and semantics” (13). In such a way, second language learners, must learn the “fixed” meaning of an idiom, for instance, “Kick the bucket”. The literal meaning is to kick *the bucket*; the figurative is *to die*.

2.5.2 Translation

Second language learners, after not being able to understand an idiom by the meaning itself, will try translating it to their native language, but again, they will encounter two types of elements to take into consideration: successful literal translation and unsuccessful literal translation.

2.5.2.1 Successful Literal Translation

In accordance with Glucksberg, second language learners often use word-



by-word translation to understand idioms. This strategy may produce some acceptable results, but these results are only sentences with sense and structure; they do not express the real meaning of an idiom, as in:

- Smell a rat. (English) = Huelo una rata. (Spanish)

In this example, it is observable that both sentences in English and in Spanish make sense, have some correct word order, and literal meaning, which will be *to smell a small type of rodent known as rat*, but the “hidden” or figurative meaning related to this idiom, which is *to indicate that within a group of people, somebody is a traitor*, is still unknown (Glucksberg 87).

2.5.2.2 Unsuccessful Literal Translation

This strategy follows the same process previously shown, but with one clear difference; in some cases, the result obtained by the second language learner will lack meaning, correct word order, and structure. One good example is:

- *Feel a bit under the weather.* (English) = *Sentir un poco debajo del clima.*
(Spanish)

It is easy to see that within this example, there is, neither literal nor figurative meaning because the sentence obtained from the literal translation has no word order, no sense, no structure, and it does not show the “hidden” meaning directly related to the idiom.



2.5.3 Type of Correspondence

2.5.3.1 Total Correspondence

The main characteristics of these idioms are that they are, in English and Spanish, identical on semantics, lexical, and formal levels (Vičková 13); for example,

- *At the tip of my tongue* (English) = *En la punta de mi lengua* (Spanish).

2.5.3.2 Partial Correspondence

These idioms share some common lexical, semantic, and grammatical characteristics in both languages, but they are not denotatively identical (Sučková 12); for instance,

- *It's raining cats and dogs* (English) = *Está lloviendo a cántaros* (Spanish)

It is easy to observe that there are some common elements in Spanish and English in the sentence, such as the use of the present progressive *It's raining* in English and *Está lloviendo* in Spanish, but the rest of the sentence, the denotative part of it, is totally different.

2.5.3.3 Non Correspondence

Within this category, the idioms that belong here do not share any lexical or grammatical features; they only share the same denotative meaning (Sučková 15); for example,



- *To screw up* (English) = *Meter la pata* (Spanish)

Notice that the lexical and grammatical structure is totally different, but the denotative meaning is the same.

2.5.4 Opacity of Idioms

According to Kvetko, there are three levels of opacity in idioms (78):

2.5.4.1 Pure Idioms

The meaning of this group of idioms is not in any way connected to the words that form the actual idioms (Kvetko, 79). For instance,

- *White elephant* = Something that requires a lot of care and money and that gives a little profit or enjoyment.

2.5.4.2 Partially Motivated Idioms

In this group of idioms, there is some semantic and lexical relation with its constituent elements (Kvetko 79). For example,

- *Have a free hand* = An expression used to indicate that you are available and willing to provide some kind of help or aid.

2.5.4.3 Semi Idioms

“Idioms from this group combine both literal and figurative meanings. One word from an idiom of this group carries literal meaning, and the other word carries figurative meaning” (Kvetko 80). For instance,

- *Foot the bill* = To pay the charges



It is not hard to realize that something people from a certain country with a particular language take for granted can be tough for people who are trying to learn that language. Idioms are indeed, a vast and important part of language. Sometimes, they are omitted because they are not considered serious, but there is nothing more serious than the real language.

2.6 Cuencanismos

One of the key features of idioms is that they are commonly accepted and used within some specific groups of people who share the same mother tongue. Each idiom has an origin, and each place has different idioms; however, due to human movement, they are usually reunited in some specific areas and are considered as belonging to those areas, and they become a unique feature.

Cuencanismos are not in any way foreign to this concept since they have followed the same steps of development to be considered now what they are, a set of expressions or phrases commonly used by Cuencanos.

These steps of development have a lot to do with the history of our city. Starting in 1970, after the late Cañaris settled and the Spaniards moved to Cuenca, a new civilization was born. In this new civilization, there were two social classes, the middle-class country people, who had some land and farms, and its counterpart, the high-class country people, who, obviously, had more power, more land, and more dominance over the middle class (Inga 7).

This social status differentiation between the two dominant classes gave birth to two different dialects; cult-urban and popular-urban, the first one used by



the high class, and the second one by the middle class. Within these two dialects, the most important to our study is the popular-urban, because it is a mixture of Quichua brought by the Cañaris and Castilian introduced by the Spaniards (Inga 7).

From the fusion of these two dialects, a new dialect full of new words and phrases emerged to be used by the people. In the beginning, people were only using these new words with their real meanings, but, as time went by, people got bored with some words, and gave them totally new meanings, born from the inventiveness and populism of the Cuencanos (Encalada 63).

One good example is the idiom *gara*, taken from the Quichua dialect that literally means *male*, but as a cuencanismo, it means *really nice* (Encalada 63).

Most cuencanismos were born following the same process mentioned, but in recent years, Cuencanos have adopted a lot more words from several languages and countries. A clear example of this phenomenon is the idiom *chance*, taken from the English language that literally means *opportunity*, but as a *cuencanismo*, it has more meanings such as: *opportunity*, *asking for permission*, and *short period of time* (Inga 8).

Every day, new idioms are born. This shows that people are creative, adaptable, and sometimes even funny as will be seen with some cuencanismos. Language and idioms are undoubtedly important, but there is something deeper than that since they do not only show how original Cuencanos and people in



general are, but also show the history of the cities, their roots, and the path they will follow ahead.

2.6.1 Some Cuencanismos and its Literal Translation to English.

Cuencanismos	Meaning in the Spanish language	Translation to the English language
Chachai	Hace demasiado frío.	It's too cold.
Chévere	Bonito	It's cool.
Chiro	Persona sin dinero	Person without money; to be broken.
Joda	Diversión	To have fun with friends. / To enjoy something.
Yapa	Añadidura, regalo del vendedor al comprador. Gratuito. Por concesión del vendedor.	To receive extra food for free by a food seller.

Chart 9: "Cuencanismos with some literal translation in English"

Source: *Diccionario de la Real Lengua Morlaca*

As it can be seen, these examples show the main approach of this research to creating a handbook with cuencanismos and their definition in English to help foreigners have a better understanding and use of each one of them. Thanks to the creation of this material, foreigners might improve their capacity to understand cuencanismos and to use them in different contexts.



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This investigation will be based on a quanti-qualitative approach, which is used to study significant research samples scientifically. After detecting that foreigners who have settled in *Cuenca* have problems understanding *cuencanismos*, it was decided to create a handbook containing these expressions with their corresponding definitions or equivalents in English.

To collect reliable quantitative and qualitative data for the creation of the handbook, it will be necessary to use surveys, proficiency tests, and interviews. On one hand, the quantitative data will be represented in tables and charts to be analyzed and interpreted. On the other hand, the qualitative data will be analyzed and interpreted based on the comments emitted by the participants as a complement of the quantitative collected data. The information gathered from the three instruments above mentioned will help the researchers to develop the investigation and, in the end, come up with conclusions.

Finally, two groups of individuals will be considered as the primary source of this study: *Cuencanos* and *foreign English speakers*, whose contribution will be essential for the data collection of the project.

3.1 Samples

For research purposes, two samples will be taken into account. Sample number I will include fifty *Cuencano* citizens (native Spanish speakers) who will serve as the source and filter to select the most common *cuencanismos* to be included in the handbook. Population number II will be the foreign English

speakers as the main participants and beneficiaries of the handbook.

3.1.1 Sample I: Cuencano Citizens

According to the latest INEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) census taken in the year 2010, 505.585 Cuencanos are living in our city. The accessible sample of this population will be fifty Cuencanos found within the following geographical limits: *Mariscal Lamar, General Torres, Calle Larga and Hermano Miguel Streets* (See figure 1).

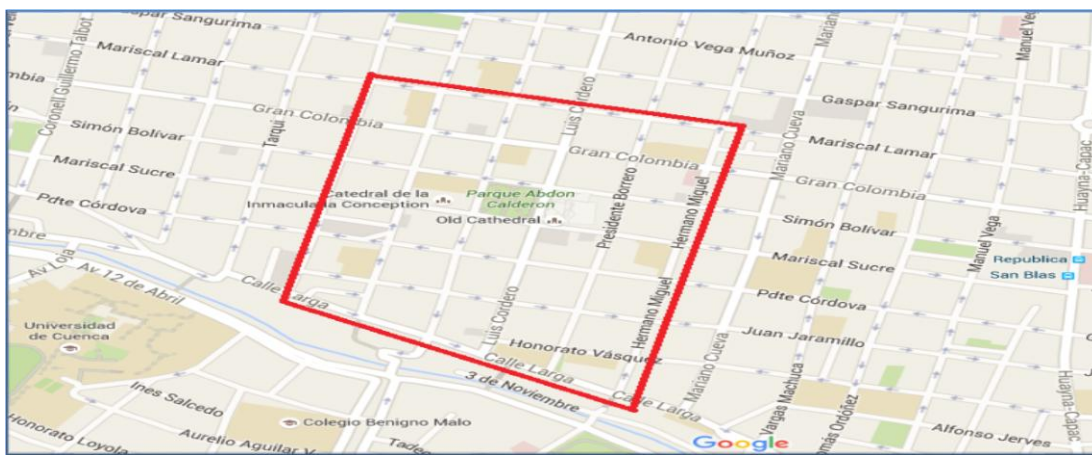


Figure 1: “Geographical limits of the study”
Source: Maps.google.com

Fifty *Cuencanos*, within the geographical limits previously settled, will be randomly selected to gather information related to the most common *cuencanismos* used in context by means of a Survey designed by the researchers (See appendix 1).

3.1.2 Sample II: Foreign English Speakers

This research will take place in the city of Cuenca, Ecuador. In agreement with the information of the INEC, there are 9077 foreigners permanently living in our city (Ortega 1). From this amount of foreign nationals, and in agreement with



the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, cited in the website of El Tiempo Newspaper, more than 8,000 of them are North American, who in fact, is the most representative English speaking community in the city (Minchala 1).

Thus, due to the enormous number of English speaking foreigners settled in our city, it is infeasible to apply a test regarding cuencanismos to all of them. For this reason, the study sample will consist of the foreigners found in different places such as bars, cyber cafés, restaurants, and other similar places located within the following geographical limits: *Mariscal Lamar*, *General Torres*, *Calle Larga* and *Hermano Miguel* Streets (See figure 1). Also, Spanish learners from two different Language Teaching Institutes will be tested. As a result of this process, the sample will be more manageable in numbers.

Finally, it is necessary to mention that from sample number II, three participants, who have previously taken the proficiency test, will be randomly considered to be part of the interview.

3.2 Subjects

3.2.1 Subject I

Cuencano citizens (fifty) located inside the geographical limits mentioned in sample I, and whose age range goes from 18 to 60.

3.2.2 Subject II

Foreign English Speakers, males and females, permanently living in Cuenca, and within the limits mentioned in sample I (See figure 1), whose age range goes from 18 on up.



3.3 Data Collection Techniques

To collect data for the research, the following instruments are going to be used: a survey with structured questions, a Spanish proficiency test regarding cuencanismos, and an interview (See appendices 1, 4 and 7).

3.3.1 Survey

A survey with structured questions has been designed because of the advantages and results it might give to the research. Some of its benefits are the following:

- "It includes the low level of involvement of the researcher and a high number of respondents" (Trueman 1).
- "They are easier for the researcher to code and analyze" (Timpany 1).
- "They require a lower cognitive load on the respondent. They reduce the amount of thinking that a respondent needs to undertake to complete the task. This generally leads to higher response and more accurate data" (Timpany 1).

Under the ideas previously quoted, the survey with structured questions will be the best tool to help the researchers collect the most common cuencanismos in use to date. This will be administered to Subject I (See appendix 1).

3.3.2 Cuencanismos Proficiency Test

Following the previous process, for the creation of the pilot proficiency test and the final proficiency test used in this research, multiple choice questions and matching questions have been selected due to all the advantages that this



instrument gives to the research. Some of its main advantages are:

- **Versatility:** “. . .items are adaptable to the measurement of a wide variety of learning outcomes including reasoning, making inferences, solving problems, exercising judgment and demonstrating knowledge of facts through interpretation and analysis of information" (U. of Minnesota 2).
- **Efficiency:** "Because of the large number of items that can be posed in a given length of time, [multiple choice] items [and matching questions] items permit extensive sampling and broad coverage of the content domain" (U. of Minnesota).
- **Reliability:** "Consistency in scoring and wide sampling of content provides test results that can be generalized to the domain of interest" (U. of Minnesota).
- **Diagnosis:** "Patterns of incorrect responses can provide diagnostic information about the learning of individual students or groups" (U. of Minnesota).
- **Reduction of guessing:** "In comparison with two-choice (e.g., true-false) tests, guessing is reduced with MC items [and matching questions]" (U. of Minnesota).

Additionally, it is imperative to mention that the cuencanismos used for the development of the questionnaire in the pilot proficiency test and the final proficiency test were obtained from the answers collected from the surveys applied on subject I (Cuencano citizens).



In sum, this was the process that was followed to design the pilot proficiency test which will eventually become the final and definite proficiency test.

3.3.2.1 Pilot Proficiency Test

The pilot proficiency test (See appendix 3) was applied to five English speaking foreigners settled in *Cuenca*. They were randomly selected within the area specified in figure 1. The purpose of piloting this test was to identify any technical errors regarding:

- Misspellings
- Clarity and understandability of the instructions and content
- General format and structure of the test

3.3.2.2 Proficiency Test

A proficiency test was administered to sample II in order to identify their knowledge regarding cuencanismos (See appendices 5 and 6). The purpose of this test was to measure the level of knowledge and understanding that foreign Spanish learners have regarding cuencanismos.

Twenty participants took this test; ten of them belonged to the geographical limits previously used with the sample I (See figure 1), and the other ten belonged to different well-known Spanish teaching schools located in Cuenca's downtown. The names of the Spanish teaching schools participating in the research will be kept anonymous since the researchers were asked not to give their names due to managerial grounds.



3.3.3 Interview

This qualitative instrument was chosen because it is widely considered the second primary method for data collection, just behind the survey (Tashakkori and Abbas 305). A structured interview (See appendix 7) has been designed because of the advantages it offers, such as:

- The interviewer can establish rapport so that the interviewee will feel more comfortable and confident with his/her answers (Tashakkori and Abbas 305).
- "The interviewer can probe the respondent for clarity or more detailed information when needed" (Tashakkori and Abbas 305).
- Structured interviews use well-designed forms already established.
- More complicated questions can be asked, and the information can be validated immediately.
- Interviewees' responses can be collected in a variety of ways, such as video recorders, voice recorders, and by filling survey forms (Tashakkori and Abbas 305).

It is observable that structured interviews offer a lot of advantages. In fact, the interviewer always has to take into consideration what is recommended by Tashakkori and Abbas, "The interviewer must always remain nonjudgmental to the responses provided by the interviewee to help reduce the potentially biasing effect of the interview" (305). Also, it is recommendable to elaborate a pre-interview to check any failure with the questions and the answers they will get from the



interviewees; this can be done by interviewing a couple of pilot respondents, or it can be checked by a tutor or expert in the matter.

Finally, it is relevant to state that the subjects of the interview were three of the participants who took the proficiency test, just because they are already familiar with the topic.

3.4 Data Organization Technique

As this study comprises quali-quantitative data, the information obtained from the structured survey and the proficiency test will be numerically represented using tables, charts, or graphics. Thus, all the information gathered will be easily converted into understandable data to show:

- The most common cuencanismos used in diverse contexts based on the surveys applied to sample number I.
- Lack of knowledge of cuencanismos from subject II.
- The importance of including idioms when learning a second language, in this case, foreigners learning Spanish.
- The communicative problems that second language learners will face when idioms have not been included as a part of their formal or informal learning process.

Additionally, the interviews will be transcribed in order to analyze qualitatively relevant information from it (See appendix 8).



3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

To obtain the most from the data previously organized; some information will be statistically analyzed and interpreted using percentages, averages, and repetition patterns; to finally come up with conclusions that will lead to the correct elaboration of the handbook.

Since a mixed method is going to be used during this research, the information obtained from the interviews can be triangulated together with the information from the surveys and the proficiency test; in order to find valuable data regarding:

- Response patterns directly related to the responses obtained from the proficiency test.
- Responses that strengthen or weaken the central argument of the research, directly related to the research questions set in chapter I.

3.6 Consideration of Extraneous Variables

Some extraneous variables that may be observable from this research are:

- Lack of willingness to help from the participants.
- Lack of interest in the topic from the participants.
- Insufficient support from the Spanish Teaching Schools.

3.7 Design of the Handbook

Besides the main content of the handbook which deals with the most common cuencanismos, it is also important to mention another part that will be



included; this is the format and the structure of the handbook itself.

The primary form source for the body of the handbook will be the book named “Speaking Chileno a Guide to Spanish from Chile”; notwithstanding, some changes and adaptations will take place to fulfill the necessities of the research. The format will contain the following:

- a) **Acknowledgment:** It will include a brief acknowledgment written by the authors.
- b) **Introduction:** It is a short introduction to the Handbook of Cuencanismos written by the authors and directed to its users.
- c) **Table of Contents:** This will help readers or users to find what they need inside the handbook. It provides an outline of what the work is all about and where to find every topic or section.
- d) **User Guide:** It is a short paragraph and a table that will contain all the instructions related to the correct use of the handbook.
- e) **The most used Cuencanismos:** This section contains all the cuencanismos gathered from the result of the research (215 *cuencanismos*), which have been alphabetically ordered and classified into eight sections (contexts).

Additionally, it is important to mention each one of the parts that form the entries of the handbook.

- **Word or group of words:** It refers to the word or group of words that

form the cuencanismo in its written form without its meaning. It will also include any possible variation the word or group of words may have.

- **Function of the words or group of words:** It refers to the parts of speech that the word or group of words that form the cuencanismo belong to.
- **Meaning of the words or group of words:** It is the literal or equivalent meaning of the cuencanismos itself.
- **Examples in use:** After each definition of a cuencanismos, the reader will be able to find an in-use example of it in context.

The next figure illustrates how the format of the handbook will look like:

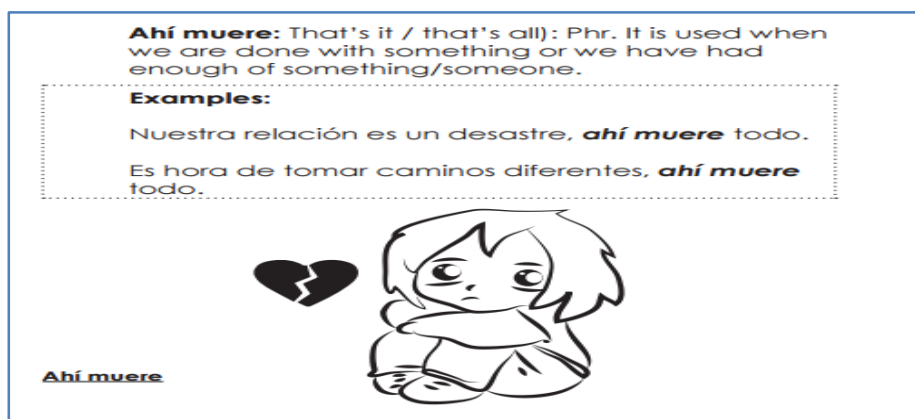


Figure 2: "Handbook format"
Source: Pintado and Torres

This format has been adapted from the book named "Speaking Chileno a Guide to Spanish from Chile" by Romey Jared.

- **Works Cited:** This section will contain the literary works from where the cuencanismos and any other information included in the handbook were taken.



CHAPTER IV

RESULTS: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

After collecting the necessary data from subjects 1 and 2, mentioned in chapter three, there is a need to analyze and interpret the gathered information to obtain specific results represented in graphs.

This section is divided into three parts: first, the analysis and interpretation of the survey; second, analysis and interpretation of the proficiency tests; and third, analysis and interpretation of the interviews. On one hand, it is important to mention that the surveys were taken from *Cuencanos* whose contribution was essential to collect the most common *cuencanismos* used in ten different contexts. On the other hand, foreign English-speakers were the ones who took the test to evaluate their knowledge regarding *cuencanismos*. Finally, three participants who previously took the proficiency test were selected to be part of the interviews.

4.1 Survey: Analysis and Interpretation

The survey titled “The Most Common ‘Cuencanismos’ Used in Context” was administered to fifty Cuencanos (See appendix 2). The data collected from the participants were divided in ten different contexts. The idea of setting ten different contexts was essential to gather as many *cuencanismos* as possible to select the most common ones based on terms of repetition.

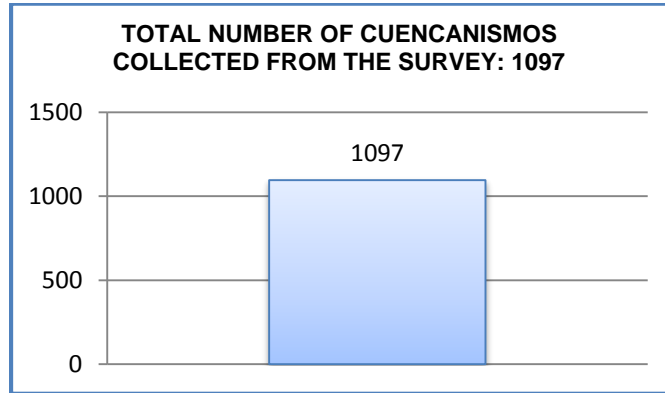


Chart 10: "Total number of cuencanismos collected from the survey"
Source: Pintado and Torres

The total number of words obtained from the survey is 1097. The amount of words received corresponds to the global result of the ten different contexts used during the survey as showed in the following chart:

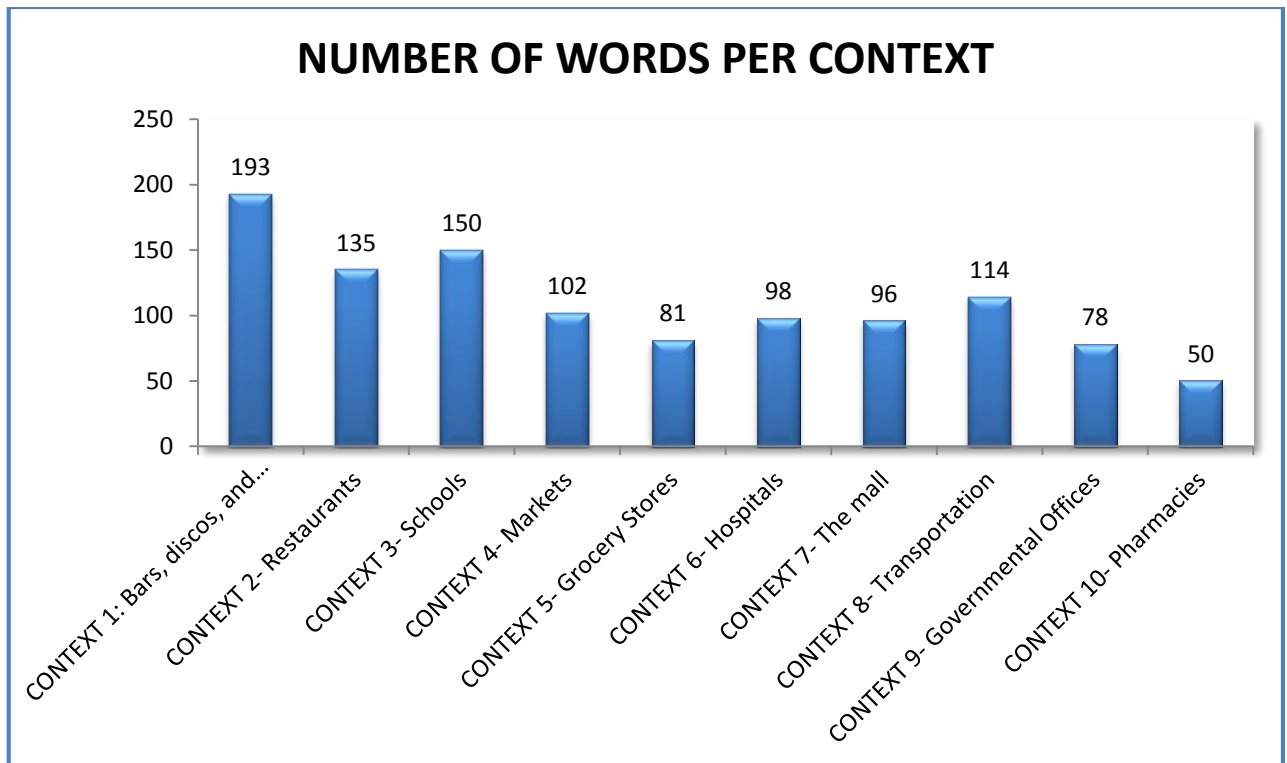


Chart 11: "Number of words per context"
Source: Pintado and Torres

This graph is divided into ten different categories which correspond to the amount of words collected per context from the surveys. Thanks to the cooperation of the fifty participants, it was possible to obtain an acceptable number of words which were analyzed, in terms of repetition patterns, to finally obtained results of the most common cuencanismos.

4.1.1 Word Patterns

As mentioned above, it was useful to apply word patterns per context to find and classify the most common cuencanismos. By using this technique, it was possible to obtain the following results:

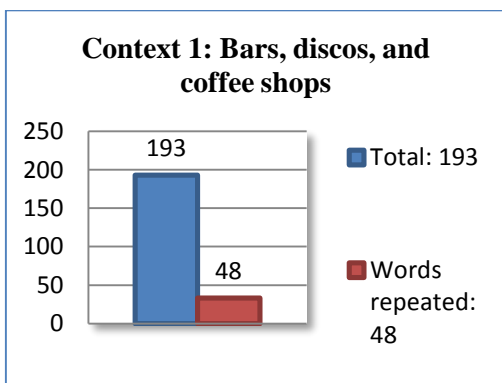


Chart 12: "Bars, discos, and coffee shops"

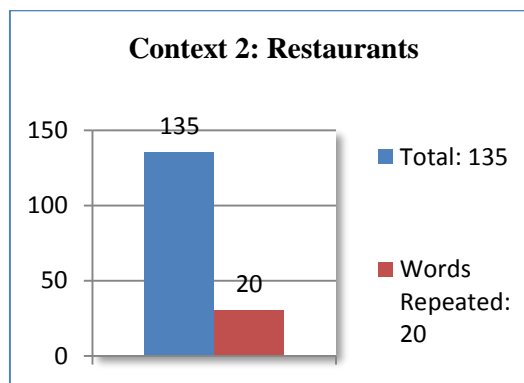


Chart 13: "Restaurants"

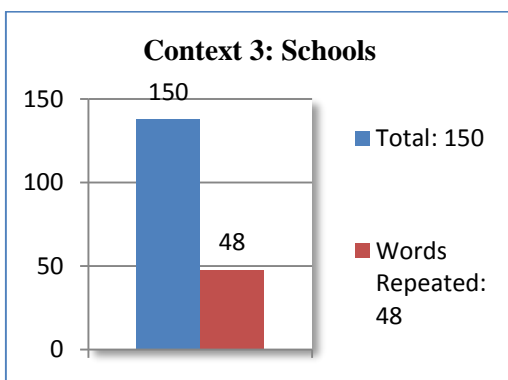


Chart 14: "Schools"

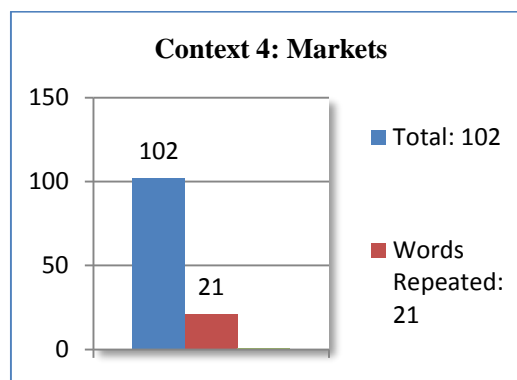


Chart 15: "Markets"

Source: Pintado and Torres

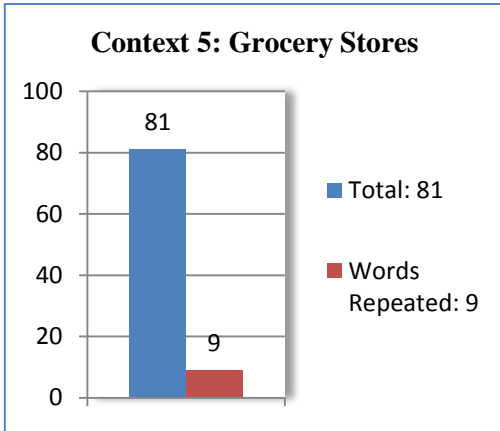


Chart 16: "Grocery Stores"

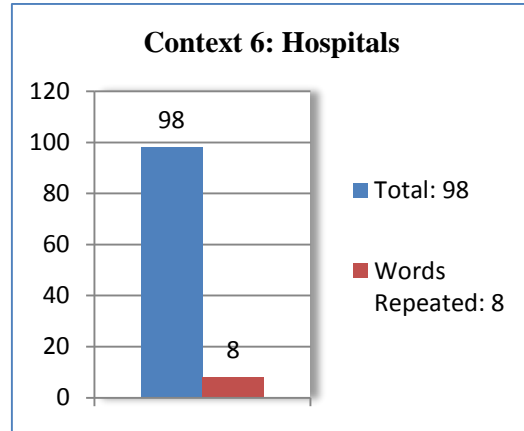


Chart 17: "Hospitals"

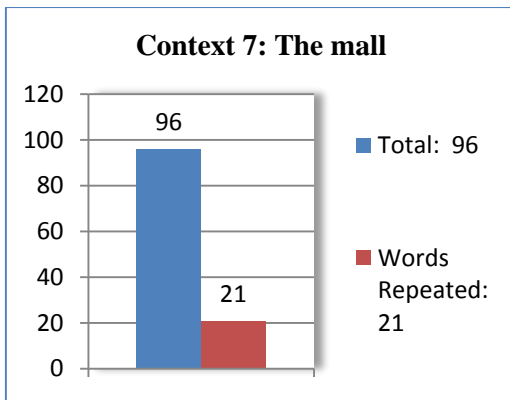


Chart 18: "The mall"

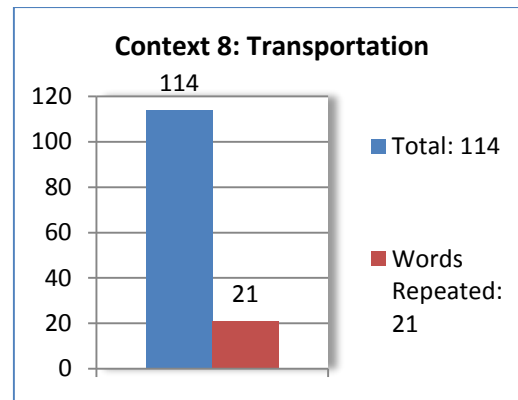


Chart 19: "Transportation"

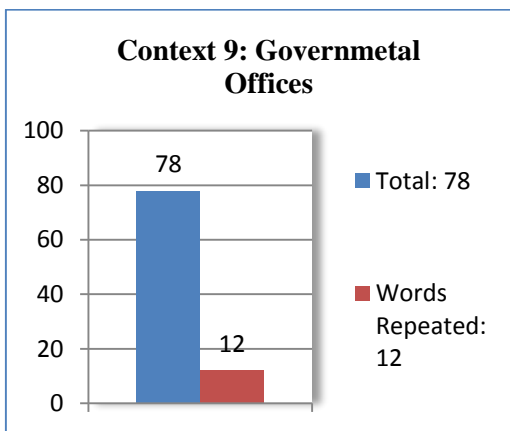


Chart 20: "Governmental Offices"

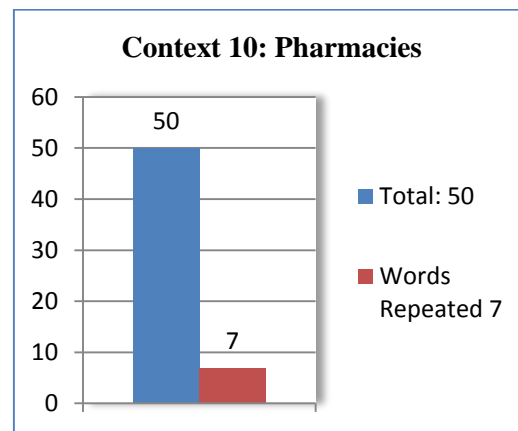


Chart 21: "Pharmacies"

Source: Pintado and Torres

Once all of the contexts were analyzed, in terms of repetition, it was possible to gather a total of 215 words repeated from all of the contexts, as shown in the chart:

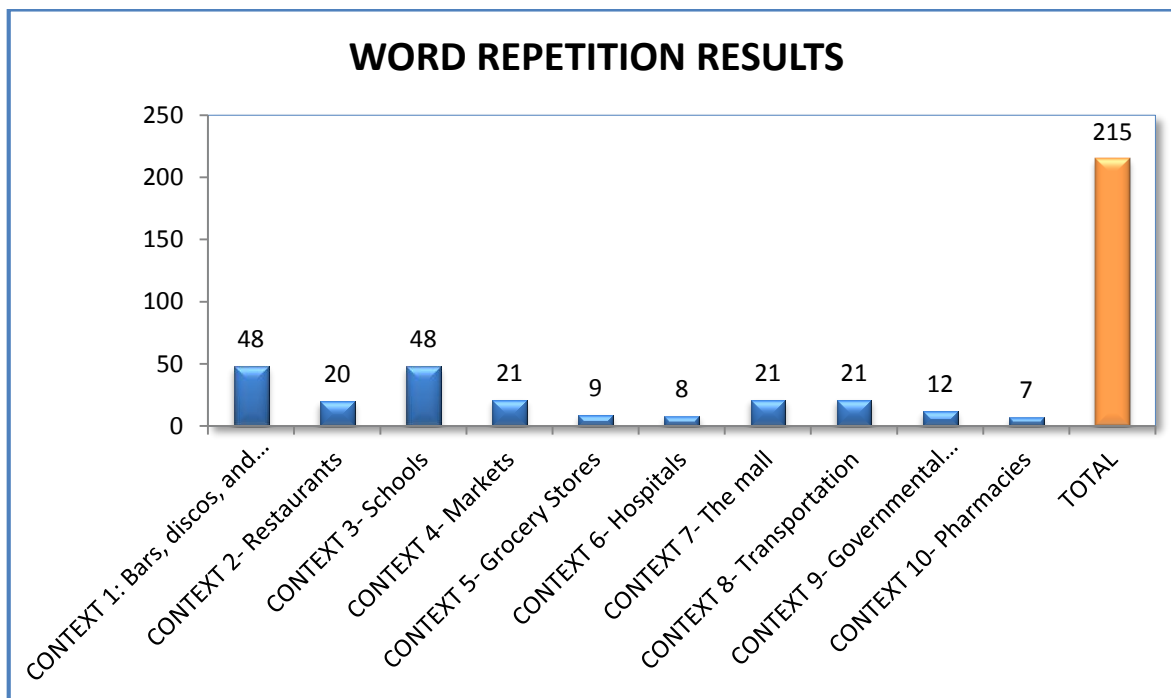


Chart 22: "Word Repetition Results"
Source: Pintado and Torres

With this number of words, it was not difficult to determine which words had to be included in the handbook. Moreover, a process to identify which words could be part or not of the handbook was carried out. It consisted in only selecting the words that had a literary backing based on previous literary works about cuencanismos.

At the end of the process, a total of 179 words fulfilled the requirement formerly mentioned, and only 36 words did not. However, the researchers decided to include these last 36 words into a category called *Neologisms*, since these words were relatively new, but commonly used nowadays. The researchers also



assigned a meaning to each one of those words as a contribution to the study.

Consequently, a total of 215 words were identified as the most common cuencanismos, being divided into the following contexts: Social Life (*bars, clubs, coffee shops, and restaurants*); Schools; Markets; Grocery Stores; Hospital and Pharmacies; Transportation; Universal category; and Neologisms.

4.2 Proficiency Test Analysis

To evaluate foreigners knowledge regarding cuencanismos, a proficiency test was given to twenty participants, all of them immigrant English speakers living in Cuenca. From these 20 participants, 10 of them were taken at different Spanish Teaching Schools around the city, and the other 10 were held in various parts of the downtown area of the city, such as bars, coffee shops, bookstores, café nets, central streets, among others (See appendices 5 and 6).

4.2.1 Pilot Proficiency test

A proficiency test was piloted with three subjects, having the purpose of receiving any feedback and to validate the instrument (See appendix 3). Some Results were obtained as follows:

- There was one mistake found in the spelling of the word "asshole" within the test. This mistake can be seen in the following figure:

Section A: **Underline the correct definition that fits with the expression in bold.**

Example:
 Vamos de **bailongo**.
 ➤ Let's eat.
 ➤ Let's study.
 ➤ Let's dance.

1. **¿Qué chévere** tu casa!
 ➤ Your house looks clean.
 ➤ Your house looks terrible.
 ➤ Your house looks nice.

2. Mi amigo está **chumado**.
 ➤ My friend is high.
 ➤ My friend is angry.
 ➤ My friend is drunk.

3. **Vamos a bielar**.
 ➤ Let's get some shots.
 ➤ Let's get some wine.
 ➤ Let's get some beer.

4. **¿Qué leona traigo** hoy!
 ➤ I'm starving.
 ➤ I'm tired.
 ➤ I'm happy

Figure 3: "Spelling Mistake"
 Source: Pintado and Torres

- The instruction in section "B" of the test was changed due to the preference of the participants to circle the answer rather than underline it (see Figure 4).

Section B: Using the letters, match the definitions in English with the words in Spanish.

SPANISH		ENGLISH	
• Gil	d	A. To collect money for a purpose.	B. Asshole
• Pana	j	C. A childish person.	D. To travel on foot.
• Salado	c	E. To give a hand.	F. I'm tired.
• Yapa	m	G. It's looking good.	H. To go dancing
• A pata	e		
• Acolita	f		
• Ya no jalo	n		
• Al pelo	o		

Figure 4: "Instruction change"
 Source: Pintado and Torres



It is important to mention that the objective of the pilot proficiency test was to correct any mistakes regarding the structure and the general form of it, and of course validate the instrument. After the test was validated, it was administered to the participants.

4.2.2 Coding

To correctly manage the results obtained from the proficiency tests and to protect the participants' identities for ethical issues, it was imperative to use a coding system for each one of the groups who took the test.

- ✓ **STRG1** and **blue color**: for the ten participants found at different places around the city streets.
- ✓ **SCHG2** and **red color**: for the ten participants found at the different Spanish teaching schools.

4.3 Analysis and interpretation of the results obtained from the Proficiency Test

There were three sections (**A**, **B**, and **C**) included in the proficiency test. Section "**A**" included ten items; section "**B**", fifteen items; and section "**C**", one item. Additionally, there was a blank space that was used to register any comment from the participants regarding the test (See appendices 5 and 6).

The proficiency tests were analyzed using percentages based on the level of accuracy of the participants' answers. These rates were obtained from the accuracy and error rate of every item within each section.

To calculate each one of the percentages of accuracy and error, the following mathematical formula was used:

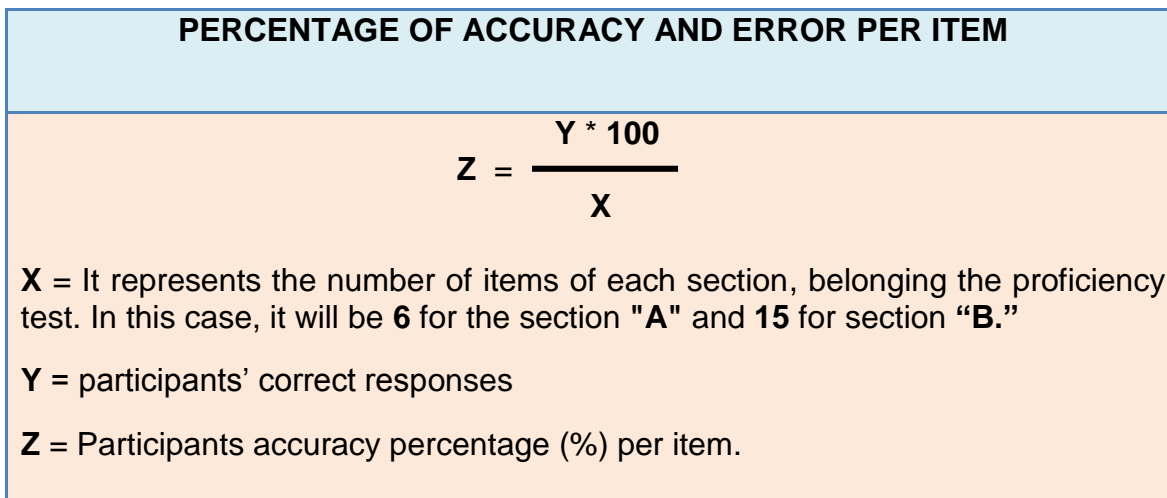


Figure 5: "Accuracy and error"
Source: Pintado and Torres

4.3.1 Analysis of the Street Test Results: Sample II (STRG1 - BLUE COLOR).

Section "A" (6 items): Circle the correct definition that fits with the expression in bold (See figure 6).

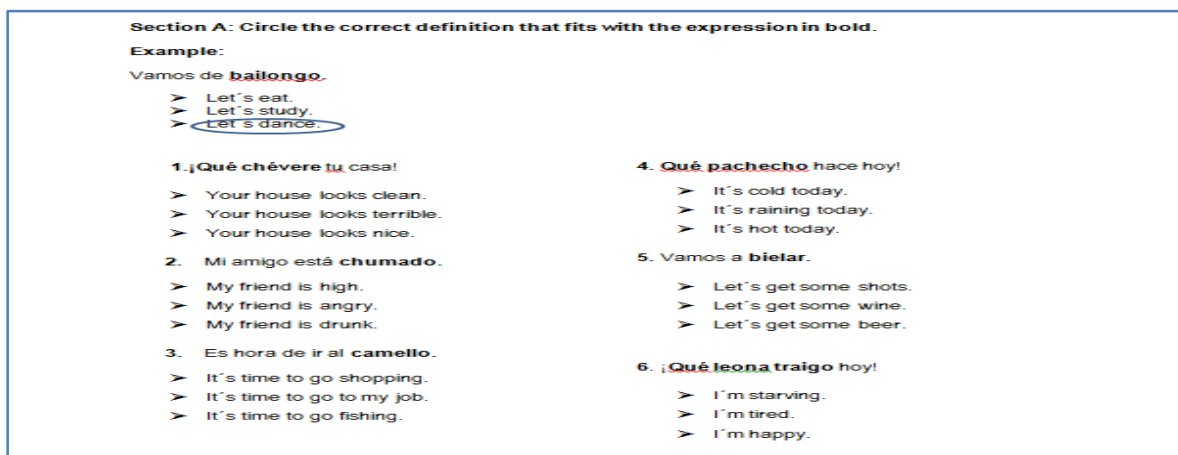


Figure 6: "Section A: Street Test Results"
Source: Pintado and Torres

The results were the following:

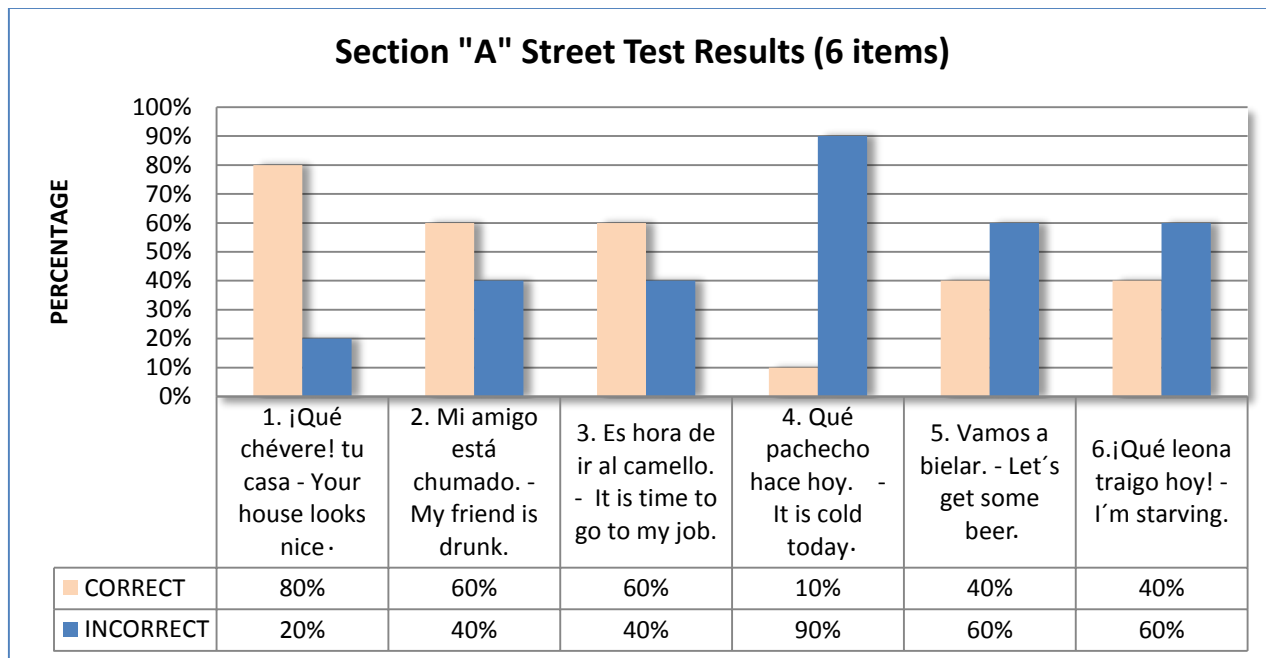


Chart 23: "Section A: Street Test Results"

Source: Pintado and Torres

- On the first item (*Chévere*), there was a very high percentage of success by the participants (80%). This result adduces that this idiom is widely used in Cuenca in more than one social context, and that is why it is easy to acquire and get used to it.
- On the item four (*¡Qué pachecho!*), on the other hand, only 10% of the participants hit the correct answer. This result indicates that this expression is not regularly used by the participants.
- Items two (*Mi amigo está chumado*) and three (*Es hora de ir al camello*) had a success percentage of 60%, alleging significant use of these expressions among participants.

- The results on Items five (*Vamos a bielar*) and six (*Que Leona que traigo hoy!*) with 40%, it can be suggested that these *cuencanismos* are not well-known by the participants, but do not reach extremes of being almost unknown as item four (*Que pacheco!*).

From the six items listed, four of them represent a negative percentage of success, and only two have a positive percentage. This evidences that there is a tendency to ignore the idiomatic expressions used in the test, within this section.

Section “B” (15 items): Match the definitions in English with the words in Spanish respectively (See figure 7).

Section B: Match the definitions in English with the words in Spanish respectively.	
SPANISH	ENGLISH
• Gil	A. To collect money for a purpose.
• Pana	B. Asshole
• Salado	C. A childish person.
• Yaca	D. To travel on foot.
• A pata	E. To give a hand.
• Acolita	F. I'm tired.
• Ya no jalo	G. It's looking good.
• Al pelo	H. To go dancing
• Estar chiro	I. What a mess!
• Una tocha	J. Friend, dude
• Aññado	K. Yes
• ¡Qué hecho, leña!	L. To get something extra
• Ir de farra	M. To have bad luck
• Simón	N. To be broke
• Hacer yaca	O. A small bottle of alcohol

Figure 7: “Section B: Street Test Results”
 Source: Pintado and Torres

The results were as follows:

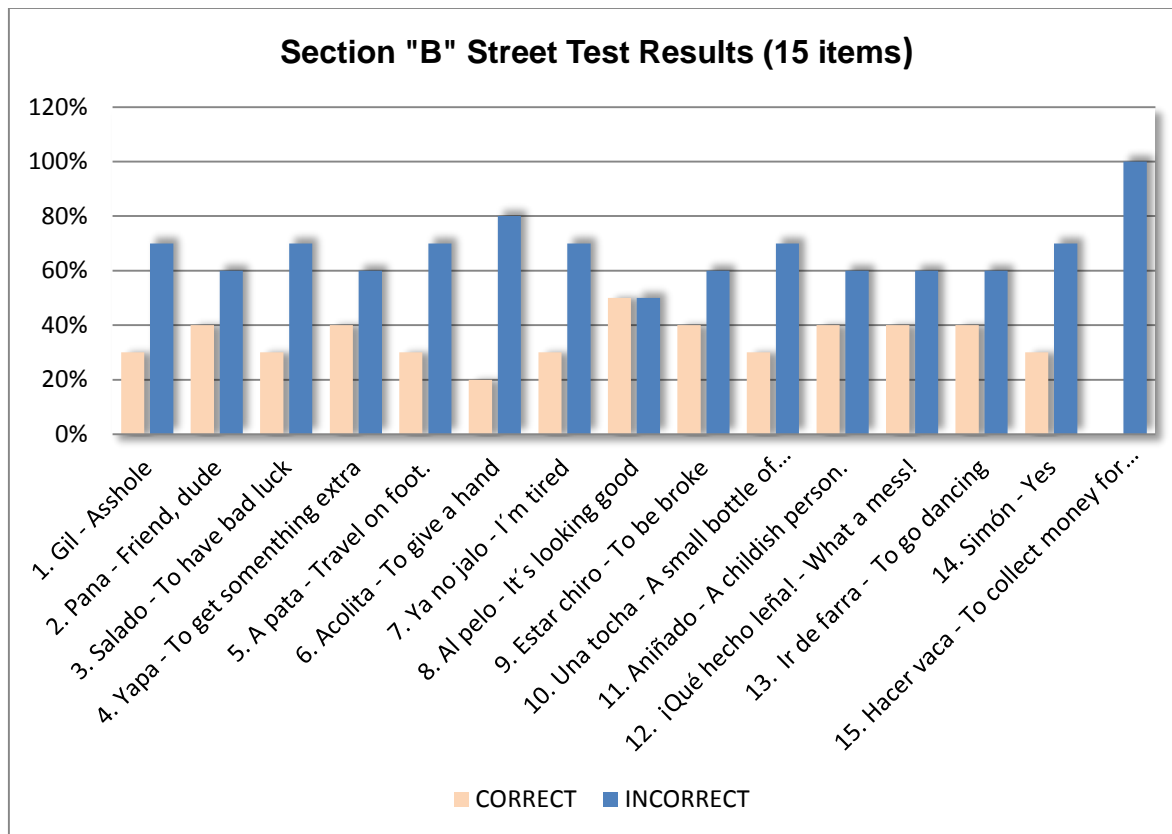


Chart 24: "Section B: Street Test Results"
Source: Pintado and Torres

- In this section, 14 out of 15 items had from 60% to 100% of erroneous responses given the participants. This result contends that even though the cuencanismos used within the test were the most commonly used according to the survey applied to Cuencanos (sample I), there is a general lack of knowledge, among the participants, of the cuencanismos used within this section.
- Amazingly, the highest success percentage in this section was found on item eight (*Al pelo*), in which only 50% of the answers were correct. It

suggests that the success percentages on the other items are even lower. This result demonstrates again that foreigners do not know cuencanismos so well.

On this section, the level of error from the participants is much greater than the degree of accuracy. Since 14 out of the 15 of the total participants' responses had lower success percentages, it could be stated that in response to one of the research questions, foreigners do not know the most common cuencanismos used in context.

4.3.2 Analysis of the Results found in Spanish Teaching Schools in Cuenca (SCHG2 - RED COLOR).

Section “A” (6 items): Circle the correct definition that fits with the expression in bold (See figure 8).

Section A: Circle the correct definition that fits with the expression in bold.

Example:
 Vamos de **ballongo**.
 > Let's eat.
 > Let's study.
 > Let's dance.

<p>1. ¡Qué chévere tu casa!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Your house looks clean. > Your house looks terrible. > Your house looks nice. <p>2. Mi amigo está chumado.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > My friend is high. > My friend is angry. > My friend is drunk. <p>3. Es hora de ir al camello.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > It's time to go shopping. > It's time to go to my job. > It's time to go fishing. 	<p>4. Qué pachecho hace hoy!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > It's cold today. > It's raining today. > It's hot today. <p>5. Vamos a bielar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Let's get some shots. > Let's get some wine. > Let's get some beer. <p>6. ¡Qué leona traigo hoy!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > I'm starving. > I'm tired. > I'm happy.
---	--

Figure 8: “Section A: Spanish Schools Test Results”
 Source: Pintado and Torres



The results were the following:

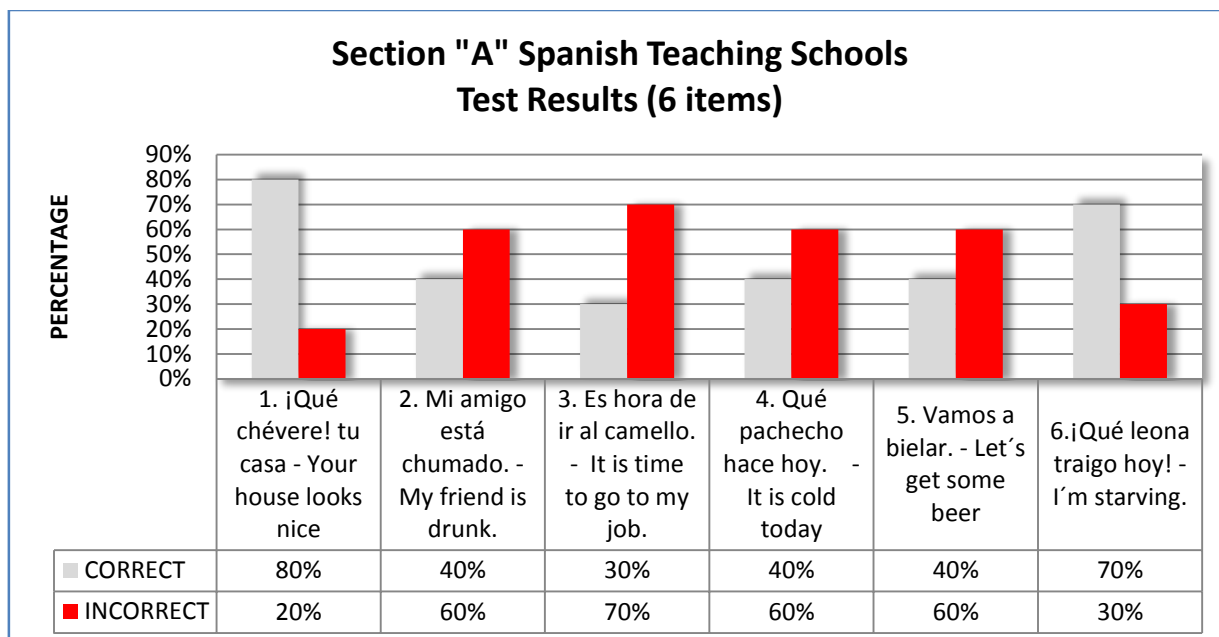


Chart 25: "Section A: Spanish Teaching Schools Test Results"

Source: Pintado and Torres

- ✓ On item one (*chévere*), it can be seen that 80% of the responses were correct. These results compared with the results on the same item one from the test given to the participants found around the city, show, once again, that participants know and regularly use this idiom.
- ✓ On item six (*¡Qué leona que traigo hoy!*), 70% of the answers were correct, contending that this expression is widely used by participants.
- ✓ Items two (*Mi amigo está chumado*), four (*¡Qué pachecho que hace hoy!*), and five (*Vamos a bielar*) had 60% of wrong responses. This percentage alleges that the participants occasionally use these idiomatic expressions.
- ✓ Additionally, item three (*Es hora de ir al camello*) has the lowest percentage



of success of the section (70%.) As a result, this idiom is regarded as the least known and barely used of the six idioms listed.

From the six items listed, four of them represent a negative percentage of success, and only two have a positive percentage. This adduces again that there is a tendency from the participants to ignore or rarely use this cuencanismos.

Section “B” (15 items): Match the definitions in English with the words in Spanish respectively (See figure 9).

Section B: Match the definitions in English with the words in Spanish respectively.

SPANISH		ENGLISH
• Gil		A. To collect money for a purpose.
• Pana		B. Asshole
• Salado		C. A childish person.
• Yapa		D. To travel on foot.
• A pata		E. To give a hand.
• Acolita		F. I'm tired.
• Ya no jalo		G. It's looking good.
• Al pelo		H. To go dancing
• Estar chiro		I. What a mess!
• Una tocha		J. Friend, dude
• Aninado		K. Yes
• ¡Qué hecho leña!		L. To get something extra
• Ir de farra		M. To have bad luck
• Simón		N. To be broke
• Hacer vaca		O. A small bottle of alcohol

Figure 9: “Section B: Spanish Schools Test Results”
Source: Pintado and Torres

The results were as follows:

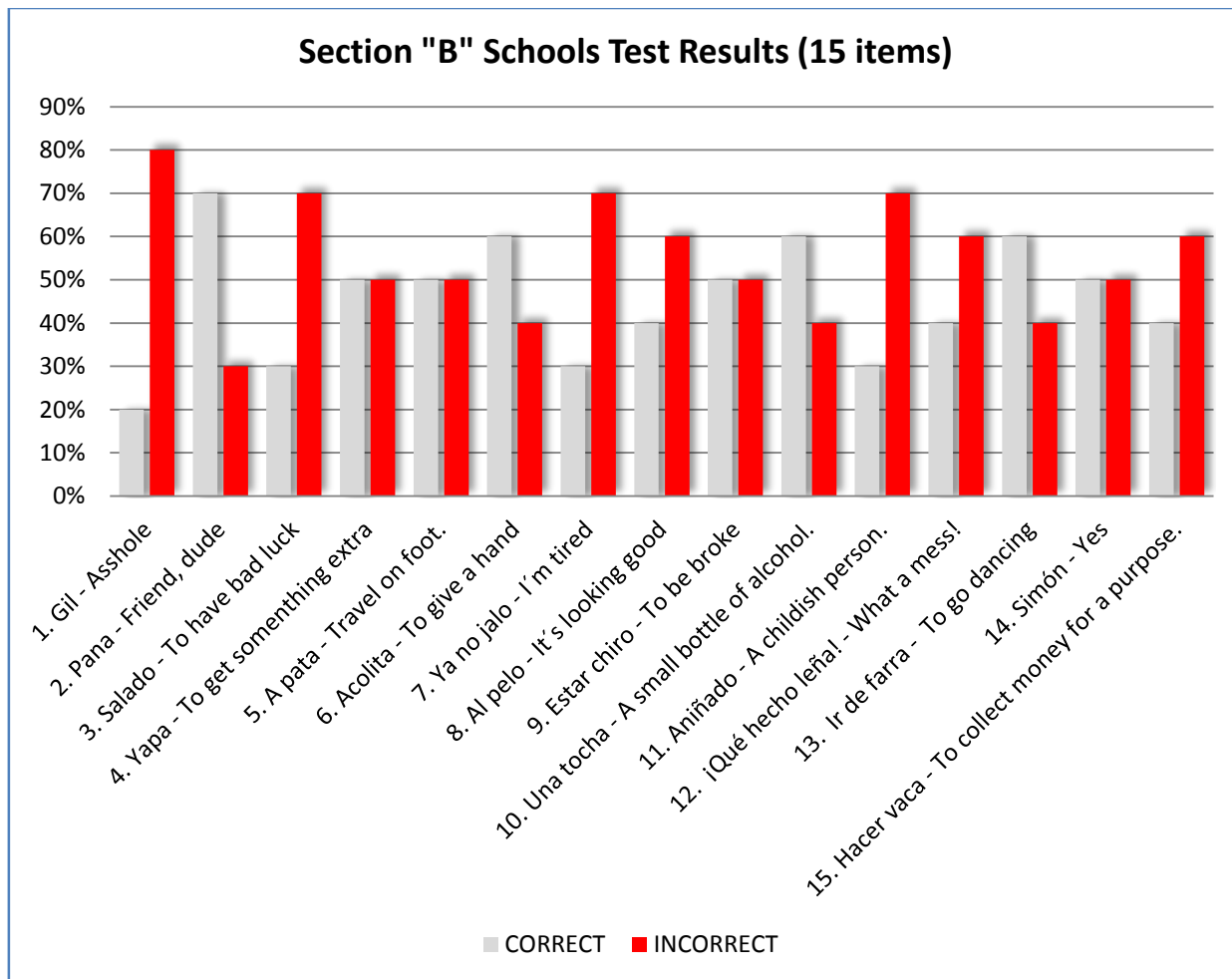


Chart 26: "Section B: Spanish Teaching Schools Test Results"
Source: Pintado and Torres

- ✓ On items two (*pana*), six (*acolita*), ten (*una tocha*), and thirteen (*ir de farra*) the percentage of error was pretty low (between 30% and 40%). With these results, it can be assumed that the participants often use these expressions. The main reason why these idioms are pretty well-known could be because they are more directly contextualized in social life.
- ✓ Items four (*yapa*), five (*a pata*), nine (*estar chiro*), and fourteen (*simón*)



show a neutral trend. Indeed, 50% of the answers were wrong, and the other 50% were correct. This tells us that half of the participants knew these idioms, while the other half did not.

- ✓ Items one (*gil*), three (*salado*), seven (*ya no jalo*), and eleven (*aniñado*) had profoundly negative percentages of accuracy. Between 80% and 70% of the answers were wrong. With these results, it is evident that participants rarely know or use these idioms.
- ✓ Finally, items eight (*al pelo*), twelve (*que hecho leña*) and fifteen (*hacer vaca*) also had negative percentages of accuracy. In fact, 60% of the participants got wrong answers. These results suggest that these idioms are just occasionally used.

From the fifteen items listed, seven of them obtained accuracy percentages equal or lower than 40%, four items got tied results (50/50%), and the last four items had positive accuracy percentages (70% being the highest and 60% the lowest). Once again, these results show that the percentage of error is still higher than the percentage of success.

4.3.3 Interview: Analysis of the responses obtained in section “C” (1 item) from the two groups of participants (STRG1 and SCHG2)

Section C (comment): *Do you think that a handbook containing the most common cuencanismos (idioms used in Cuenca) may help you to improve your communicative skills? YES (___) NO (___) (See figure 10).*



Section C (comment): Do you think that a handbook containing the most common cuencanisms (idioms used in Cuenca) may help you to improve your communicative skills? YES (___) NO (___)

Write your comments

Figure 10: “Section C: Street and Spanish Schools Test Results”
Source: Pintado and Torres

The results were the following:

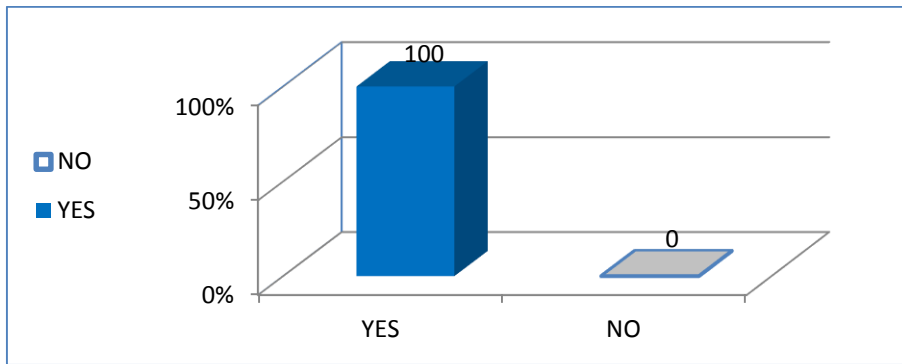


Chart 27: “Section C: Street Results”
Source: Pintado and Torres

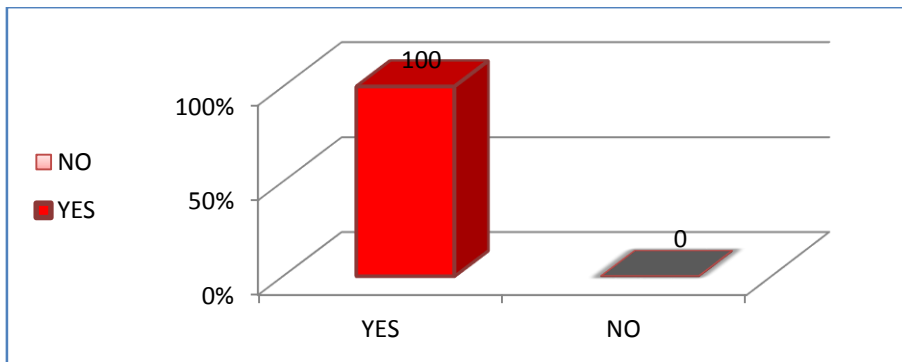


Chart 28: “Section C: Spanish Teaching Schools Results”
Source: Pintado and Torres



Since this last question was elaborated only with the purpose of proving if American foreigners agree that a handbook filled with cuencanismos will help them to understand *Cuencano* lexicon more accurately, the results were almost obvious. From the twenty participants selected, all of them agreed that a handbook containing the most common cuencanismos would help them to understand *Cuencano* lexicon appropriately.

4.4 Interpretation and Analysis of the Interviews

To obtain useful information from the qualitative approach, two interview with three people (1 = individually and 1 = with a couple), who were given pseudonyms to protect their identity, and who have previously taken the proficiency test, were carried out. Valuable information related to the participants' previous experiences with cuencanismos was obtained. Also, by means of these interviews, it was possible to know the interviewees' opinion about the possibility of having a handbook which could help them to learn the most common cuencanismos used at different contexts (See appendix 8).

The most relevant thoughts gathered from the interview were:

- ❖ In the first section, the participants were asked to give some examples regarding cuencanismos. However, the participant named "Leon" was the only one who knew some of them. On the other hand, the answers given by "Jack" and "Jill" were not entirely correct. Indeed, in some part of the interview, they were not sure if the examples given were right or wrong. This situation showed us that exists, somehow, a lack of knowledge about



cuencanismos.

- ❖ Both interviewees affirmed to use cuencanismos with their friends, family, or in certain situations.
- ❖ In the third section, the participants were asked to give some examples of cuencanismos they have heard the most in the city. Their answers, indeed, matched with some idioms collected from the surveys which were applied to *Cuencanos*. In fact, the first example given by the participant was the idiom “*Chévere*”, which matched with the list of the most common cuencanismos collected, and also with the test applied to Americans, on which, this idiom was well known for them.
- ❖ In the fourth question, a list of four idioms was given to the participants to evaluate their level of knowledge by using examples; however, they only recognized the idiom “*Chévere*”, what proves once more the commonly use of it. On the other hand, the rest of idioms could not be identified by them.
- ❖ Also, participants considered that learning idioms is important; however, they also mentioned that this necessity would depend on the Spanish language level of the learners.
- ❖ Socialization is a major key they found to learn cuencanismos.
- ❖ Cuencanismos do not cause misunderstandings, but problems or confusion when trying to understand certain expressions.
- ❖ The amount of Cuencano lexicon dominated by foreigners is directly proportional to the amount of time they have been exposed to the Spanish language. The more time foreigners spend in our city, the more they will



learn about cuencanismos.

- ❖ Finally, they affirmed that the creation of a handbook containing the most common cuencanismos with definitions or translations in the English language would be an excellent idea.

Based on the previous ideas, it can be stated that participants have certain knowledge about cuencanismos. They do recognize some of them; one example is the idiom “*chévere*” which is the most well-known. However, foreigners just recognize some cuencanismos without actually knowing the meaning.

Furthermore, interviewees confirm that the way they learn cuencanismos is by talking and listening to different people from different informal contexts (socialization). There is not available material they can use to learn idioms, and even when idioms sometimes cause problems in communication, these problems can be solved by asking the meaning of them.

Finally, interviewees affirm that it will be of great help to have a material with the most common cuencanismos since it would help them to improve their communicative skills.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After compiling the necessary information and results of this research, it is a need to set up some conclusions and recommendations for future studies.

5.1 Conclusions

- The survey administered to fifty Cuencanos was a useful instrument to select the most common cuencanismos used in the city. By the application of the survey, it was possible to collect a total of 1097 idioms which helped the researchers to gather the most common ones within the handbook.
- The results obtained from the proficiency tests showed that the participants knew a very limited number of cuencanismos, specifically the most common ones that can be heard in daily life communication like “*chévere*” and “*gara*”; however, most of these idioms remain unknown for them.
- The idiom “*Chévere*” is the most common and well-known cuencanismo used not only by Cuencanos but also by foreigners. In fact, almost all the participants who took the proficiency test knew the meaning of this idiom, and the reason could be easily conveyed: “*Chévere*” is highly used in different contexts around the city, so it is easy for foreigners to get familiar with it. In fact, this idiom could be added into any of the contexts included within the handbook.
- During the interviews, it was detected that foreigners considered that learning cuencanismos was fundamental for some of them; nevertheless,



they also agreed that the importance of learning new expressions would depend on their Spanish Level, and if they permanently lived or not in the city.

- One of the best alternatives foreigners find to learn and understand *cuencanismos* consists of asking *Cuencanos* the meaning of some expressions as they hear them. This proves that not only academic learning is necessary, but also the exposure to informal language like the case of these idioms (*cuencanismos*), which are part of everyday life.
- During the research process, it was possible to detect that foreigners have a few tools and materials containing *cuencanismos* where they can learn from. Also, it was noticeable that there are not any places where this type of material can be easily acquired, and even when found, some are not updated and well-structured for an easy usage. Besides, they do not include English translations, examples in use, or grammatical category organization.
- In agreement with the results gotten from the proficiency test, a material containing the most common *cuencanismos* in use might help foreigners to understand our way of speaking (dialect), and to use them when necessary.
- The different *cuencanismos* collected during this research are currently the most used; however, it is necessary to point out that some of them may be disused if new idioms come out and replace them.



5.2 Recommendations

- Based on the collected data, it is advised for Spanish teaching schools to include cuencanismos in their study programs, as they are an essential part of Cuencanos' dialect.
- When developing this type of studies, it may be recommendable to use mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) in order to gather diverse data which may allow the researchers to see different approaches and perspectives.
- The School of English Language and Literature from the University of Cuenca should encourage its students to develop research projects focused on Language and Culture of our city, since there are only a few studies which deal with these fields.
- The absence of material related to idioms used in Cuenca limits foreigners' communicative competence. Therefore, it is advised for future researchers to create diverse and dynamic resources which can facilitate foreigners' adaptation to Cuencanos' peculiar way of speaking.
- Second language learners should consider the importance of learning idioms when studying a second language as these improve their language competence.



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APPENDICES



Appendix 1: Survey Template



UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA

Facultad de Filosofía, Letras y Ciencias de la Educación

Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa

LOS CUENCANISMOS MÁS COMUNES USADOS EN CONTEXTO

El siguiente cuestionario, tiene por objeto recolectar la mayor cantidad de expresiones idiomáticas usadas en Cuenca (Cuencanismos), y a su vez, de los contextos o situaciones en las cuales éstos son usados más a menudo. Estas expresiones serán utilizadas para la creación de un “Handbook of Phrases Containing the Most Common ‘Cuencanismos’ ”, el mismo que contendrá definiciones en inglés de cada uno de ellos. Esto con el propósito de ayudar a los extranjeros, residentes en nuestra ciudad, a entender nuestra peculiar forma de expresarnos.

INSTRUCCIONES:

- a. Lea cuidadosamente cada una de las preguntas antes de contestar.
- b. Limítese a escribir únicamente lo solicitado en cada una de las preguntas.
- c. Utilice las líneas para responder a cada pregunta.
- d. Debajo de cada pregunta encontrará un mensaje de ayuda que le orientará sobre que debería tomar en consideración al dar sus respuestas.

RECUERDE QUE ESTE CUESTIONARIO ES TOTALMENTE ANÓNIMO. SUS DATOS, TALES COMO, NOMBRE, APELLIDO, E-MAIL, ETC. NO SE VERÁN COMPROMETIDOS EN NINGÚN MOMENTO.

Código:

1. **¿Cuáles son los Cuencanismos que usted utiliza más a menudo cuando se encuentra en un bar, discoteca o en un café? Ejemplo: Aniñado / Aniñada**

-
-
-
-
-



2. **¿Cuáles son los Cuencanismos que usted utiliza más a menudo cuando se encuentra dentro de un restaurante? Ejemplo: Esta comida *más para chimba*.**

-
-
-
-
-

3. **Escriba una lista de los modismos cuencanos que usted más utiliza cuando está dentro de su institución educativa (escuela, colegio, universidad)**

-
-
-
-
-

4. **Cuando vamos a comprar en un mercado, los cuencanos usamos Cuencanismos tales como:**

-
-
-
-
-

5. **¿Qué expresiones idiomáticas ha notado que usted usa cuando va a comprar a la tienda de al lado?** "Tienda de al lado" se refiere a aquella pequeña tienda del barrio cercana a su casa, donde a menudo compra productos básicos de uso y consumo diario.

-
-
-
-

6. **Cuando ha ido al hospital, ¿Ha notado haber usado cierto tipo de expresión idiomática cuencana?** Se refiere a expresiones idiomáticas usadas dentro de los contextos de un hospital, tales como: hablar con el médico, preguntar por información, comprar medicamentos, etc



-
-
-
-

7. Cuando va de compras al Mall de Río o a Milenium Plaza, ¿Ha notado haber usado algún Cuencanismo en alguno de sus locales o atracciones? Se refiere a cuando compra en algún local del centro comercial, hace un pedido en el patio de comidas, visita la zona de juegos, etc.

-
-
-
-

8. Existen ciertos Cuencanismos que usamos cuando tomamos un taxi o un bus urbano. ¿Recuerda alguno de ellos? Dos buenos ejemplos son: "deme cobrando" (cuando se paga al taxista por su servicio), y "pongo de dos" (cuando se paga el pasaje del bus de dos personas a la vez).

-
-
-
-


9. ¿Que Cuencanismos ha usado dentro de una oficina municipal o gubernamental? Oficinas tales como: SRI, Empresa Eléctrica, Etapa, etc.

-
-
-
-

10. Cuando va a la farmacia, ¿Que expresiones idiomáticas Cuencanas ha usado? Se refiere a las expresiones idiomáticas usadas en la interacción entre Ud. y el farmacólogo.

-
-
-

Appendix 2: Survey with Answers



UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA
Facultad de Filosofía, Letras y Ciencias de la Educación
Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa

LOS CUENCANISMOS MÁS COMUNES USADOS EN CONTEXTO

El siguiente cuestionario, tiene por objeto recolectar la mayor cantidad de expresiones idiomáticas usadas en Cuenca (Cuencanismos), y a su vez, de los contextos o situaciones en las cuales éstos son usados más a menudo. Estas expresiones serán utilizadas para la creación de un "Handbook of Phrases Containing the Most Common 'Cuencanismos' ", el mismo que contendrá definiciones en inglés de cada uno de ellos. Esto con el propósito de ayudar a los extranjeros, residentes en nuestra ciudad, a entender nuestra peculiar forma de expresarnos.

INSTRUCCIONES:

- Lea cuidadosamente cada una de las preguntas antes de contestar.
- Limítese a escribir únicamente lo solicitado en cada una de las preguntas.
- Utilice las líneas para responder a cada pregunta.
- Debajo de cada pregunta encontrará un mensaje de ayuda que le orientará sobre que debería tomar en consideración al dar sus respuestas.

RECUERDE QUE ESTE CUESTIONARIO ES TOTALMENTE ANÓNIMO. SUS DATOS, TALES COMO, NOMBRE, APELLIDO, E-MAIL, ETC. NO SE VERÁN COMPROMETIDOS EN NINGÚN MOMENTO.

1. ¿Cuáles son los Cuencanismos que usted utiliza más a menudo cuando se encuentra en un bar, discoteca o en un café? Ejemplo: Aniñado / Aniñada

- *chevere*.....
- *gaxeta*.....
- *genial*.....
- *del puctar*.....
- *f.a.c.a.s.e.*.....

2. ¿Cuáles son los Cuencanismos que usted utiliza más a menudo cuando se encuentra dentro de un restaurante? Ejemplo: Esta comida *más para chimba*.

- *tatay*.....



• *esta del nabo*.....

• *esta maravilla*.....

• *buenazo*.....

•

3. Escriba una lista de los modismos cuencanos que usted más utiliza cuando está dentro de su institución educativa (escuela, colegio, universidad)

• *mis panas*.....

• *compas*.....

• *mija*.....

• *china*.....

• *jamar*.....

4. Cuando vamos a comprar en un mercado, los cuencanos usamos Cuencanismos tales como:

• *padra la yapita*.....

• *dara bien puesta*.....

• *buenas señite*.....

• *dara peadito*.....

•

5. ¿Qué expresiones idiomáticas ha notado que usted usa cuando va a comprar a la tienda de al lado? "Tienda de al lado" se refiere a aquella pequeña tienda del barrio cercana a su casa, donde a menudo compra productos básicos de uso y consumo diario.

• *Oiga veci*.....

• *padrina*.....

• *ya sabe desde vivo*.....

• *haya fiox*.....

6. Cuando ha ido al hospital, ¿Ha notado haber usado cierto tipo de expresión idiomática cuencana? Se refiere a expresiones idiomáticas usadas dentro de los contextos de un hospital, tales como: hablar con el médico, preguntar por información, comprar medicamentos, etc

• *ya no jale*.....

• *tenga el cacho flaja*.....

• *mata sanos*.....

• *suante es el daño*.....



7. Cuando va de compras al Mall de Río o a Milenium Plaza, ¿Ha notado haber usado algún Cuencanismo en alguno de sus locales o atracciones? Se refiere a cuando compra en algún local del centro comercial, hace un pedido en el patio de comidas, visita la zona de juegos, etc.

- *alaja está*.....
- *van de pelis*.....
- *nada menos*.....
- *basán está*.....

8. Existen ciertos Cuencanismos que usamos cuando tomamos un taxi o un bus urbano. ¿Recuerda alguno de ellos? Dos buenos ejemplos son: "deme cobrando" (cuando se paga al taxista por su servicio), y "pongo de dos" (cuando se paga el pasaje del bus de dos personas a la vez).

- *cojer el humillante*.....
- *vamos hecho sardina*.....
- *aquí mamá*.....
- *vaya llorando*.....

9. ¿Que Cuencanismos ha usado dentro de una oficina municipal o gubernamental? Oficinas tales como: SRI, Empresa Eléctrica, Etapa, etc.

- *buenas*.....
- *cuanto está de...*.....
- *de cobrando de...*.....
-
.....


10. Cuando va a la farmacia, ¿Que expresiones idiomáticas Cuencanas ha usado? Se refiere a las expresiones idiomáticas usadas en la interacción entre Ud. y el farmacólogo.

- *me estoy muriendo*.....
- *tiene gorrillos*.....
- *me duele el mate*.....



Appendix 3: Pilot Proficiency Test with errors

Pilot Test



UNIVERSITY OF CUENCA
Faculty of Philosophy, Letters, and Science of Education
English Language Major

The Most Common Cuencanisms (idioms) used in Cuenca

Date: 18/02/2016 Age: 62 Gender: M F

Section A: Underline the correct definition that fits with the expression in bold.

Example:
 Vamos de **bailongo**.
 ➤ Let's eat.
 ➤ Let's study.
 ➤ Let's dance.

1. ¡Qué **chévere** tu casa!

Your house looks clean.
 Your house looks terrible.
 Your house looks nice.

2. Mi amigo está **chumado**.

➤ My friend is high.
 My friend is angry.
 My friend is drunk.

3. Es hora de ir al **cameilo**.

➤ It's time to go shopping.
 It's time to go to my job.
 It's time to go fishing.

4. ¡Qué **pachecho** hace hoy!

It's cold today.
 It's raining today.
 It's hot today.

5. Vamos a **bielar**.

Let's get some shots.
 Let's get some wine.
 Let's get some beer.

6. ¡Qué **leona** traigo hoy!

I'm starving.
 I'm tired.
 I'm happy



Section B: Using the letters, match the definitions in English with the words in Spanish.

SPANISH

• Gil	d
• Pana	J
• Salado	C
• Yapa	m
• A pata	e
• Acolita	f
• Ya no jalo	n
• Al pelo	G
• Estar chiro	l
• Una tocha	O
• Aniñado	b
• ¡Qué hecho leña!	A
• Ir de farra	H
• Simón	K
• Hacer vaca	L

ENGLISH

A. To collect money for a purpose.
B. Asswhole
C. A childish person.
D. To travel on foot.
E. To give a hand.
F. I'm tired.
G. It's looking good.
H. To go dancing
I. What a mess!
J. Friend, dude
K. Yes
L. To get something extra
M. To have bad luck
N. To be broke
O. A small bottle of alcohol

Section C: Do you think that a material containing the most common Cuencanismos (idioms used in Cuenca) may help you to improve your communicative skills? YES (X) NO (___)

Write your comments



Appendix 4: Proficiency Test Template



UNIVERSITY OF CUENCA

Faculty of Philosophy, Letters, and Science of Education

English Language Major

The Most Common Cuencanismos (idioms) used in Cuenca

Date: Age: Gender: M F

Section A: Circle the correct definition that fits with the expression in bold.

Example:

Vamos de **bailongo**.

- Let's eat.
- Let's study.
- **Let's dance.**

1. ¡**Qué chévere** tu casa!

- Your house looks clean.
- Your house looks terrible.
- Your house looks nice.

2. Mi amigo está **chumado**.

- My friend is high.
- My friend is angry.
- My friend is drunk.

3. Es hora de ir al **camello**.

- It's time to go shopping.
- It's time to go to my job.
- It's time to go fishing.

4. ¡**Qué pachecho** hace hoy!

- It's cold today.
- It's raining today.
- It's hot today.

5. Vamos a **bielar**.

- Let's get some shots.
- Let's get some wine.
- Let's get some beer.

6. ¡**Qué leona traigo** hoy!

- I'm starving.
- I'm tired.
- I'm happy



Section B: Using the letters, match the definitions in English with the words in Spanish.
SPANISH **ENGLISH**

• Gil	
• Pana	
• Salado	
• Yapa	
• A pata	
• Acolita	
• Ya no jalo	
• Al pelo	
• Estar chiro	
• Una tocha	
• Aniñado	
• ¡Qué hecho leña!	
• Ir de farra	
• Simón	
• Hacer vaca	

A. To collect money for a purpose.
B. Asshole
C. A childish person.
D. To travel on foot.
E. To give a hand.
F. I'm tired.
G. It's looking good.
H. To go dancing
I. What a mess!
J. Friend, dude
K. Yes
L. To get something extra
M. To have bad luck
N. To be broke
O. A small bottle of alcohol

Section C: Do you think that a material containing the most common Cuencanismos (idioms used in Cuenca) may help you to improve your communicative skills? YES (___) NO (___)

Write your comments



Appendix 5: Proficiency Test with Answers: Spanish Schools

UNIVERSITY OF CUENCA
 Faculty of Philosophy, Letters, and Science of Education
 English Language Major

The Most Common Cuencanisms (idioms) used in Cuenca

Date: 23/3/16 Age: 33 Gender: M F

Section A: Circle the correct definition that fits with the expression in bold.

Example:

Vamos de **bailongo**.

- > Let's eat.
- > Let's study.
- > Let's dance.

1. ¡Qué **chévere** tu casa!

- > Your house looks clean.
- > Your house looks terrible.
- Your house looks nice.

2. Mi amigo está **chumado**.

- My friend is high.
- > My friend is angry.
- > My friend is drunk.

3. Es hora de ir al **camello**.

- > It's time to go shopping.
- > It's time to go to my job.
- It's time to go fishing.

4. ¡Qué **pachecho** hace hoy!

- > It's cold today.
- > It's raining today.
- It's hot today.

5. Vamos a **bielar**.

- > Let's get some shots.
- > Let's get some wine.
- Let's get some beer.

6. ¡Qué **leona** traigo hoy!

- > I'm starving.
- > I'm tired.
- I'm happy.



Section B: Using the letters, match the definitions in English with the words in Spanish.

SPANISH

• Gil	I
• Pana	M
• Salado	D
• Yapa	A
• A pata	O
• Acolita	E
• Ya no jalo	P
• Al pelo	G
• Estar chiro	C
• Una tocha	J
• Anifiado	B
• ¡Qué hecho leña!	N
• Ir de farra	H
• Simón	K
• Hacer vaca	L

ENGLISH

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. To collect money for a purpose.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Asshole
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. A childish person.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. To travel on foot.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E. To give a hand.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. I'm tired.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> G. It's looking good.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> H. To go dancing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I. What a mess!
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> J. Friend, dude
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> K. Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L. To get something extra
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M. To have bad luck
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N. To be broke
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> O. A small bottle of alcohol


Section C: Do you think that a material containing the most common Cuencanismos (idioms used in Cuenca) may help you to improve your communicative skills? YES () NO ()

Write your comments



Appendix 6: Proficiency Test with Answers: Streets

Prof. Test.



UNIVERSITY OF CUENCA
Faculty of Philosophy, Letters, and Science of Education
English Language Major

The Most Common Cuencanisms (idioms) used in Cuenca

Date: 22/02/16 Age: 46 Gender: M F

Section A: Circle the correct definition that fits with the expression in bold.

Example:

Vamos de **bailongo**.

- > Let's eat.
- > Let's study.
- > Let's dance.

1. ¡Qué **chêvere** tu casa!

- > Your house looks clean.
- > Your house looks terrible.
- > Your house looks nice.

2. Mi amigo está **chumado**.

- > My friend is high.
- > My friend is angry.
- > My friend is drunk.

3. Es hora de ir al **camello**.

- > It's time to go shopping.
- > It's time to go to my job.
- > It's time to go fishing.

4. ¡Qué **pachecho** hace hoy!

- > It's cold today.
- > It's raining today.
- > It's hot today.

5. Vamos a **bielar**.

- > Let's get some shots.
- > Let's get some wine.
- > Let's get some beer.

6. ¡Qué **leona** traigo hoy!

- > I'm starving.
- > I'm tired.
- > I'm happy



Section B: Using the letters, match the definitions in English with the words in Spanish.

SPANISH

• Gil	A
• Pana	F
• Salado	H
• Yapa	k
• A pata	E
• Acolita	O
• Ya no jalo	M
• Al pelo	G
• Estar chiro	N
• Una tocha	L
• Anifiado	C
• ¡Qué hecho leña!	I
• Ir de farra	D
• Simón	J
• Hacer vaca	B

ENGLISH

A. To collect money for a purpose.
B. Asshole
C. A childish person.
D. To travel on foot.
E. To give a hand.
F. I'm tired.
G. It's looking good.
H. To go dancing
I. What a mess!
J. Friend, dude
K. Yes
L. To get something extra
M. To have bad luck
N. To be broke
O. A small bottle of alcohol

Section C: Do you think that a material containing the most common Cuencanismos (idioms used in Cuenca) may help you to improve your communicative skills? YES () NO ()

Write your comments

yes for cuenia and the region



Appendix 7: Interview Template



UNIVERSITY OF CUENCA

Faculty of Philosophy, Letters, and Science of Education

English Language Major

“A Handbook of Phrases Containing the Most Common ‘Cuencanismos’ to help foreigners in Cuenca”

INTERVIEW

Date: _____ Pseudonym: _____

The purpose of this interview is to gather information and opinions about Cuencanismos and their influence in communication.

1. Do you know any Cuencanismos (idioms)?
2. How often do you use them?
3. Could you mention 4 idioms that you have heard most of the time in the city of Cuenca?
4. From the following list of Cuencanismos (idioms) have you heard or used any of them? If the answer is yes, can you give us an example by using them?

	YES - NO
Chévere	Example:



Hacer vaca	YES - NO
	Example:

¡Qué pacheco!	YES - NO
	Example:

¡Qué leona que traigo hoy!	YES - NO
	Example:

5. Is it very important for you to learn Cuencanismos? Why?
6. What type of alternatives have you used to learn and understand idioms used in the city?
7. Have Cuencanismos caused you any communication misunderstanding at any time?
8. Do you believe that a material containing the most common cuencanismos (idioms used in Cuenca), with definitions or equivalents in the English language might help you to communicate more easily?



Appendix 8: Transcriptions of the Interviews



UNIVERSITY OF CUENCA

Faculty of Philosophy, Letters, and Science of Education

English Language Major

The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding what foreigners know about Cuencanismos (idioms used in Cuenca); their importance and use in different contexts.

INTERVIEW 1

I1 WILL BE THE INTERVIEWER AND **R1** WILL BE THE INTERVIEWEE.

I1: ok, so..., so the next interview is just to like..., have uh..., different ideas or opinions about what people think about cuencanismos, and about the possibility of having eh..., a handbook, eh..., compiling some of them which are the most useful. Ok? So the first question for you will be: do you know any *Cuencanismos*?

R1: Yes, I do.

I1: ok. The next one will be: how often do you use them?

R1: Not..., not every day probably, but frequently. Yes, (interviewer says “frequently”) yeah. Uh..., especially if I’m chatting with people that I know very well (interviewer assents with “ah, ok”) yeah, and..., and uh..., *Cuencanos*. And uh..., and..., and..., I just like to use them. It’s..., they may laugh, the..., th..., the..., they’re for real. They get a kick out. They like it, because that makes me sound more like a *Cuencano* (interviewer softly says “all right”) and not so much like an *extrangero*.

I1: That’s right. Uh, Ok! Question number three: could you mention 4 idioms that you have heard most of the time in the city of *Cuenca*?

R1: Ahh! Idioms uh..., uh..., *Hay que chévere! Que chévere! Es muy chévere eso!* Uh..., *Ah el es mandarina, el es hombre mandarina*. Uh..., (interviewee chuckles) *ya sabemos, no? uh..., y como es... ah estoy muy chiro y no puedo pagar*, yeah uh..., *estoy chiro*. Uh..., *que leona que traigo hoy?* (interviewee and interviewer



laugh.) yeah.

I1: Ok!

R1: Ok!

I1: From the following list of *Cuencanismos*, have you heard or used any of them? If the answer is yes, can you give us an example by using them in a sentence? The first one is *chévere*. Have you used it?

R1: Yeah! Yeah! I just..., I just told you.

I1: Could you give an example in use?

R1: Ay me gusta mucho, que *chévere*!

I1: Ok. The next one, *hacer vaca*. Have you used it? have you hear it?

R1: No, no ,no.

I1: Next one. *Que pacheco!* Have you used it or heard it?

R1: I've heard, but I..., I've not used it. I don't use it.

I1: Ok. Ok. So, do you..., will you be able to give us an example in a sentence, using *que pacheco*?

R1: I forgot. (Everybody laughs) I told you (unaudible) you told me I forgot to *que pacheco!*

I1: And the last one, *que leona que traigo hoy!*

R1: Yeah, *que leona que traigo hoy, es que tengo mucha hambre.*

I1: Ok!

R1: What was *pacheco*? Tell me again?

I1: it was..., it was like it is freezing.

R1: Ah ya, *yaya*, clima, but uh..., instead of *que pacheco* I say *achacay, achachay!* (Interviewer and interviewee laugh.)

I1: Question number five: is it very important for you to learn *cuencanismos*? And why.

R1: Well, you know there are two groups here, there really are two groups. Um...,

people who speak Spanish pretty well, and I include myself in that. Yes, it is important to know *cuencanismos*, because you want to communicate with people the way they communicate (interviewer affirms with “yeah”) when you go to another country. But you also have foreigners, who are still learning Spanish, and..., for them, they have to concentrate on the basic Spanish and..., they probably don’t need the *modismos* as much. Uhm..., when I have Spanish classes, I teach Spanish to, eh..., to *extrangeros*, and uh..., sometimes I teach them *modismos*, *cuencanismos*, and they love it! they love it! ohh! I like that, but for them it’s..., they’re still trying to learn *presente*, *pretérito imperfecto* (interviewee chuckles) *futuro*. You know. So, it’s a lot harder for them to..., to..., to learn the *modi...*, the *cuencanismos*. Probably less important for them, but I think is very important for people who already can speak Spanish and communicate well. I think it’s important.

I1: ok. That’s good. What type of alternatives have you used to learn and understand idioms used in the city?

R1: yeah! Not, the way I learn uhm..., *modismos* is I ask people. If I hear a *modismo* I say what..., tell me what that means, please, *explícame*. *Que quiere decir* (interviewer assents with “ok, that’s good”) yeah, uh..., *que leona que traigo hoy!* *Que quiere decir eso? No comprendo. Ahh, es el sonido “grow” del estómago.* Uhm..., but I ask, I ask people. Please teach me that, please teach me that. I... I... I heard two people one day say they are going..., *quiere...*, *quiere ir comer con nosotros? Ay estoy muy chiro, no puedo.* I said, what’s *chiro*? I Don’t understand it. *Que es chiro? Ahora yo sé, ahora yo soy chiro* (interviewer laughs) yeah, yeah! I don’t ____ this. I don’t ____ this.

I1: ok. The next one: Have *cuencanision...*, *cuencanismos* caused you any communication misunderstandings at any time?

R1: Not a misunderstanding! I wouldn’t say misunderstanding, didn’t cause me confusion, I just didn’t understand what they said. But it didn’t cause a problem.

I1: Ok. And the last one: do you believe that a material containing the most common *cuencanismos* used in Cuenca with definitions or equivalents in English will help you to improve your communicative skills?

R1: Definitely! Absolutely! I think that will be wonderful. There was a little booklet, I don’t know who did it. The last (interviewer adds “a small one, red one”) last year I read it sometimes. Yeah, it was *cuencanismos* that had in the restaurants and..., things. It was wonderful! I loved it! uhm..., and the..., I tried to learn as many as I could learn, uh..., but I don’t have a good memory so (everybody laugh) yeah..., but it’s like any vocabulary, you have to use it or you..., you know, to remember you have to use it. Yes, definitely, wonderful idea.



I1: Ah ok. Ok that's it. Thank you! Thank you so much!

R1: Yeah (interviewee and interviewer laugh.)



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The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding what foreigners know about Cuencanismos (idioms used in Cuenca); their importance and use in different contexts.

INTERVIEW 2

I1 WILL BE THE INTERVIEWER AND **R1** WILL BE THE INTERVIEWEE.

I1: The purpose of this interview is to..., like..., have eh..., different ideas of what people who are learning Spanish think about the importance of cuencanismos which are idiomatic expressions used here. So let's start!

I1: Do you know any cuencanismo?

R1: I don't... I don't know, I don't know like..., if..., like guagua and naña. (husband asks "It's *Kichwa*?"). That's *Kichwa*? That's hmm..., *cuencanismos* or no?

I1: Ya, ya, ya. It c..., It comes..., It comes from *Kichwa* but it is also used as a *cuencanismo*.

R1: So, Yeah I feel.

I1: Oh, ok.



I1: How often do you use them?

R1: Not very often (they talk to each other because they were supposed to take turns to answer) Uh..., *A veces*. We use them sometimes with like our daughters; our daughters go to CEDFI (sound of a car passing by) they hear and they used 'em. They'll say like..., oh it was *chachay* in the *escuela* or..., uh..., *ñaña*, my friends *ñaña*..., or..., I sometimes say *mijin* (wife laughs and interviewer affirms with "ok") to my buds. So yeah.

I1: Ah, ok. Number three. Could you mention four idioms that you have heard most of the time in the city Cuenca?

R1: So..., *mijin* (interviewer affirms) and *guagua*, and *chachay* and..., uh *ñaña*.

I1: *Ñaña*, ok, Next one. From the following list of cuencanismos, have you heard or use any of them? If the answer is yes, can you give us an example in u..., by using them? The first one is *chévere* (interviewed affirms with "a ya") *Have you heard it?*

R1: Si si si (wife laughs.)

I1: yeah. Could you give us an example in use of it?

R1: *Cuenca es chévere* (wife laughs)

I1: that's cool, and that's true also (interviewer, interviewed and wife laugh.) yup.

I1: the next one. *Hacer vaca*..., no, no idea? Ok. So, at the end we are gonna explain you. Ok.



I1: next one. *Que pacheco!*

R1: No.

I1: Ok. And the last one, *que Leona que traigo hoy!*

R1: No.

I1: No, Ok. Let's go to the next (husband says "*no entiendo*" and everybody softly laugh.) ok. Let's go to the next question. Is it very important for you to learn cuencanismos? And why?

R1: Yes, because I think it make communication a lot easier.

I1: oh ok. You're right. Next one, what type of alternatives have you used to learn and understand idioms used in the city?

R1: Not much. We've just (inaudible) to take classes with Tatiana every day. *Clase de español* and I *practicar con DUOLINGO* on my..., uh *teléfono* and then just try to..., *hablar con la gente* (wife adds "and with friends") yeah, with friends.

I1: oh ok. That's cool. Have cuencanismos caused you any communication misunderstandings at any time?

R1: No. (Interviewer repeats "no" and adds "ok") Because the people are nice enough (wife says "yeah") if we don't understand, *no entiendo*, then they'll try..., uh..., *otra palabra* (wife adds "they'll use a different".)

I1: ah, ok..., ok. The last one, do you believe that a material containing the most



common cuencanismos used in Cuenca, with definitions or equivalents in English will help you improve your comu..., communicative..., eh..., to..., sorry (interviewer chuckles), let's start again. Do you believe that a material containing the most common cuencanismos used in Cuenca, with definitions or equivalents in English will help you to communicate more easily?

R1: Definitely! Yes (husband affirms "yes") that would be great.

I1: yeah, ok. That's it.

R1: Oh

