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# INTERCULTURAL BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE URBAN ANDES

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## Background:

While in many countries, especially in urban settings, the linguistic vitality of indigenous languages is diminishing, Quechua use and bilingualism in urban Cusco remains strong. Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) is a language planning model derived from the *indigenismo* movement in Latin American countries, which strives to teach two languages in their own and separate cultural contexts. However, IBE application has been criticized for attempting to normalize Quechua from a purely Spanish-speaking context, stripping it of its agency and cultural power, prioritizing the formal grammaticality. Thus, this investigation seeks to analyze the actual state of bilingualism in Cusco and the effects of IBE pedagogy in education students of a Quechuan background.

## Objectives:

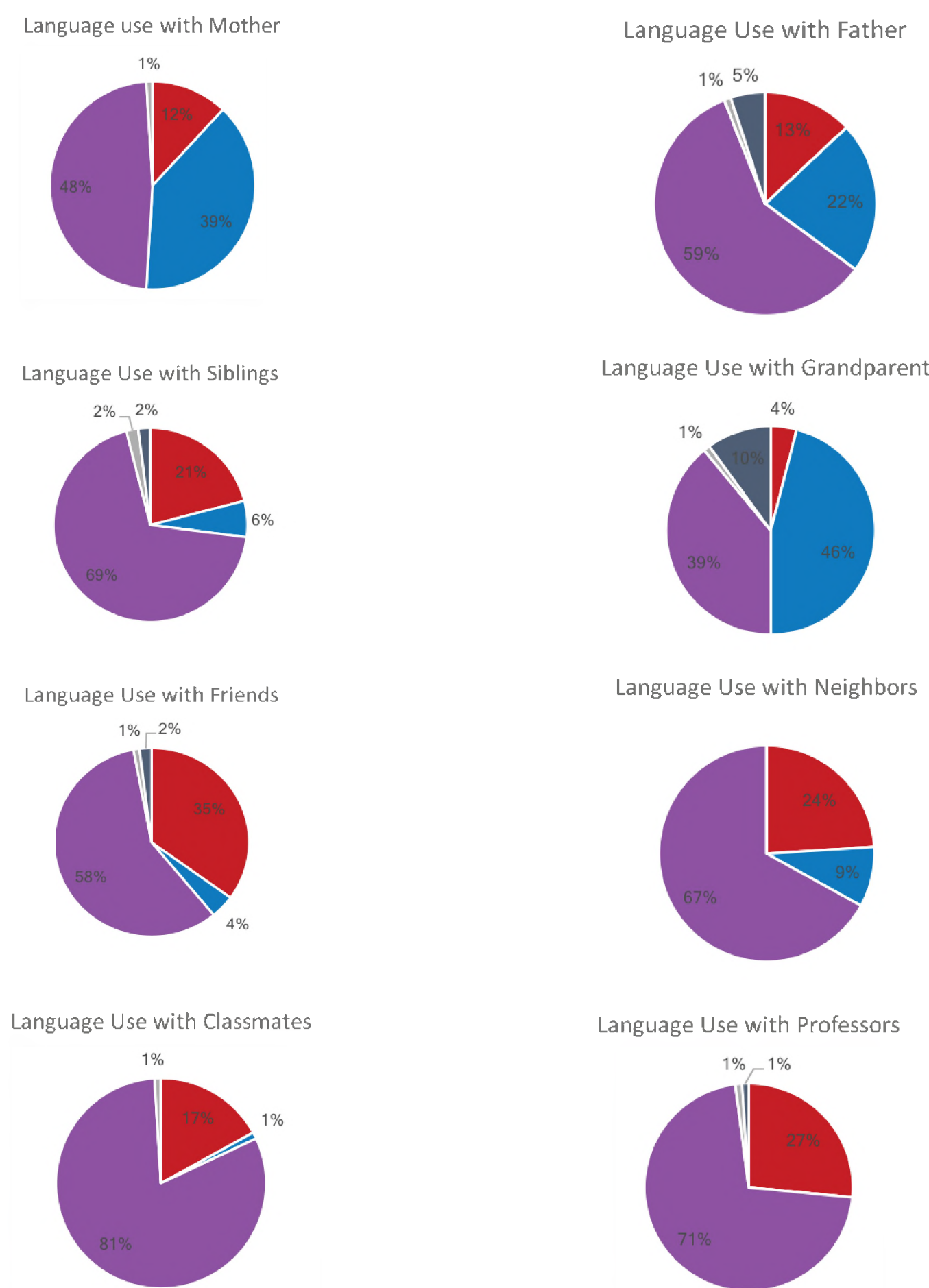
This study was designed with three objectives in mind. Through usage information and interviews of students at the Pukllasunchis Institute, the contact between Quechua and Spanish can be observed.

<b>VITALITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirming the vitality of bilingualism in various language domains and in all parts of the social network.</li> <li>Is bilingualism still prevalent in all domains and with all members of their social network in Cusco?</li> </ul>
<b>VALORIZATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gauging the affection and respect felt toward both Quechua and Spanish in this population of bilingual students.</li> <li>How are both languages valued by these bilingual students?</li> </ul>
<b>PEDAGOGY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observing the effects of IBE pedagogy application in the language attitudes of the students.</li> <li>How has IBE and its pedagogy affected the thinking and language patterns of these future educators?</li> </ul>

Through questionnaires, language usage data was collected in order to confirm the vitality of bilingualism and of Quechua use in this population of students. Questions were asked about their preferred language use with their parents, extended family, friends, acquaintances, peers, professors and others.

Most students used both languages with almost all members of their social network, with the notable exception of their interactions with their grandparents. These results indicate that intergenerational transmission of this native language remains strong. This might also signal the fact that the phenomenon of native bilingualism is relatively limited to the younger generation in the Andes.

Legend: Only Spanish (red), Only Quechua (blue), Both Spanish and Quechua (purple), Other (green), No Answer (grey)

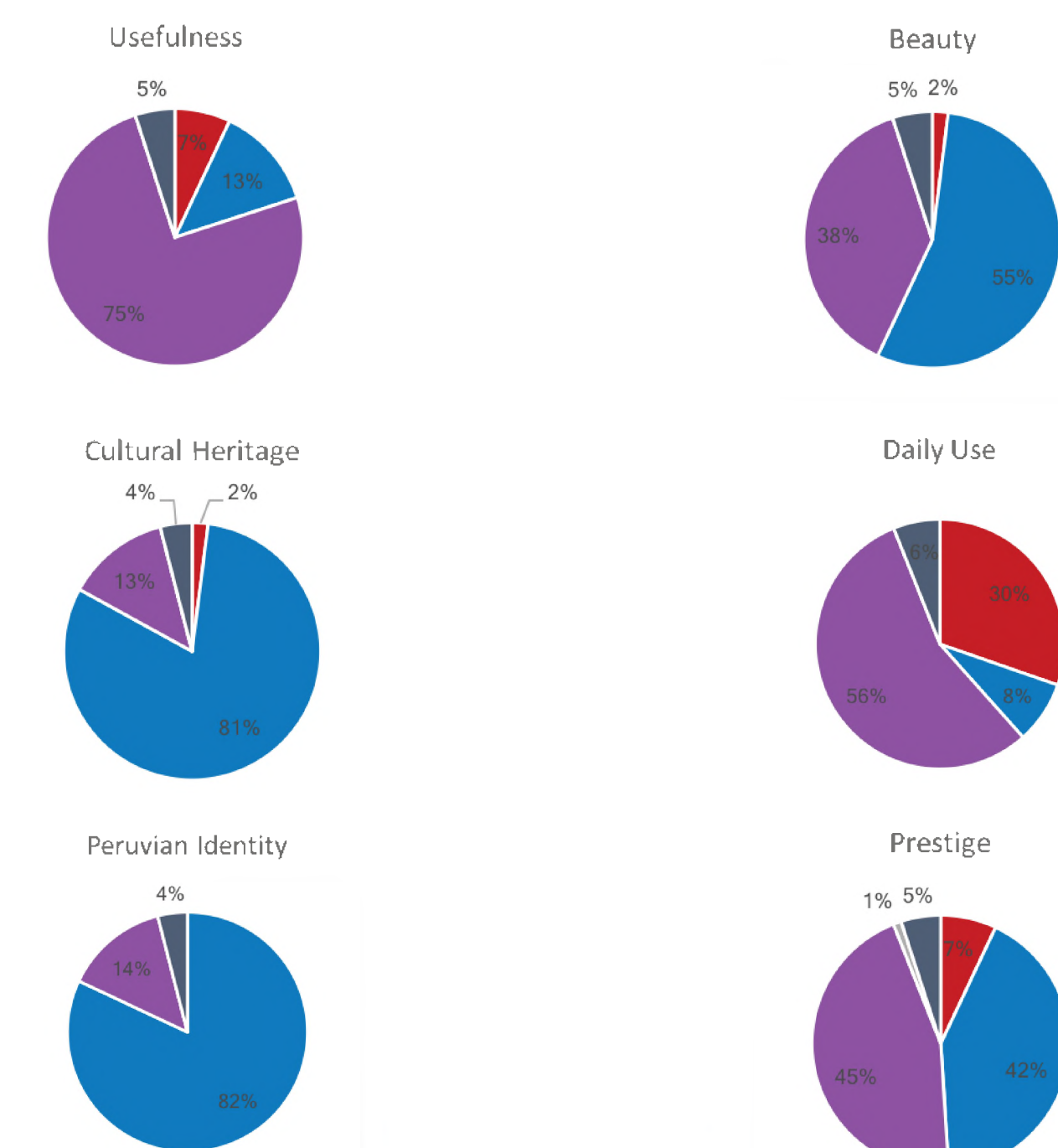


## Analysis

Along with gauging the students' language choices within their social networks, they were asked questions to observe the value that they attach to each or both languages. These included judgements on utility, beauty, cultural heritage and self-identity.

When asked questions that related to affective value, the vast majority of students demonstrated their attachment to Quechua. This confirms what most sociolinguists that have previously studied this region have often theorized: part of Quechua's survival and development is largely due to the positive affective value that its speakers have for the language. The data collected from these questionnaires served to complement the interviews conducted with a portion of the students.

Legend: Spanish (red), Quechua (blue), Both Spanish and Quechua (purple), Other (green), No Answer (grey)



*"Dicen que el hablar quechua es algo dulce...por las bromas también, son [más] dulces que el castellano"*  
*"They say that speaking quechua is something sweet...because of the jokes too, they're sweeter than in Spanish."*

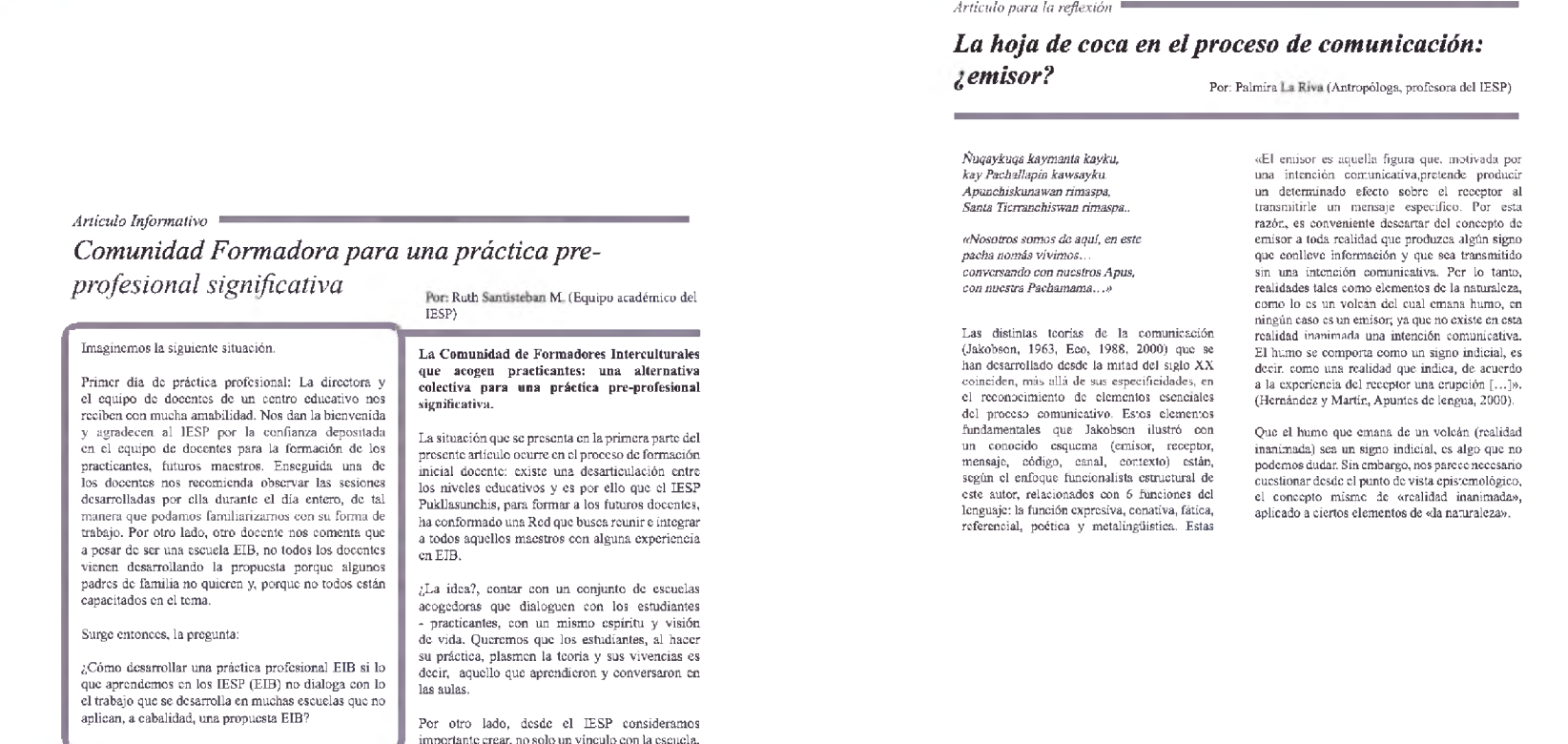
IBE pedagogy at the Pukllasunchis Institute is taught with the goal of application at their own primary and secondary school in Cusco itself, as well as their programs in rural zones and other institutions. Their school in Cusco was the first to decide to teach Quechua to the Spanish-speaking population in the area, calling their program "Intercultural Education in the City." Not only does Pukllasunchis teach this pedagogy, but it develops and publishes materials for other educators seeking to adopt it into their own methods.

The students interviewed also expressed their appreciation for this program. Calling from past experiences, they spoke about linguistic discrimination and how Pukllasunchis and the particular IBE pedagogy it expounds, helped them to maintain and strengthen their pride in their language and cultural practices.

*"But now I think that there are more [Quechua-speakers] because of the institute... thanks to the institute, I am speaking Quechua once more. And now I am not ashamed, nor am I afraid."*

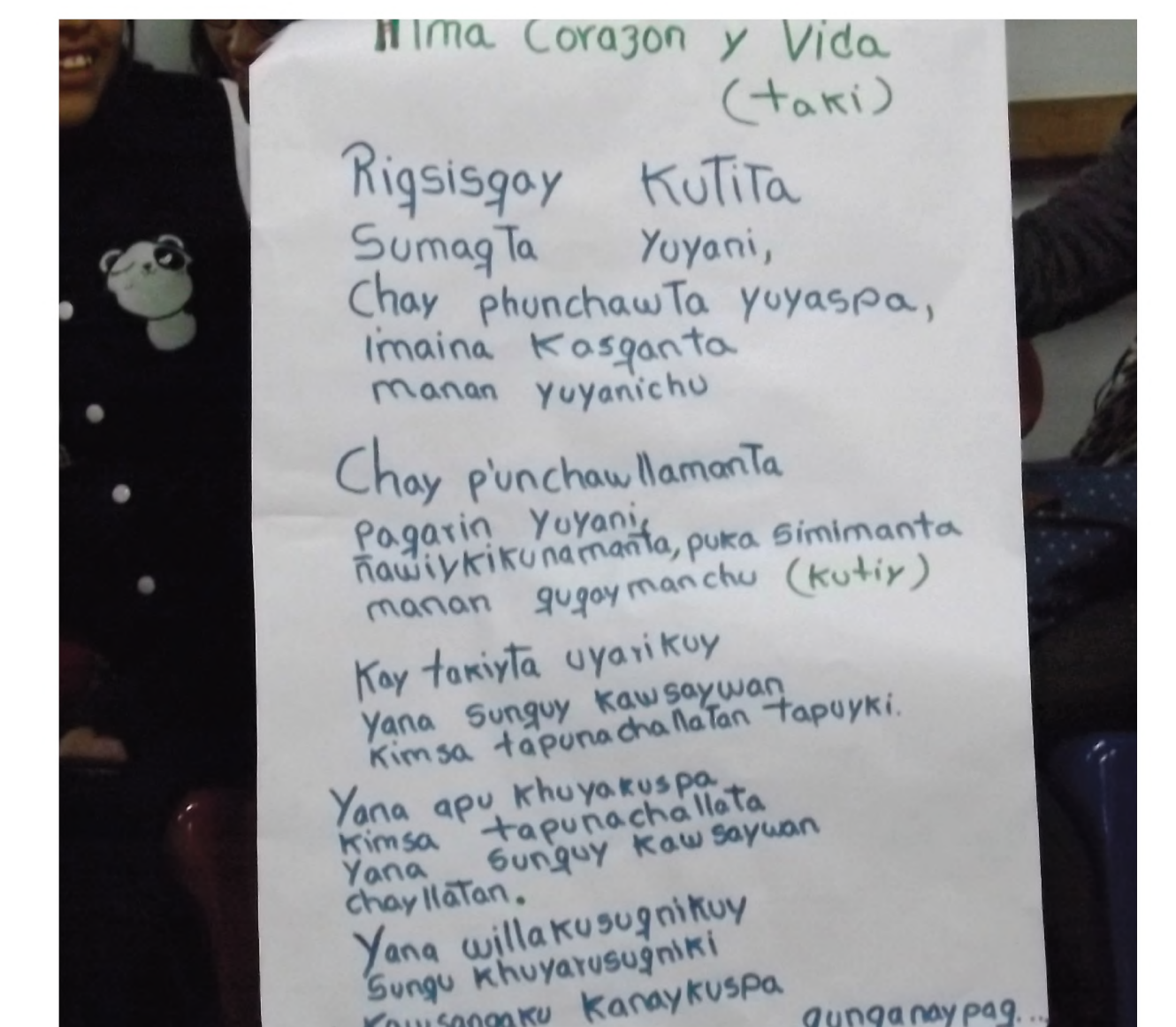
*"The idea was: how do we create an [environment] that would allow the Quechuan-speaking students to talk to the Spanish-speaking students and that their academic conditions would not leave them behind. So we created certain courses: medicinal plants and healing, nutrition and biodiversity, ceramics...This has placed the students from the rural communities, the Quechuan students, in a prestigious academic situation"*

*"When we talk about intercultural dialogue, no one understands what dialogue, how does it happen? No, this is the dialogue: how do the Spanish-speaking students learn to listen to all the wisdom that the indigenous communities have and how do the indigenous communities start to value their own wisdom from that listening. That is what we propose... because it makes students recognize the value of their culture."*



## Methodology:

The data for this study was collected through interviews in both a personal and group setting with some of the participants and a questionnaire completed by all the participants. The interview questions allowed participants to reflect on their experiences speaking and learning both languages, linguistic discrimination and the effects of IBE. The questionnaire had various parts, which collected demographic information, as well as usage data and value judgements.



## Acknowledgements:

This study could not have been possible without the help of the Pukllasunchis Association, who so kindly opened its doors to us. We would like to thank all the students and staff at the Pukllasunchis Institute who participated in the study for their warm welcome and patience throughout the study. Many thanks to Cecilia Eguiluz for her tremendous and invaluable help. We are very grateful for the support given to us by Cleveland State University and the Undergraduate Student Research Award that allowed us to complete this study.

