

VENEZUELAN PRIMARY ENGLISH:

EMPOWERING TEACHERS
AND YOUNG LEARNERS

**Robert Hutchinson
Rosa López de D'Amico**
(Editors)



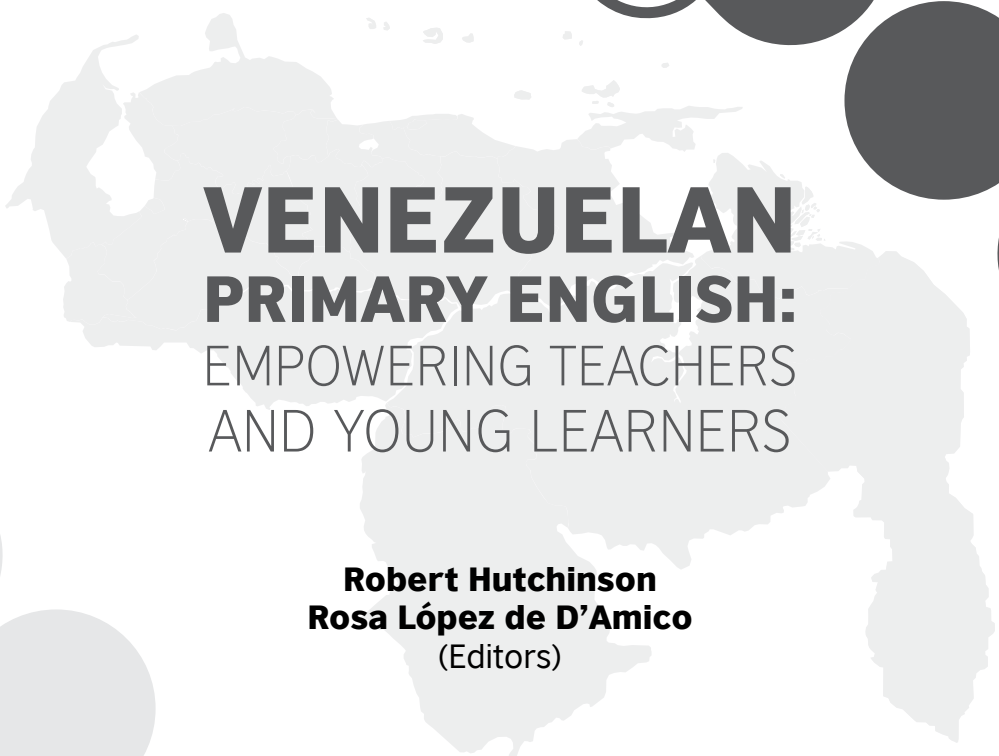
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UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL EXPERIMENTAL
DEL MAGISTERIO "SAMUEL ROBINSON"



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DEL MAGISTERIO "SAMUEL ROBINSON"

To the Memory of

Ipzent Sequera Blanco

Forever to be remembered for her
dedication, sincerity and enthusiasm

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Table of Contents

- 8 **Foreword.** *Soraya Colmenares & Belkis Bigott Suzzarini*
- 11 **Introduction of English in the Public Primary School in Venezuela (2018-2019): A Case Study.** *Juana María Sagaray C. & María Teresa Fernández D.*
- 83 **Teaching English in Primary School for Generalist Teachers.** *Rosa López de D'Amico & Nelson Morao*
- 103 **English for Primary Education: in the Voices of Teachers and Facilitators.** *Belkys Blanco, Denis Canales, Iván Lezama & Jhoanna Ruiz*
- 115 **Impact of Primary School English on School Communities.** *Johanna Romero Pizzoferrato, Yris Normarina Rivas & Franklin Prieto*
- 135 **The Role of the British Council in Teacher Training.** *Rosa López de D'Amico, Ipzent Sequera Blanco † & Jesús Medina*
- 151 **Don't forget learner resources and support for the teachers!** *Wendy Arnold*
- 163 **Contributors**

FOREWORD

Since 2014, the British Council has been actively involved in partnership with the Venezuelan Ministry of Education providing support and expertise in two programmes of the Ministry's Micromisión Simón Rodríguez to help transform the teaching of English in public sector schools. The first of these was the Programa Nacional de Formación, the PNF, an in-service teacher development specialisation course for secondary school English language teachers. Efforts are currently concentrated on the second of these programmes which aims at implementing government proposals to include English for the first time for 4th to 6th grade public primary school students. The standout feature of this plan is that English classes are taught by in-service generalist primary school teachers, graduates of a one-year, part-time postgraduate specialisation course, the Programa Nacional de Formación Avanzada, the PNFA, the National Advanced Training Programme: English for Primary Education.

Training generalist teachers who have little or no English or ELT methodology makes it particularly innovative and challenging. The idea is that these teachers will learn enough English (reaching a minimum CEFR A1 level) and Young Learner techniques to be able to share some basic English with their pupils.

The British Council contribution to this programme has been to design the syllabus for the Young Learner teaching methodology component of the programme, to provide access to the British Council's online English course to help the teachers' language development, to

train local teachers through methodological workshops as facilitators who, in turn, pass on their acquired knowledge to course participants and to produce classroom materials (Student and Teacher Books) to be used in training sessions and classroom teaching itself.

From course design to workshops to classroom materials, the British Council has called upon UK consultant expertise, and on local experts to monitor and evaluate progress. As British Council direct involvement in the project now enters its third year, we present a series of articles that capture much of the essence of the PNFA as it stands today. From an in-depth case study of teachers undergoing training, to studies that give voice to the opinions and feelings of teachers, school authorities, facilitators, parents and the young learners themselves, to an overview of the British Council involvement in and impact on the programmes, to the views of one of our UK consultants, we hope that they represent some of the enormous collective effort that has gone into the project to date.

Soraya Colmenares

Director, British Council Venezuela

Creating multiple and meaningful learning experiences is a fundamental challenge for every State that conceives education as a human right and this aim can only be made concrete when public policies are developed for all alike. In the specific case of language teaching and the development of communication processes, the incorporation of second language and foreign language learning emerges as an unavoidable initiative. Under this conviction, the Foreign Language Training Program - English for Primary Education (PNFA in Spanish) began in 2016, a free postgraduate program for teachers of the Venezuelan public schools conducted by the People's Ministry of Education in conjunction with the British Council. A similar experience

to that in the English Foreign Languages degree Program that began in 2015.

The training and research processes in this area and at this educational level yield important results regarding the democratization of access to better conditions for the comprehension of equality as a political and social principle. An initiative like this requires social consensus where the various sectors, public and private, actively participate in these projects. In this framework, a set of research papers is presented from the perspective of the participants and the assessment of the socio-educational impact that the PNFA has had on the official education of our country.

We hope, from the Universidad Nacional Experimental del Magisterio “Samuel Robinson”, that these experiences may serve as a reference for other educators concerned with the teaching of English from the early years of schooling and that the work developed in our schools helps through communication, the unity of peoples in the construction of a more humane world.

Belkis Bigott Suzzarini
*Rector Universidad Nacional Experimental
del Magisterio Samuel Robinson*

INTRODUCTION OF ENGLISH IN THE PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL IN VENEZUELA (2018-2019): A CASE STUDY

Juana María Sagaray C.
María Teresa Fernández D.

Introduction

The *Programa Nacional de Formación Avanzada* (PNFA), “English in the Primary School”, is a programme from the *Micromisión Simón Rodríguez* of the Ministry of Education supported by the British Council that started in 2016 training generalist teachers to introduce English in public primary schools in Venezuela.

Before this programme, the opportunities for children in public primary schools to have English were very limited. The language was only taught in some private institutions or in some schools, based on regional initiatives. Even though English is included in the most recent curriculum for primary schools (2007) from 4th grade to 6th grade, its implementation had not been put into place. One of the reasons has been the lack of enough specialist English teachers in the country to cover all public primary schools.

The PNFA attempts to solve this problem by training the generalist teachers to teach English to their students.

The first cohort of the PNFA graduated in 2018, and the second cohort started in the same year. In this research study, the main objective

is to analyse the impact of the second cohort of the PNFA. For this, a case study was carried out with ten generalist teachers participating in the programme.

There were class observations, interviews and surveys in order to collect data that were analysed and categorised in first order concepts and second order categories to draw assertions.

Data were organised in four sections: biographies of the teachers, class observations, interviews and tutors' surveys. After the analysis of data, findings and assertions were drawn.

Brief History

In Venezuela, the teaching of English has been compulsory in secondary school for many years but for primary it has not.

Some attempts have been made to incorporate English in the public primary school in some states such as Barinas, Carabobo, Mérida, Táchira and Vargas (Sagaray, Fernández y Rodríguez, 2007).

The first nation-wide coordinated effort to introduce English in the public primary school was an initiative by the British Council Venezuela. The Council, along with Universidad Pedagógica Experimental Libertador (UPEL), started a Diploma in English language teaching for primary school (DIPELT). It was addressed to generalist teachers who worked in the public sector and were interested in learning some English to introduce the language in their classrooms. The DIPELT lasted one school year: British specialists in young learner methodology trained facilitators who were professors in different universities and guided the writing of training materials to take generalist teachers from A₀ level of English to A₁. They also taught the methodology to teach the language to children. The Diploma did not continue, mainly because of administrative issues.

In 2016, the Ministry of Education with the cooperation of the

British Council Venezuela, started the *Programa Nacional de Formación Avanzada Lenguas Extranjeras, Inglés para la Escuela Primaria* (PNFA). This is a training programme, equivalent to a specialisation course addressed to primary school teachers. In this programme, teachers learn basic English (to reach an A1 level) and methodology to teach English to children. The training takes place on Saturdays and teachers teach what they learn during the week to their students.

The methodology is based on some principles such as: learning by doing, interaction, primacy of spoken form, PPP (presentation, practice, production), student-centred lessons and natural approach (listening, speaking, reading, writing).

The first cohort of the PNFA that started in 2016 had participants in all the states of the country. About four hundred generalist teachers graduated (López de D'Amico and Morao, 2019). Some of these teachers stayed in the programme for the 2nd cohort, now in the role of facilitators. The results of the monitoring of the 1st cohort were favourable, children and teachers are learning the language in a motivating environment. (Sagaray, Fernández y Rodríguez, 2017; 2019)

Based on continuous evaluation, some action has been taken to improve the programme. In that sense, it is worthwhile mentioning that the British Council wrote, printed and distributed student books and teacher's books for 4th, 5th and 6th grade to support the work done by the teachers in their classrooms. Likewise, basic vocabulary required by the teachers to teach the lessons has also been recorded and distributed to help teachers with pronunciation.

Besides, the British Council has organised and offered a series of training sessions for facilitators to show the methodology for teaching English to children.

Additionally, the Council granted free access to an online English course to all the participants to help them improve their English proficiency.

In this context, the second cohort for the PNFA, which is the object of this research study, started in November 2018 and scheduled to end in November 2019.

Methodology

This is a case study carried out in four stages. A first stage for planning, establishment of a log frame, selection of the teachers and designing instruments. Stages two and three were devoted to the collection of data and stage four consisted of analysing data and drawing assertions.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the impact of the programme “English in the Primary School”. To do so, emphasis was placed on ten teachers participating in the programme and all data collected derived from them.

After setting the goal, a profile of the teacher for the study was established. This profile consists of five elements:

First, a teacher who is currently working in a classroom, that is, not a teacher in an administrative post. The idea was to have a teacher who could put into practice what he or she is learning in the training.

Second, the teacher should be working with either 4th, 5th or 6th grade. The programme focuses on these grades even though teachers from other grades eventually participate. The books written for this project cover 4th, 5th and 6th grade. Besides, according to the national curriculum, English is to be introduced from 4th grade.

Third, a teacher with between 5 and 10 years of experience. The idea was to observe an average teacher, neither lacking in or with so much experience, thus avoiding extremes.

Fourth, the teacher’s age between 25 and 40 years old. Likewise, an average teacher.

Fifth, the teacher's level of English proficiency is A_0 . The teachers who participate in the programme are generalist teachers. They normally do not know English. The expectation of the programme is to raise teachers' level and their students' from A_0 to A_1 .

Once the profile of the teachers for the study was set, there was a first contact with tutors, the coordinators of the programme in each state, in order to get the list of all participants of the 2nd cohort that fulfilled the profile along with their emails and phone numbers.

Then, a survey was sent via email to all participants fitting the profile with the intention of knowing more about these teachers, their classrooms and schools, their reasons for being in the programme and their willingness to cooperate in the study.

Based on the survey, the selection of 10 teachers was made. Their geographical location was at random. These were ten teachers who fitted the profile. Then, the tutors of the states where these teachers are located were contacted to arrange a visit to their schools.

The schools were visited to make classroom observations, interview the teachers and school principals.

Then, there was a meeting with tutors of all the states. They filled in a survey about the development of the programme in their corresponding states.

When the school year was about to end, a second visit to the schools took place in which there were classroom observations and interviews to teachers, students and other members of the community (parents, janitors, ...).

Finally, the teachers were asked to write an autobiography.

To process the data, interviews were typed and translated into English. Then, an analysis of content took place in which 1st order concepts and

2nd level categories emerged. These were analysed to draw assertions.

The class-observation notes were summarised and analysed based on the emerging categories.

The autobiographies were used along with the initial survey and some details from the interviews to draw the teacher's profile.

The survey filled in by tutors was translated into English and analysed based on emerging categories.

After categorising, contrasting and analysing data, some assertions were made.

The Teachers

The teachers selected for this study work in different schools and live in different places. What they have in common is teaching practice in primary school and now their role as students (participants of the PNFA). They were selected based on the profile described above (Primary school teacher, 4 -6th grade, 5 to 10 years of experience, 25-40 years old, A₀). In order to have a wider view, teachers' personal background is briefly described as follows.

For this study, real names of the teachers were replaced by pseudonyms in order to protect confidentiality.

Maira:

She graduated at UNESR as a primary school teacher and has worked as a teacher for 5 years. Mother of a nine-year-old boy and lives with her son and parents.

She works in a rural school located on a mountain. To go there, she gets the only bus that takes staff from the town to the school. The journey takes about an hour but if it is raining it takes 2 hours. Sometimes the

bus breaks down, so they have to walk back home which takes between 5 and 6 hours on foot. If the bus is broken down for long, classes are suspended.

She faces some difficulties in her personal life like raising her child by herself, taking care of both her parents who are disabled and sick, running the house, working and attending training on Saturdays.

A colleague talked to her about the programme and she became interested as she thought this could be useful for her students. By teaching them English, they would not have so many problems when they got to secondary school because they would be more familiar with the language and that would reduce their anxiety.

She likes the programme although at times, she has wanted to quit but her facilitator and tutor are constantly encouraging her to keep on.

Her school teaches children from kindergarten to secondary school. She is currently teaching 5th grade and has 18 students in her class. She teaches English to them but also to 6th graders (11 students). She has had the chance to teach some English lessons to students in 1st and 2nd grade in the same school and she has liked it a lot. Her colleagues have asked her to teach English to all children in the primary school but she has refused because she says she has too many responsibilities being the coordinator of dance and theatre in all grades (from kindergarten to secondary level), besides she is working with the programme “*manos a la siembra*”¹

Most of students live very far from the school. They have to walk long distances. They often have the main meal at school but sometimes there is no food for the kids so they leave school earlier. Most students do not attend school if there is no food. Some students also miss classes

1. “Manos a la siembra” is a programme intended to introduce children to agriculture in their schools, so they sow and collect crops to benefit the community.

when they have to help their parents collect the crops on family land. Sometimes children drop school because they have to help their parents with agricultural labour.

Marcia:

Marcia studied her bachelor at UPEL and graduated in 2010. She is married and has two children (13 and 16 years old). She wakes up at 5.30am to prepare breakfast and lunch for her family since she works at school from 7 to 2pm.

Both of her children are already in secondary school so they help her to study English at home and prepare materials for her lessons. They have shown not only support but pride to see her learning and communicating in the language.

She learnt about the programme through her colleagues at school who were participants in the 1st cohort. They invited her to join the programme and so she did.

At the beginning, she felt nervous. She felt as if she were going back to secondary school but when she started having classes, she felt much better and relaxed. Nowadays she enjoys the training sessions. She has established a connection with the other participants and they have supported each other.

She works at a Bolivarian primary school. She has been teaching in this school for 7 years. She has taught 6th, 1st and 3rd grades; currently she does not have a group but works with different groups teaching them “education for work”. In this school, they have a radio station. The school produces the programs that are broadcast to the community. Some children have decided to record some short radio programs to teach basic vocabulary in English based on what they are learning.

At the beginning, the children were a little nervous and anxious to have English but then they were enthusiastic and always willing to participate and have English lessons all the time.

Celia:

Celia studied education at Universidad Bolivariana de Venezuela and graduated in 2010. She had started other courses in other universities but economic issues made her drop. She has three children.

She works at a public primary school near her house. This school is located in a poor area that suffers constant threats of flood during the rainy season.

She had seen the information on the web and tried to register two years ago but unsuccessfully. Last year, some colleagues told her that the programme would start in a school in her community and she attended and that is how she became part of the second cohort of the PNFA.

In the programme, at the beginning, she felt insecure, had doubts whether she was going to be able to participate because they had said participants would need internet access. She does not have internet at home or at school, she needs to go to a cybercafé. She also had troubles with pronunciation that made her feel bad but her facilitator helped her to feel better, she encouraged her to keep going on. She says that now she feels better, that a connection between her and the other participants has emerged, and that they help each other and have a good training environment.

At the beginning, she tried to work with the three sections of 5th grade in the school but it was difficult to arrange the groups and schedules so she started teaching her group only (5th A). Other teachers of the school had started the training with her but for different reasons they dropped. She and a kindergarten teacher are the only ones who remain from this school (2 out of 6). After some months in the programme, one

day when trying to teach English to her group of students, there was noise outside the classroom that disturbed the class. It was a group of students of 3rd grade who were working on a bulletin board. The teacher asked 3rd graders to join the English class so they could continue. After this beginning, the 3rd-grade students were energetically demanding to continue with the English lessons so the teachers accepted and now both groups join to have English class together once a week. The 3rd grade teacher also participates in the lesson, helps the teacher to develop the activities and she is learning as well.

Children have shown enthusiasm and eagerness to learn. They participate and help the teacher make the resources for the English lessons. They want more, they come with questions and they feel proud to know some English. Their parents have also got involved in the program by helping with the resources and motivating children at home.

José:

He studied in the school where he teaches right now. The school is in an area with problems with services (water, gas...) and delinquency. He is a former soldier but decided to study education because he thinks education can change lives and the country. He graduated as a Primary School teacher at UPEL.

He got to know about the programme because one of the facilitators came to his school to promote the PNFA. He was the only teacher from this school to join the programme. He did it because he thinks English is good for the children. They will have more opportunities to succeed if they learn the language.

He says he feels well in the programme. He thinks the PNFA has helped him be a better teacher. The facilitators are very good and have helped him learn new strategies, games and resources to work with the children.

Since January most of teachers in his school were on a strike, including him. He quit the strike in May. By that time, the training had advanced but he had not been able to teach English to the children.

He teaches his group of 4th grade. Every week, when there are English lessons, other children from other grades (from kindergarten to 6th grade) come to the window to observe the class from the outside. Sometimes, they entered the classroom and join the group to participate in the activities.

Parents from his class and from other grades are signing a petition to request English for other students. They want the teacher to go to all the classrooms to teach English.

They love English. They want English class every day. They love songs and competitions. The teacher says he likes students to move during the lesson so he incorporates games that make students stand, move, run, jump while learning the language. The children also enjoy singing so he creates songs for all sets of vocabulary they are learning (colours, animals, numbers, letters, classroom objects...). He compares his English class with physical education, he says students love both because they do something different than copying from the board.

Laura:

She studied at Universidad Pedagógica Experimental Libertador (UPEL) and graduated in 2013. She decided to study to be a teacher because she liked children and loves to teach. She works in a rural area. The community where the school is located lacks services like water, gas, paved streets; a big issue is delinquency and vandalism. She is married and has two kids (3 and 4 years old).

She knew about the programme through a colleague who invited her to join and even registered her.

She says that she likes it. She has always liked English but did not

have any chance to study it. It was her favourite subject in secondary school. She thinks to study in this programme is a personal and professional challenge because she needs time to practise the language and that is something difficult for her but makes the effort to find some time to practise and prepare the lessons and materials. She had quit the programme because she had family issues but her facilitators and partners encouraged her to continue. She admits it is not easy to study right now because the situation is difficult but she says that thanks to her facilitators, partners and family she feels more encouraged to keep going.

In her school, all teachers were on a strike since January. She abandoned the strike by the end of February. By then, she had already started the training and was behind in the English lessons in her school. She gradually covered all the content by teaching English twice or three times a week. The children are motivated. They show her they want to learn English. Parents have also been supportive; they like the idea that their children are learning English.

Martha:

She is a primary school teacher graduated in 2010. She is married and has two children (9 and 5 years old).

She got to know about the programme through Facebook where she saw the invitation to participate in the programme and the link to join. She thought this was a wonderful idea. The following day she talked to her colleagues in the school about it and registered.

She says that her experience in the programme has been satisfactory and rewarding, the students have been receptive, they are anxious and have great expectations to learn a new language. She has faced difficulties especially because sometimes she does not have enough money to pay the bus fare so she has to walk long distances to get to the training centre but her facilitators encourage her to continue.

Reina:

She is a primary school teacher. She struggled to get her degree because she had lots of family issues. These issues made her move and change to another school. She has three children (17, 9 and 7 years old).

She has been working in her new school for about 11 months. It was a challenge for her because this was a new school, with new colleagues, new group of children and English was new for them. The PNFA has helped her adapt better and have a closer relationship with her students.

She got to know about the PNFA because her colleague friends from her former school called her to invite her to join. She accepted and has loved the experience. She feels she is doing something special for her new students who at the beginning were really shy and did not participate but after she started the English lessons, they have changed their behaviour, now they want to participate and look enthusiastic.

In the programme she says she feels very well. She even says that this programme came to her life in the right moment because it has helped her focus more on her career and she feels better.

Yanitza:

She is a Primary school teacher graduated from UPEL in 2004. She has two children and lives with them and her mother who is sick. She has to take care of her mother and children.

She got to know about the programme through the Ministry of Education webpage and registered online.

Since she started the programme, she has felt very well. The environment in the training is very pleasant. She has had difficulties with pronunciation but the facilitators are supportive and she has tried to find extra material like YouTube videos and online dictionaries to improve her pronunciation.

She teaches 5th grade and has 18 students in her class. She has a problem with student attendance. The average attendance is between 6 and 8 students and they are not the same every day. The ones who come participate in the activities, enjoy the games and the songs and help the teacher create the resources for the English lesson.

Ruth:

She is a primary school teacher graduated from Universidad Bolivariana de Venezuela in 2008.

She is the mother of a teenager and lives with him and her husband in a house near the school.

She got to know about the programme through a colleague who invited her to register.

She currently teaches 4th grade and her students have been very receptive. They are eager to participate in the activities and ask her to have English lessons every day

Classroom observations

There were two classroom observations per teacher. The first observations took place in April. The training in some places started in December and some others in January. From January to April there were some issues that caused interruptions in the training and the school classes. To name some: at the beginning of March there was a national blackout that lasted about a week and all activities were suspended for about two weeks. At the end of March, there was a second national blackout that lasted about two days and caused interruption of all activities. After activities were resumed, hours of classes were reduced from 5 to 3 hours in most public schools around the country because electricity was not re-established completely so there were daily blackouts at different hours. This obstacle affected both the classes in the school and the training.

Besides this, some teachers were on strike so they were not teaching but only attending training. The idea of the training is to learn language and methodology on Saturdays and put into practice what has been learnt during the week with their students in school but that was not possible in some cases. Some teachers quit the strike in April and this is when they started teaching English to children. This coincides with the first observation.

It means that for the first observation, even though it was in April, for one of the teachers it was the first English lesson, for the others one of the first lessons.

The second observations took place in June. Between the first and second visit, there was about two months in time but not necessarily two months of training and practice because there were other interruptions. For example, in May there was scarcity of fuel in the whole country causing problems with transportation. This caused irregular attendance of students, teachers, facilitators.

Maira (1st class)

<i>1st observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 25/04/19
Grade: 5 th grade	Duration: 45 minutes
Children:	Enthusiastic. Participative
The Teacher:	Enthusiastic, positive body language
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Visual, colourful, adapted to the content
Type of interaction:	T-St

Something remarkable from this class was the enthusiasm of both the teacher and the students. The arrangement of the classroom was

favourable for the lesson, students were sitting in a horseshoe shape. The teacher used visual resources like a colourful alphabet that students were able to see and touch. The teacher used appropriate body language to reinforce some vocabulary (commands). Students participated and had a responsive attitude. The students wanted to learn new words and continuously asked the teacher.

However, this class did not have a clear distinction between beginning, development and closure. The class started with a choral repetition of the alphabet and was followed by a sequence of activities related to a variety of topics (greetings, introductions and commands). This was a review. The class ended with a game.

During the lesson, the teacher presented vocabulary accompanied by translations that were copied on the board. Not only the vocabulary and translation but also the way words sound in Spanish were copied. Children spent 20 minutes copying from the board.

The type of interaction presented in this class was exclusively teacher-students. No pair work or group work took place.

The teacher said the words in English and students repeated; however, some words were mispronounced by the teacher and thus by the students.

This lesson showed that the teacher and the students are in progress. There is a willingness to learn and teach the language and this is seen in the teacher's and students' attitude in the class.

Maira (2nd class)

2nd observation to this teacher	Date: 06/06/2019
Grade: 5 th grade	Duration: 45 minutes
Children:	They participated, they were attentive.
The Teacher:	She looked confident.
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Colourful wordcards, poster, books
Type of interaction:	T-St

Similarly to her first class, most of the students show interest in the new content, they wanted to participate and answer the teacher's questions. The resources used by the teacher (wordcards and poster) were colourful, legible, appealing. The teacher used the students' books to show the pictures about family members.

This time the class consisted of at least two distinguishable phases (beginning and development); the closure was not seen because after the bell rang, the class ended abruptly and students left the classroom.

The teacher placed wordcards related to family members on the board, then she read the wordcards in English and orally translated the word in Spanish. The poster was not used, only shown on the board. The teacher asked the students to copy the new vocabulary from the board. Children spent several minutes copying.

Even though the original topic of the class was family members, she then included occupations and took some minutes to work on personal pronouns in isolation. Children had problems to follow the teacher.

The interaction was solely teacher-students. The teacher said the members of the family in Spanish and elicited the words in English. There was some mispronunciation.

Ruth (1st class)

<i>1st observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 24/04/19
Grade: 4 th grade	Duration: 30 minutes
Children:	They were attentive and expectative. They participated and showed previous knowledge
The Teacher:	She was calm
Classroom Arrangement:	Traditional arrangement (rows and columns)
Resources:	Poster about the family
Type of interaction:	T-Sts

The teacher started the class with a song about colours. The children already knew the colours and the song. It was a review of previous topics. The teacher pointed at a poster related to the family and the children said the words aloud. After this, she copied on the board personal pronouns and “verb to be”. She asked the students to copy. Then, she explained how to ask and answer questions. There was no closure.

The students showed previous knowledge and mastery of the content (colours, family members). They were enthusiastic when singing the song at the beginning of the lesson.

The interaction was teacher-students. The teacher asked questions and the students answered. The classroom arrangement did not favour interaction. The grammar was explained in isolation with no communicative purpose.

The teacher mispronounced some words. This mispronunciation was repeated by children.

Ruth (2nd class)

During the second visit to this teacher, observation of the English lesson was not possible. The teacher explained that she had not taught English to the children for some weeks because she had not received training. In her training centre, there was only one facilitator but she quit so the group could not continue in the training because of lack of facilitator. She was informed that they would have a new facilitator in a few days.

Elvira (1st class)

<i>1st observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 26/04/19
Grade: 5th	Duration: 45 minutes
Children:	Enthusiastic
The Teacher:	Confident,
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Wordcards
Type of interaction:	T-Sts

The class consisted of a series of activities to review content (greetings, commands, farewell, numbers, letters). The teacher ended the class with a game reviewing numbers. The children enjoyed the game because they stood up, all of them participated and they mingled around the class.

The children showed previous knowledge. The type of interaction was always teacher-students. The teacher asked questions and the students answered the questions eagerly. There was neither group work nor pair work in this class.

The teacher showed wordcards with the greetings, children read them aloud and she elicited the translation in Spanish of each.

Elvira (2nd class)

<i>2nd observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 07/06/19
Grade:	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	They participated
The Teacher:	She looked confident, she praised students
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Only the board and marker
Type of interaction:	T-sts

The teacher and the children had a positive attitude in the class. The teacher showed herself confident and praised the students for their answers. The children participated in all the activities.

She copied on the board three columns: Vocabulary, Pronunciation, Meaning. She wrote the family members on the board and how these words sounded in English, she elicited the translation in Spanish from the children and copied the translation on the board.

This class had no distinction between beginning, development and closure. The only resources used were the board and a marker. The type of interaction was always teacher-students. The teacher asked questions or elicited the translations and the students reacted.

Reina (1st class)

<i>1st observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 09/05/19
Grade:	Duration: 45 minutes
Children:	Happy, enthusiastic.
The Teacher:	Good attitude.
Classroom Arrangement:	Traditional arrangement (rows and columns)
Resources:	Flashcards, wordcards, poster.
Type of interaction:	T-St

This class had clear stages (beginning, development and closure). The teacher started the class with a song to review weather. For the development, she used flashcards and wordcards related to the weather. Children were given either a wordcard or a flashcard. They stood up and found their corresponding partner. The teacher asked questions to the whole class using the children's flashcards, children answered, she elicited the translation. Then, she used a poster to introduce the new vocabulary (the seasons). She asked the children about the weather during the seasons. She ended the class with a game matching weather and seasons. Children enjoyed the activities and participated energetically.

The type of interaction was teacher-students. The teacher asked questions and the students answered chorally. The students were sitting in a traditional arrangement in rows.

The teacher used some phrases in English for the instructions like: repeat after me, listen, stand up, sit down.

Reina (2nd class)

2nd observation to this teacher	Date: 20/06/19
Grade:	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Quiet, attentive
The Teacher:	Nervous
Classroom Arrangement:	Traditional arrangement (rows and columns)
Resources:	Big book, cards with phrases
Type of interaction:	T-St

The class started with the teacher introducing the topic (daily routines) in Spanish. Then, she showed students a big book about routines. She showed the images and the phrases in English from the big book, said them, and asked students to repeat and elicited the translations from the students. The teacher had problems pronouncing some words, the children repeated the words as the teacher said them. When she finished reading with the students, she started over again asking them the translation of every phrase.

Then, the teacher gave each child at random a card with one of the phases related to the daily routines (wake up, have breakfast, go to school, take a shower...).

Then she asked students in Spanish questions about what people do first in the morning and asked the students with the corresponding card to stand up in front of the class showing it. They were standing in order as the teacher was asking questions. When all the students were standing in order holding the cards, she asked students to read in chorus the daily routines shown in the cards: wake up, have breakfast, go to school, take a shower... This is how the class ended.

Martha (1st class)

<i>1st observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 09/05/19
Grade:	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Enthusiastic
The Teacher:	Enthusiastic
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Radio, flashcards
Type of interaction:	T-Sts

The teacher started the class playing a song about animals. She gave a flashcard to some children and they stood up in front of the class. All children listened to the song, sang it and clapped. When the animals in the flashcards were mentioned in the song, the child with the flashcard raised it, showed it to everybody while dancing. The song was played several times and all the children sang and clapped. The teacher also sang, clapped and danced encouraging children. They all looked very happy.

After the song, the teacher showed the flashcards and elicited the name of the animal. Children answered chorally and energetically. The teacher added more flashcards of other animals that were not mentioned in the song.

The teacher wrote on the board the name of the animal in Spanish and English. She asked the children to copy from the board.

After this, the teacher asked the children “What have we learnt so far?” The children mentioned all the animals they practised (song, flashcard, board)

Then, the students played a game: Pictionary (drawing animals on the board and guessing the animal).

Then, the teacher brought a huge crossword that she pasted on the board and asked volunteers to fill in with the corresponding animals. That is how the class ended.

Martha (2nd class)

2nd observation to this teacher	Date: 20/06/19
Grade:	Duration: 1hour
Children:	Happy, excited, active
The Teacher:	Dynamic, enthusiastic.
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Speakers, audio device, flashcards and wordcards.
Type of interaction:	T-st

The class started with a song. The song was about fruits and days of the week. Some students were standing in front of the class holding a flashcard (fruits) or a wordcard (days of the week) and every time the song mentioned either the fruit or the day of the week the student holding the card moved forward showing it. All the class sang.

After this, the teacher showed flashcards related to food and drinks and said the words aloud. She asked the children to repeat.

Then, the teacher asked four volunteers to stand up and they made two groups. She displayed some flashcards on a desk and explained to them the game: they had to pick as many flashcards as possible to prepare a meal. She gave them 30 seconds to do that. Then, each group explained their meal (e.g. coffee, milk, bread and egg). The children showed their flashcards and said aloud the items. The teacher repeated until all students had passed. This is how the class ended.

Marcia (1st class)

1st observation to this teacher	Date: 24/04/2019
Grade: 4 th	Duration: 1hour
Children:	Enthusiastic, they wanted to participate vigorously
The Teacher:	Enthusiastic.
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Visual resources like flashcards, wordcards, posters, realia.
Type of interaction:	t-Sts

Something remarkable from this class was the children's interest in participating. All the children raised their hands to answer the questions, some of them were so anxious to participate that they stood up from the chairs to raise their hands higher and be considered for the teacher. Some children wanted to answer even before the teacher finished the questions. They looked happy, they wanted to show how much they knew.

This class was a review of the content taught so far (greetings, numbers, colours, animals). No clear class phases were distinguished (beginning, development, closure), it was more a set of activities about the different topics. The activities were varied: they included an adaptation of a traditional song (*Los Chimichimitos*) to practise vocabulary related to animals. Some children stood up holding flashcards with animals; they sang, danced and showed the flashcard when their animal was mentioned. The rest of the class sang. They also had matching on the board, the teacher stuck flashcards and wordcards with numbers (in digits and letters) and volunteers drew a line to match the number.

The interaction was teacher-students. The teacher asked questions and the students answered either chorally or individually (one by one).

The teacher reviewed numbers, pointing at their flashcard on the board and saying the number in Spanish, then in English and asking the students to repeat. The same happened with the classroom objects: the teacher pointed at the object, said the name in Spanish, then in English and asked students to repeat.

Marcia (2nd class)

2nd observation to this teacher	Date: 05/06/19
Grade: 4 th	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Enthusiastic, eager to participate
The Teacher:	Confident
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Flashcards, the board
Type of interaction:	T-St

In this class, all students wanted to participate, even students with special learning needs stood up, went to the board and answered a question. The teacher gave all students a chance to go to the board.

This class showed the three phases: beginning, development, closure. The teacher started activating students' previous knowledge about the topic: jobs and occupation.

The teacher wrote a list of occupations on the board in English and asked the students to say what they think these words mean in English. After, she pointed to the words and asked students to say them in English. If they mispronounced the words, she corrected them. Then,

she stuck the flashcards on the board.

She pointed at the flashcards and elicited the occupations. The students called out the occupations in Spanish. Then, she made a gesture and asked the students to say them in English.

The teacher used the flashcards and wrote the name of the occupations for the students to do a matching on the board. They all wanted to participate.

The class finished with a word search game, the teacher wrote the letters on the board and the students found and circled the words.

Celia (1st class)

<i>1st observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 26/04/2019
Grade: 5th	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Shy, nervous
The Teacher:	Nervous, tense
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Made by the students (flashcards)
Type of interaction:	T-Sts, Sts-sts

In this class there were two types of interaction. Most of the activities were marked by teacher-students interaction but some included student-student type, specifically pair work.

The resources used in this class were made by the students and the teacher, they consisted of flashcards and models of landscapes.

The teacher stuck flashcards and wordcards under the chairs. The children picked the resources and moved around the classroom to find

the corresponding partner.

The class was a review. The students showed they knew vocabulary and structures but they were shy and nervous. The teacher was tense. She had problems pronouncing some words. The students imitated the mispronunciation.

There was a student with special learning needs. She stood up to do an activity with a partner; her partner asked her a question and she answered in front of the class. The teacher was surprised because this child had never participated before.

Celia (2nd class)

2nd observation to this teacher	Date: 07/06/2019
Grade: 5 th and 3 rd grade	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Excited
The Teacher:	Enthusiastic
Classroom Arrangement:	Double horseshoe
Resources:	Flashcards and wordcards about food and drinks.
Type of interaction:	T-Sts

Children from 5th grade went to the 3rd grade classroom. Both groups were integrated. The students were having the class together.

The class started with the teacher reviewing commands. She asked the students to do the actions, she said: "sit down, stand up..."

Then she showed flashcards about food and drinks, said the words aloud and asked students to repeat. After she showed all the flashcards and practised pronunciation, she showed all the flashcards again, said

the word, asked students to repeat and showed them the wordcards.

After that, the teacher numbered students 1, 2 to make two groups, (thanks to this grouping technique, students from 3rd and 5th grade got together). One group received the wordcards and the other group received the flashcards. Then, the teacher asked students to move around the class to match the wordcard and the flashcard. They mingled and found their partner. Then, each pair said the word they had aloud.

The class ended with the game “Hot potato”. The teacher used two flashcards and asked the children to pass them in different directions. The teacher turned and said, “hot potato, hot potato... stop”, when she said “stop”, the children who had the flashcards had to say the name of the food aloud. Then, the teacher changed the flashcards for two new ones and said, “hot potato...”. The children were very excited. Suddenly the bell rang, children got frozen for some seconds, they looked at each other and said, “let’s continue playing”, so they got back to the game.

Some teachers from other classes entered the classroom and children greeted them in English. The cooks entered to bring children some hot milk and the children greeted them in English and said “thank you” in English to them.

The teacher asked the students before they left the classroom for recess, “What did we do today?” Some children replied, “we learnt the names of food”, “we played games”, “we learnt English”.

Laura (1st class)

<i>1st observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 09/05/19
Grade: 5 th	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Shy at the beginning, then, they wanted to participate
The Teacher:	Organised, steady
Classroom Arrangement:	3 rows of tables
Resources:	Poster, wordcards
Type of interaction:	Teacher-students

The teacher started the class greeting students in English and they stood up and replied to her in English as well. After the greetings, she told students riddles in Spanish related to the topic (family).

She introduced new vocabulary using a poster about family members. After repeating the vocabulary, she pointed and elicited the name of the family members in English. Then, the teacher asked the students to draw their family. After that, the teacher showed wordcards and read them aloud; she asked students to repeat. Then, some volunteers stuck the wordcards on the poster (matching image and word). The class ended with a song about family members.

The students were eager to participate. When the teacher asked for volunteers, they all wanted to come to the front. They produced very creative drawings about their family and sang energetically.

Laura (2nd class)

2nd observation to this teacher	Date: 20/06/2019
Grade: 5 th	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Energetic, willing to participate
The Teacher:	Steady, quiet
Classroom Arrangement:	Traditional sitting arrangement: rows and columns.
Resources:	Posters, flashcards
Type of interaction:	T-St

This class was a summary of all what the children had learnt so far. The children had short presentations to show mastery of vocabulary like the alphabet, the numbers, family members, weather, seasons, days of the week, jobs and occupations.

The children stood up individually in front of the class to show what they knew with the help of resources like posters, flashcards and wordcards.

After all the children had shown the content, the teacher asked volunteers questions regarding the content and all wanted to speak. They showed mastery of the content but some minor problems with pronunciation of some words.

José (1st class)

1st observation to this teacher	Date: 02/05/2019
Grade: 4 th	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Enthusiastic, excited
The Teacher:	Quiet, steady.
Classroom Arrangement:	3 groups
Resources:	Board and colour chalks, Classroom objects, a backpack
Type of interaction:	T-St

The teacher arranged the tables in three groups. He gave each group a name of a famous artist (Bad bunny, Naty Natasha and Ozuna). It had an effect on children because it was noticeable they were happy to have these names in their groups.

He started with a song about the colours in chorus. Children were in the process of learning them. They listened to the teacher and tried to follow; the teacher sang the song twice. The second time, some children remembered some words of the song.

Then, the teacher asked each group calling out the name of the artist that identified each group to sing the song. He was supporting them when they did not remember some words. He made it like a competition, encouraging the groups to remember the song. It worked, they all sang most of the song.

The teacher drew on the board some clouds with the name of the colour inside using different colour chalk (yellow, green, pink, blue and white). He pointed and said the name, asked the students to repeat. Then he pointed to the desk and other objects to incorporate brown, red and black.

The teacher took a student's backpack and elicited the colours in it by pointing (yellow, red and blue). Students said the words. He elicited the colours using classroom objects, shoes, walls, ceiling... Students showed they knew the vocabulary.

Then, the teacher asked the children to draw and colour a landscape in their notebooks and next to each element they had to write the name of the colour. For example, next to the sun they wrote the word "yellow". The teacher moved around the classroom to monitor and support students. That was the end of the class.

José (2nd class)

2nd observation to this teacher	Date: 20/06/19
Grade: 4 th	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Active, happy, energetic
The Teacher:	Enthusiastic, active
Classroom Arrangement:	Semicircle
Resources:	Poster
Type of interaction:	T-Sts

This class was a review. The class started with a song the teacher created related to greetings in English. The students knew it by heart. There was a point when the teacher forgot the lyrics and it was the children who continued singing. The song is an adaptation of a song in Spanish.

Then, the children played a clapping game. It was an adaptation of a traditional clapping game in Spanish but this time using vocabulary of the colours in English. The teacher showed his fingers eliciting numbers in English.

During the class children from other grades stood at the window from the outside seeing the class. Then, the teacher asked two volunteers to draw a hopscotch court on the classroom floor using chalk. Children were placed in teams and a member from each team went jumping all the steps saying the numbers in English from 1 to 10 and then backwards (from 10 to 1).

The teacher asked the children to sing the song of the alphabet. They all did it in chorus. Then, the teacher pointed the letters at random in a poster and students shout out the letter.

During the whole class, the children were eager to participate. The class finished with students singing a song about family members. When the class finished, some children from other classes were inside the classroom participating as well.

Yanitza (1st class)

<i>1st observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 25/04/19
Grade: 5 th grade	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Quiet
The Teacher:	Enthusiastic
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Poster of the family
Type of interaction:	T-Sts

The class has 17 students but the average of attendees is 7. In this class, 6 students attended.

The class started with brain gym activities. The teacher asked the students to do a series of activities like “touch your left ear with your right hand”, “stretch your arms”.

The teacher started asking students questions in Spanish about the children's family to introduce the class. Then, she showed a poster of the family and pointed at each member, saying the word aloud and asking students to repeat.

Then, she pointed at the members and elicited the words from the students. After this, the teacher asked the students to draw their family tree in their notebooks. This is how the class ended.

Yanitza (2nd class)

<i>2nd observation to this teacher</i>	Date: 06/06/2019
Grade: 5 th	Duration: 1 hour
Children:	Enthusiastic, happy, excited
The Teacher:	Enthusiastic
Classroom Arrangement:	Horseshoe
Resources:	Flashcards, recycled paper, scissors, crayons.
Type of interaction:	T-St

The class started with the teacher greeting the students in English. They all replied in English. She announced that the class was going to be about animals.

She showed flashcards and wordcards at the same time and said the words aloud. She asked students to repeat. While introducing the new vocabulary, she asked the children questions in Spanish like "Who likes chicken?", "Who has got a dog at home?" in order to relate the new content to the children's own lives.

After presenting the new vocabulary, the teacher asked the students to stand up and told them they were going to play a game to improve

their memory. She asked the kids to make two lines and displayed the flashcards (animals) on a desk. She pointed at each flashcard and said the word aloud, the children repeated. She asked questions like: "What colour is the dog?", recycling previous content. Then, she asked the children in front of the line to memorise the place where each flashcard was. She counted 5 seconds and covered the child's eyes. Then, she said the name of an animal and the child had to try to pick up the corresponding flashcard. She did the same with the first child of the other line. After that, she moved the position of the flashcards and asked the children to pick the flashcard. The children got really excited with this game. After all children had passed, they asked the teacher to have a second round, she accepted.

After she finished the game, she kept the flashcards on the desk and asked the students in Spanish how many animals there were on the desk, she invited them to answer in English. She collected some flashcards and asked the question again; the children were excited to answer quickly. She reviewed several numbers with this activity.

The teacher asked children to sit down and drew on the board an animal, she gave some tips to the children on how to draw some animals. Then she asked them to draw one of the animals she showed them. They drew the animals, coloured them, cut the figure and pasted it on another piece of paper to be included in the students' folders. That is how the class finished.

In all the lessons observed, there was a common factor and it was the enthusiasm children showed to learn the new language. This was evidenced by their willingness to participate in the activities and multiple questions they had about unknown vocabulary. They looked happy while playing games and singing songs.

Some classes were dynamic and enjoyable because of the use of games and songs, colourful resources and activities that made the children have an active participation. The classroom arrangement was in most cases

favourable either by horseshoe arrangement or groups. However, some classrooms still have the traditional arrangement (rows and columns).

Some teachers incorporated children's previous knowledge of the language (recycling) and some made efforts to connect the new content to the children's own life.

Children showed mastery of the content taught. They looked confident using the target language (greetings, talking about their family, animals, jobs and occupations, the weather, etc.)

The resources used in the lessons were appropriate to the content, the level of students and age. They were made of recycled materials, some of them by the teachers, some by parents and some by children.

A recurrent difficulty found by teachers is pronunciation of the target language. They mispronounced some words and the students repeated them.

There is also a tendency to translate into Spanish. Teachers used Spanish to make sure students are getting the content even though they were using flashcards or posters, thus minimising the effectiveness of the resources in this way.

In some cases, the teachers wrote the target language on the board, translation into Spanish and the way it sounds. This is time consuming because teachers take long copying on the board so the children. It could be confusing for them having three different written forms for each word (English, Spanish and pronunciation).

The type of interaction was mostly Teacher-students. Pair work or groups work was hardly seen. Even though the classroom arrangement favoured student-student interaction, it did not always occur. It was the teacher telling students what to do, asking questions to them in chorus or individually, asking them to go to the board, to show something, to point or say.

Interviews

The teachers had face-to-face interviews in both visits. They occurred immediately after the class observed. What follows is a categorisation of the interviews, the teachers' responses and emerging 1st order concepts and 2nd order categories.

Question 1: How have you felt in the programme?

Maira: I have been a bit scared because I feel I have lots of problems with pronunciation. I have thought of quitting because of this but my facilitator has helped me a lot and always motivates me to keep going. First order concepts: Scared, motivation.

Elvira: I have felt very well. I feel I'm learning new things every saturday. First order concepts: Well, learning.

Reina: I have fallen in love with this programme, we have worked with new strategies, we learn a lot there and all this motivation we take it to our classroom. First order concepts: Love, new strategies, learn, motivation.

Martha: I love it. I put into practice what I'm learning and I feel the children enjoy it. They love the songs and the games. First order concepts: Love, learning, put into practice, children enjoy.

Ruth: I like this programme. We all enjoy and have a good time during the training. This programme gives us the chance of growing as teachers because of the different strategies we learn. First order concepts: Enjoy, strategies, learn.

Marcia: Excellent! At the beginning I was scared because it was English. In secondary school I was terrible at English but now I feel a connection with English. I'm not afraid anymore. First order concepts: Scared, connection.

Celia: I feel well because I feel more motivated to teach my children. I'm doing different activities and they are motivated and that makes me feel proud and satisfied for what I am doing. First order concepts: Well, motivation, activities, teach.

Laura: I feel very well. First order concepts: Well.

José: very well. The programme is excellent. I think it is a light in the darkness that we are living in this country right now, to teach English to children, to teach them something new. First order concepts: Well, teach.

Yanitza: I feel well. It has been a challenge to be here because I wasn't expecting to study English. I didn't like it because of the traditional way it was taught but now through this programme I have seen a big change in the teaching of English so I felt committed and now I like it. First order concepts: Well, teaching, like, commitment.

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Second order categories: Fear. Motivation: children enjoy, they enjoy, like. Learning. Teaching: new strategies, put into practice, activities.

Comments: There are two focuses here: On the one hand, there is an affective force that moves the teacher. They feel motivated, they feel comfortable and satisfied with what they are doing. On the other hand, there is a cognitive force. They are learning English and strategies as well though the emphasis on their responses lies in the methodology more than the language itself.

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Question 2: How have you felt teaching English in your classroom?

Maira: I feel really good. Children are motivated. They want to learn more and more. First order concepts: Motivation, learn more.

Elvira: It hasn't been easy because of the circumstances we have lived as a country but my experience in the classroom has been favourable. First order concepts: *Not easy, circumstances (country), favourable.*

Reina: I have felt well. I have put into practice all the strategies I have learnt in the training. The children love it. They want more and more. They want English classes every day. First order concepts: *Strategies, learn, want more.*

Ruth: Children learn quickly. As we learn, they are also learning and we both are helping each other. First order concepts: *Learn, learning together.*

Marcia: Excellent. All kids participate. We make resources together. First order concepts: *Participation, resources, together.*

Celia: I feel more confident every day. As I practice, I feel more confident. First order concepts: *Confident, practice.*

Laura: I feel well although pronunciation has been a little bit difficult for me but I've tried to manage it and my children have been considerate. First order concepts: *Pronunciation (problem), difficult.*

José: In the class, excellent. Children enjoy the English class a lot. We always create a song for each content. Children love songs and competitions. First order concepts: *Enjoy, create (together), songs, competition.*

Yanitza: It has been good because I have used flashcards and wordcards. My problem is pronunciation, I try to watch YouTube videos to improve my pronunciation and my facilitators also help me with it. First order concepts: *Flashcards, wordcards, pronunciation (problem), help.*

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Second order categories: Motivation: to learn more, participation, enjoy, competition. Difficulties: pronunciation, circumstance of the country

Comments: There is a mutual learning, that is, they are learning and their students are learning as well, they are helping each other. A remarkable element in their classes is the use of strategies and resources learnt in their training which make the class different increasing students' motivation and participation.

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Question 3: Have you got any obstacle to participate in the PNFA?

Maira: The main obstacle for me is the pronunciation. I wanted to quit the program because I didn't know how to pronounce the words but my facilitator and tutor encouraged me to continue. The other problem is that children miss classes for different reasons. Sometimes it is because there is not food at school. When there is no food, attendance is really low. Sometimes during harvest time, parents take children with them to collect the crops so they don't come to school and it is difficult to follow a sequence. First order concepts: Pronunciation, attendance.

Elvira: Electricity has been a problem. With the blackouts we have missed classes in school and in the training. Once we resumed classes, the hours of school were reduced to 3 hours a day. I'd like to teach them English everyday but time is very limited because from these 3 hours, half an hour is taken for singing the national anthem and cultural activities, then the students have a thirty- minute break, so in two hours, it is difficult to teach all the subjects including English. First order concepts: Electricity, hours of classes.

Reina: Pronunciation has been my main obstacle Pronunciation. First order concepts: Pronunciation.

Martha: Resources because although they are made of recycled material, sometimes it is difficult to find glue, crayons, scissors, markers. We help each other and that's how we solve it. Parents also help and bring some things. Another obstacle for me is to get to the training centre. If I took public transportation, I would take two buses to go and two more to come back but it is difficult for me to get cash to pay the fares so I walk. I leave home very early to get to the training on time.
First order concepts: Resources, money/cash for the bus.

Ruth: Pronunciation. We need to put into practice pronunciation. If we don't do it well, children won't do it well either. The other problem is electricity, it is a backwardness. We miss lots of classes because of the blackouts. English is like maths if you don't practice, you lose it. First order concepts: Pronunciation, electricity.

Marcia: so far, none. First order concepts: None.

Celia: There are many obstacles. For example, the social problems we are facing have prevented us from attending regularly because if there is not transportation, we can't get to the training centre; if there isn't electricity, we can't use the video beam, these are obstacles that we try to overcome everyday but anyways affect us. Another obstacle is money because even if you do not want to spend money and try to recycle as much as possible, there is always an expense, especially if you like to do things well. First order concepts: Transportation, electricity, money.

Laura: The economic situation, the materials. Money is not enough. My husband is the provider in my house, he's a taxi driver but he had an accident and the car is destroyed now. I was going to quit the programme because of this. I need extra money for the bus fare, for the resources,... but the facilitator advised me to stay, she and my partners have helped me a lot. First order concepts: Economic situation, materials, bus fare.

José: I have a problem with the attendance of students. They do not come regularly to school because of the situation of the country. The

students who come today are not the same that will come tomorrow so what I teach today, I have to teach it again tomorrow, then it is difficult to progress. When there isn't food here(at school), it is worse because children hardly come. First order concepts: Attendance, development of content affected.

Yanitza: the fact that the training is on Saturdays because this is the day we normally run errands like buying food and gas, cleaning the house, preparing things for the week so it is tough. First order concepts: Training schedule.

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Second order categories: Pronunciation, attendance. Training schedule, pronunciation. Social and economic problems: cash, transportation, electricity, money for resources, lack of food in the school, students' nonattendance, reduced hours of class.

Comments: In terms of the learning of the language, the main obstacle found by teachers was pronunciation. They are afraid of mispronouncing or not knowing how to pronounce the words. All the other obstacles were external due to the situation of the country.

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Question 4: What have you learnt so far?

Maira: I have learnt many things like strategies and games to use in the classroom with my kids. First order concepts: Strategies, Games.

Elvira: I have learnt very useful techniques. I have applied these techniques even to teach other subjects. First order concepts: Techniques.

Reina: What I have learnt more is the methodology. First order concepts: Methodology.

Martha: The class strategies, I use them when teaching other subjects, the games. First order concepts: *Strategies.*

Ruth: one of the things we have learnt is to see English in a different way. This English is not repetitive and based on translations. This English is more real. First order concepts: *A new perception of the language.*

Marcia: I have learnt new words and phrases in English. I've also learnt strategies. First order concepts: *Words and phrases in English, strategies.*

Celia: I have learnt that children are able to learn fast, even a foreign language. First order concepts: *Children's ability to learn.*

Laura: I have learnt the same than my students: the family members, the animals, the numbers. First order concepts: *Words and phrases in English.*

José: I have learnt new strategies and many things I didn't know about English. First order concepts: *Strategies, words and phrases in English.*

Yanitza: Regarding English, the greetings, animals, the family, the numbers, professions, weather, a lot of things. First order concepts: *Words and phrases in English.*

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Second order categories: Methodology: strategies, games, techniques. English.

Comments: The main impact is the methodology. Although they are learning the language, the emphasis is on the strategies, the games and techniques.

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Question 5: Do you think there has been a change in your pedagogical practice?

Maira: Yes, because now I start the class talking to the children first instead of asking them to copy from the board. I use more dynamic activities even in the other subjects. First order concepts: *Dynamic activities.*

Elvira: Yes, there has been a change. I've changed even the way the children sit in the classroom. Now they can communicate better. First order concepts: *Classroom, arrangement, children, communicate.*

Reina: Yes, I am using more games not only in English, but also in the other subjects. First order concepts: *Games.*

Martha: Yes, now children participate more and are happier. First order concepts: *Participation.*

Ruth: Yes, I have a difficult group. When I say "listen", they pay attention but if I say it in Spanish they do not pay attention to me. First order concepts: *Attention getters.*

Marcia: Yes, my classes are more entertaining. First order concepts: *Entertainment.*

Celia: Yes because it is more joyful, it is funnier, it draws children's attention, there is more willingness from the children towards English also towards the other areas. First order concepts: *Fun.*

Laura: Yes, now I encouraged more children's participation in my classes. First order concepts: *Participation.*

José: Yes, there has been a change because this has made me look for new strategies, new games, to renew my practice, not only to teach English but also to teach the other areas. First order concepts: *Strategies, games.*

Yanitza: Yes, there has been a change. I feel the teaching of English is demanding, it demands a lot from me as a teacher and it has helped me develop my creativity. First order concepts: Creativity.

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Second order categories: Methodology: Dynamic activities, games, strategies, creativity, Participation, Children, communicate. Classroom management: Classroom arrangement, attention getters. Environment: entertainment, Fun.

Comments: After being exposed to this methodology, teachers have incorporated different things in their classes that make them more fun and enjoyable. Even classroom management has changed. Not only in the English lesson but also in the other subjects and they have proved it has made a difference.

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Question 6: How would you describe the attitude of children towards the English class?

Maira: They are enthusiastic about English. First order concepts: Enthusiastic.

Elvira: They like it. There are three students who are taking private lessons and help me with the pronunciation and meaning of some words. First order concepts: Like, cooperation.

Reina: The students are excited, they want to know everything and they want English lessons every day. Even their behaviour has had a positive change. If they are misbehaving, I say that I'm not going to teach English today, then, they get quiet immediately. The children ask, "when are we having English?" I'm new in this school, when I started teaching here I noticed the students didn't like to participate in class but now that I'm teaching English today, they all want to participate. First order

concepts: Excited, want to know, behaviour has changed, participation.

Martha: Children are excited. They all want to participate at the same time, when I ask for a volunteer all children raise their hands and this is new. Even the shy students want to participate. First order concepts: Excited, participation.

Ruth: They get excited. Actually, attendance was really low on Fridays but after I decided to have the English lesson on Fridays, all students come. First order concepts: Excited, attendance.

Marcia: They are excited. Once I taught them how to greet, they greet me in English everywhere, here in the school, in the market place, on the street, wherever they meet me. First order concepts: Excitement.

Celia: Yes, for example I have two SLN students who now participate in the class. I couldn't believe when one of them performed a short role play where she greeted a classmate and she did it very well. She is involved and is participating in the class, even in physical education which she didn't like. The parents of these students are really happy. First order concepts: SLN student's participation.

Laura: The children have changed with the English lessons. They want to participate more. First order concepts: Participation.

José: Yes, there has been a change because now they are motivated to learn. Even children from other classrooms come to participate in the English lesson. Sometimes they are watching through the window and ask to get in. That's why I think that all students should have English. I'm the only teacher in this school who teaches English. First order concepts: Motivation.

Yanitza: Yes, these children are highly motivated, they like English and I have told them that they are going to need this in secondary so that has motivated them. First order concepts: Motivation.

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Second order categories: Attitude: Motivation, excitement, like, enthusiasm. Behaviour: participation, attendance, cooperation.

Comments: Children are motivated. They show this through their participation in activities, games. Even the shyest students and special learning needs students participate. They have a willingness to do things.

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Question 7: Have you observed any impact of the PNFA in the school community? (parents, colleagues, principals...)

Maira: My colleagues ask me to teach English to all students in the school but I can't because I have too many responsibilities in the school. Parents are happy because they say that studying English, their children will be more prepared when starting secondary level. First order concepts: Colleagues: want English for their students too. Parents: happy, feel they will be well-prepared.

Elvira: Parents say that they are happy because their children are learning English. The principal told me that the children greet him in English. First order concepts: Parents: happy. Principal: happy.

Reina: Teachers in this school didn't want to participate in the program but now they want me to teach English to their students. Colleagues: they want English in their When I enter other classrooms, children say "good morning teacher", I'm walking around and I hear "good morning teacher". Principal: She is happy that I'm in this program. First order concepts: Colleagues: they want English in their classrooms. Children from other sections: greet me in English. Principal: happy.

Martha: Parents have helped a lot. I was surprised because as I was having a visit for the observation from the British Council, I asked parents to bring children in a different schedule (their classes are in

the afternoon and I asked them to bring kids in the morning) and that day all children were there very early. Parents also help me make the resources for the English lessons. Other teachers have told me they also want to participate in the program. Children from other groups ask me: “teacher, why don’t you teach English to my class?”. First order concepts: Parents: help. Colleagues: want to participate in the program. Other children: want English

Ruth: Parents are really happy that their children are learning English. First order concepts: Parents: happy.

Marcia: Other teachers want me to teach English to their students. First order concepts: Colleagues: they want English in their classrooms.

Celia: Some parents tell me “this is good because if we leave the country, they will need English”. Other parents say they want me to be their children’s teacher next school year so they continue studying English and be prepared for secondary school. First order concepts: Parents: good.

Laura: Parents do not participate but authorities are being supportive. Parents: no participation. First order concepts: Authorities: supportive.

José: Parents are happy because their children are learning English. Parents are signing a petition for including English in all grades. Some of them have other children in other grades and they want all the children benefit from it. Children from other classes stand at the window and observe the class, some get inside the class and participate. I have had kids here from all the grades, when I realise the classroom is full of children. First order concepts: Parents: happy, they want English in all grades. Children from other classes: participate.

Yanitza: I’ve got lots of positive comments by parents, they’re happy because when the children get to secondary school they will know some English. I’ve told the principal that I want to teach this same group next

school year so I continue teaching English to them and she agreed. First order concepts: Parents: happy, children will be prepared for secondary school. Principal: supportive

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Second order categories: Attitude towards the program: positive, happiness, cooperation, enthusiasm, willingness.

Comments: This is awakening an interest in other children and teachers to learn the language. Parents and principals show approval and they are happy because children are learning the language.

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Question 8: Has your perception of learning English changed?

Maira: I liked English when I studied secondary school but now I like it more because I see it is simple and practical. First order concepts: Simple, practical.

Elvira: yes, it has changed because I didn't like English but now I see it easier, I can understand the language. First order concepts: Easier.

Reina: Yes, it has changed a lot. When I studied English in secondary school, I didn't feel motivated, teachers didn't use good strategies. Now that I see the way I'm learning and teaching my children I think I wish I could have had an opportunity like this when I was younger. First order concepts: Motivation, better strategies now.

Martha: I used to think English was too difficult but now I see it as something simple for me and for my students. First order concepts: Difficult to simple.

Ruth: English for me was something mechanical, lot of translations and boring repetitions but with this program I have the chance to see

English as something dynamic, something connected to your life. First order concepts: *Mechanical, boring. Dynamic, connected to your life.*

Marcia: Yes, I have changed my perception because when I was in secondary school, teachers give you all the content at once and I didn't understand anything but here in the program I have learnt that we need to learn English bit by bit, that's how we are teaching English to the children and I think that's why they learn everything so fast. First order concepts: *Bit by bit.*

Celia: 100% yes, because when I see English in a traditional way it is like a rigid pattern. While here, this is about building from the little that we know, and we build together. First order concepts: *Building together, bits.*

Laura: Of course because now I see English easier. First order concepts: *Easy.*

José: yes because I thought it was too difficult. Now I know words and phrases. First order concepts: *New knowledge.*

Yanitza: Yes, a lot. I'm not afraid of English anymore. Sometimes I'm a bit afraid of pronouncing words because I'm not sure of the correct pronunciation but I know that as much as I practise I will be able to pronounce better. First order concepts: *Not afraid anymore.*

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Second order categories: Traditional vision: difficult, mechanical, boring. New vision: simple, practical, easier, real, dynamic, connected to real life.

Comments: Teachers had a different perception of the language that has changed after the program. Now they see that language can be taught/learnt in a dynamic, easy, funny way.

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From the interviews, two important elements stand out. On the one hand, there is an affective force related to motivation and enjoyment. All teachers agree that they and their students enjoy the English lessons. These classes are different from the traditional ones because they sing songs, play games and do different activities in which students participate actively. Children are eager to learn and participate. They also show themselves cooperative. Children's motivation has affected their behaviour positively.

On the other hand, there is a cognitive force because the programme is characterised by the learning not only of the language but also of strategies to be used in the classroom. These strategies to teach English to children have an influence on the students and on the teachers. The teachers notice the strategies work, they are producing results and they observe children's reactions and all of these encourage them. The teachers are using these strategies even to teach other areas.

Teachers have faced some obstacles in the programme. These obstacles can be classified in three groups: in the learning process, in their classrooms and in the training. Regarding the learning process, a common problem found by the teachers was pronunciation. Many of them said this was difficult for them, they even thought of giving up the programme because of it.

The obstacles found in their classrooms were:

- Attendance: Some teachers affirm student attendance has become a problem. Students are not coming regularly, they miss many classes so what usually happens is the group of students who comes one day is not always the same that comes the following day. This happens for a variety of reasons, for example, if there is no food at school, attendance is really low, sometimes parents do not have money (or cash) for transportation to take children to school, among others. This is an obstacle because it is difficult for teachers to keep a sequence of the content taught.

- Electricity: Because of the blackouts that affected almost all states of the country, classes were suspended. Continuity was lost and when classes were resumed, teachers had to restart and review content to have students in tune again.
- Reduction of school hours: as a consequence of the blackouts, because electricity service was re-established but it remained unstable in many places, school hours were reduced from 5 to 3 hours. Some teachers complain that during these 3 hours they had to do many activities and they did not have enough time for the English lessons. In some cases, if they had English twice a week, after this change, they had to reduce it to once a week.

The obstacles in the training were similar to the ones presented in their classrooms: electricity that caused suspension of training sessions, lack of money and/or cash for transportation or lack of fuel which make difficult for the teachers to attend training. The fact that the training is on Saturdays was also difficult for some teachers because that is the day in which they could buy food, petrol and run personal errands.

Despite these obstacles, the programme is having an impact not only on teachers and students but also on the community (parents, other students, principals, janitors, cooks...). Parents are happy because their children are learning English, other parents and other students have expressed their desire to have English in the other grades as well. Moreover, principals have supported the implementation of the programme in their schools.

Survey to tutors:

The tutor is the administrative figure responsible for coordinating the work related to the programme in each state. They work as liaison between the facilitators and the General Coordinator. Tutors support facilitators and also monitor the work done by them. There is one tutor in each state.

Tutors were asked in a survey about their view of the programme. Their responses are presented below:

State	Participants' concerns	PNFA Strengths	PNFA Difficulties	What can be improved in the PNFA?
Apure	They want MoE to inform principals in the schools about the programme	Motivation to keep learning despite personal situations	Economic situation in the country	We need more workshops for facilitators and participants.
Sucre	- online course - They want English from 1st grade	-Enthusiasm -Motivation to learn English and put into practice the new knowledge	Difficulty for tutors to do mentoring in all formation centres	We need to continue learning in each state
Distrito Capital	-online course (because they want it and have not had it yet)	-the 4 facilitators are graduated from the 1st cohort so they know the programme very well and love it.	-Transportation -Electricity This generates delays	We need to expand interaction with other areas and with the same programme in other states

Nueva Esparta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -They want the online course -They ask for courses to improve pronunciation 	<p>They are motivated to learn. They are good friends, they adapt to work in any environment, they create resources with recycled materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transportation -Internet 	We need to have material available
Anzoátegui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -online course 	Facilitators are motivated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of material -Transportation 	We need training to learn new strategies. We need to improve pronunciation.
Falcón	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -We need to have more books available. 	Participants' and facilitators' willingness and enthusiasm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of mentoring and class observation of facilitators to participants during the week. 	We need to do workshops more frequently related to the learning of English
Táchira	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -online course -books -participants' training 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The situation of the country -transportation 	We need BC accompaniment in Táchira state. Training for participants and tutors

Barinas		Location of training centres close to participants -use of materials adapted to the daily teaching practice	-transportation -economic and social situation	More time for learning English and accompaniment of facilitator and tutor in the primary school classrooms.
Mérida		Children motivated to learn the language	- difficulty to print the topics [training material] -internet connection	-To design simple programs to do offline home tasks.
Yaracuy		-Motivation -love towards children -interest to learn English -creativity -union of the groups -they value personal and professional growth	Social and personal situation of the facilitator and participants: -cash -transportation -materials to create resources	More workshops and training

Aragua	-online course -books	The main strength is the motivation of the facilitators to teach the language	-Training centres conditions -transportation -distance to the training centres	
Trujillo	-Books are not enough for everybody -They require the online course -difficulties to write the research paper - insecurity regarding pronunciation	-motivation to learn the language and then to teach it.	-distance to the training centre	
Guárico		-High level of motivation in people involved in the process	-to visit training centre (tutor)	We need to improve communicative competence of facilitators
Cojedes	-Books are not enough to all participants -Lack of facilitators -online course	-BC support -planning models -new strategies that can be applied in other areas.	-classes missed because of blackouts and lack of facilitator -training centres close at 1pm -Lack of economic incentive	Workshops for tutor, facilitators and participants. -Feedback between states -online course

Lara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -they require more training in English -They are anxious to get the online course -They need more books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -innovation -commitment of tutors and facilitators -BC support -the books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Money for transportation -Lack of economic incentive -we need more training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -organise training workshops about the topics before each term
Delta Amacuro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -more topics related to the other areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -distance to the training centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -online course
Zulia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -they are worried because they need extra resources to practise pronunciation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the group is cooperative and united. -They are highly motivated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Classes missed because of the situation in the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -they want a complementary course to practise

The responses given by the tutors about the development of the programme in all states of the country confirms the information obtained from the ten teachers in this study.

Most tutors mentioned pronunciation as an element that requires attention. Many teachers around the country are concerned about this. They ask for extra help to overcome pronunciation problems.

According to the tutors, participants are also concerned about the online course. As part of the support given by the British Council, a free online English course is given to participants in order to help them reach A1 level of English. At the moment of the collection of data, participants had not had access to this course yet because of an administrative issue. That might be the reason why many tutors named the online course as one of the participants' concerns. It is necessary to point out that an online English course could represent a challenge for some teachers since some of them do not have a computer at home or work, many do not count on regular internet service or even electricity.

Regarding the difficulties presented, most of tutors agree with the teachers. They mentioned the economic situation of the country as the main difficulty. This includes lack of money and cash, problems with transportation, problems with internet and the blackouts.

The most remarkable strength mentioned by tutors is motivation. This is also a common element observed in the study. Motivation seems to be the engine that has helped teachers to be in the programme and to remain there despite unfavourable conditions.

Finally, most tutors agree on the need to increase training opportunities for them, for facilitators and participants.

Data of PNFA participants and dropouts per state

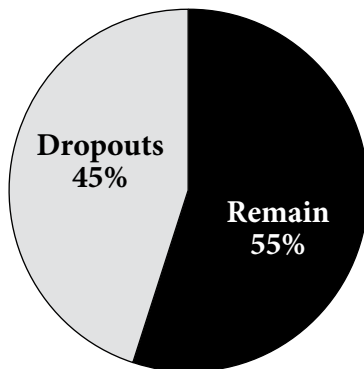
These data were obtained in two meetings with tutors. The first meeting took place in June 2019 and the second one in September the same year.

State	Participants who started the programme (November 2018)	Participants in June 2019	Participants who remain in the programme (September 2019)	Reasons for dropping out	Percentage of participants who remain in the PNFA (September 2019)
Amazonas	42		12		28.5%
Anzoategui	156		121		77.5%
Apure	87	24	21	- The situation of the country - They do not have money to attend the training.	24.1%
Aragua	117	68	64		54.7%
Barinas	87	47	47	-Facilitators have left the country. -Problems to attend the training -wrong expectations about the programme -situation of the country	54%
Bolívar	67	63	63		94%
Carabobo	35	17	17	-Transportation	48%
Cojedes	43	30	30		69%

Delta Ama- curo	17	17	5		29.4%
Distrito Capital	67	48	43	-Some teachers thought it was a free English course	64.1%
Falcón	58	49	34		58.6%
Guárico	145	78	55	-Some teachers wanted classes on Fridays or Thursdays. -Facilitators drive about an hour or take rides to get to the training centre	37.9%
Lara	151	96	96		63.5%
Mérida	125	82	65		52%
Miranda	47	31	31	-Facilitators dropped	65.9%
Monagas	89	56	31	-Teachers have difficulties to attend the training	34.8%
Nueva Esparta	36	20	20	-Economic situation -Some teachers did not have the qualifica- tions to be in the pro- gramme.	55.5%

Portuguesa	0	0	0	-Migration of teachers and facilitators. - Teachers were on a strike	
Sucre	192	128	125		65.1%
Táchira	114	52	52		45.6%
Trujillo	77		31		40.2%
Vargas	0	0	0	-Facilitators quit	
Yaracuy	82		49	-Facilitators quit	59.7%
Zulia	18		7	-Electricity	38.8%
				-Economic situation	
Total participants who started			1852		
Total participants who remain (Sep2019)			1019		
Percentage of participants that remain			55%		

The dropout rate in the programme is around 45%. There are multiple reasons why teachers drop the programme but most of these reasons are related to the main obstacles the ten teachers in this study have reported: the situation of the country, transportation, economic situation, lack of money, among others.



It is important to highlight some facts that explain the reasons for many dropouts. In 2019, in Venezuela there have been various blackouts, some of them nationwide that lasted some days; when electricity is gone, water service fails, internet and phone lines collapse, fuel distribution is also affected hindering mobility, that is why classes were suspended.

The economic situation is related to hyperinflation that, according to the Venezuelan Central Bank (source: Últimas Noticias), had reached 379.6% from January to April 2019. This affects all citizens including generalist teachers and facilitators.

Cash is another issue: in the first semester of 2019, it was difficult for people to get cash. ATMs were not working or the limit was very low, banks also had restrictions for clients to withdraw money so people had to spend hours queuing in the bank to get small amounts of cash. Cash is necessary to pay transportation.

Facilitators as well as participants suffer the same situation. This has caused lot of facilitator dropouts. These dropouts hinder the process because in many cases, it is difficult to find a replacement for them and that is the reason why in some regions many participants had to stop the programme because of lack of facilitators.

In the midst of this scenario, the fact that more than half of teachers remain in the programme is a success because there are many obstacles they face and they have been persistent.

Assertions

In this section, some assertions based on the data collected are developed.

Empowerment of the teacher

The impact of the programme on the teachers has been noticeable. The teachers have been empowered. There has been a

professional and personal growth. They are happy for what they have achieved and recognise there is a difference between their current pedagogical practice and what they used to do in the classroom, what happens in their classrooms and in other classrooms, their students' attitudes now and before and how people from the community recognise their work.

Personal and professional growth

Teachers are learning English. They consider it as something important and valuable for themselves and for their students and the fact they are learning it make them feel a positive change.

The teachers have highlighted the importance of the strategies learnt in the programme and how they have had an impact on their classrooms, not only to teach English but also to teach the other areas.

Most of the teachers had negative experiences with English in secondary school and thought learning English was not something they could be able to do, now they have changed their minds because they are not only learning some English but they are also teaching it. This makes them feel they are overcoming obstacles and they are growing. Their perception of English has changed. They now see there is another way of teaching English which is dynamic and connected to real life.

There is a sense of achievement, not only for learning the language and observing their students learning as well but also because they think they are doing something important for their children.

Recognition by the community

The teachers have experienced a change in their role in the school. Now, they are known for being the English teacher by parents, children, colleagues and school staff. In some schools, these teachers are not only

working with their groups but they are also going to other classrooms to teach English. This has made teachers be involved with more children and parents and has made them gain some status.

In some schools, where there is only one teacher participating in the programme, some children and parents from other groups have requested English lessons for them. In one school, parents signed a petition to the principal to have English lessons in all grades.

In another school, the principal said there were many parents requesting a place for their children to study there because they had heard they taught English to the students.

So has been the impact of the programme that some teachers have been asked by principals, janitors, school cooks some training in how to greet in English because children are greeting everybody in English now and they did not know how to reply.

In some schools, other teachers have asked teachers participating in the programme to teach their students some English because they have noticed their own students show interest for being in the English class as other students.

Most of teachers expressed that their families are happy to see them learning and teaching English. In some cases, the family has taken an important role by supporting these teachers and encouraging them to keep going. A teacher who has two children in secondary school said that her children helped her learn the vocabulary and to pronounce the words in English. Another teacher who has small children (4 and 6 years old) said she practised the lesson with her children at home first and her children are also learning English.

All these elements empower the teacher, their self-esteem has risen and this self-assurance makes the teachers feel more confident and have more successful lessons. All of this has an impact on the learning

process because it increases the teachers' motivation and consequently the students' motivation as well.

Motivation as the engine

A keyword in this study is "motivation". Motivation from children to learn English and motivation of teachers to learn it and teach it, even motivation from other students who are not part of the programme but want to learn. This is not given only by the novelty that represents to learn something unknown but maybe the special ingredient is the "how" it is learnt. Most teachers compared their experience with English in secondary school to this new learning experience. Many of them did not like it then but love it now. This motivation seems to be what keeps teachers in the programme despite unfavourable conditions and helps them move forward.

The high motivation was observed in the classes by the willingness students have to participate. In the classes observed, when the teachers announced they were going to have an activity, they raised their hands energetically and sometimes stood up to be considered for the activity. Children not only were motivated for the fact that learning English represented something new but also because of the types of activities incorporated in the classroom like games and songs and because they are more active in the English lessons.

Empowerment of the students

Children as the core of this process have shown mastery of the content taught. Most of children observed in their classes were enthusiastic in the English lesson, willing to participate, active, happy and thirsty for more.

They are not only having fun in class but they are learning a language. This has made them feel special, they show with pride what they know, they do it inside and outside the classroom. They want to greet everyone

in English. As opposed to adults, they do not feel ashamed or afraid of making mistakes. They have noticed they are learning something not everybody knows, they know something not even the highest authority of the school (the principal) knows and that makes them feel good. They have been told learning English will help them in secondary school and they feel confidence in this.

Learning Process

This learning process has particular characteristics. The fact that the teacher is learning in parallel to the students makes it peculiar and brings different implications. The introduction of English in the public primary schools is a novelty. First, English is a foreign language in Venezuela; second, the possibilities for students of public primary schools to have English were remote and third, because the English teacher is actually the generalist teacher.

In this scenario, some elements have come out.

Dual Learning

This programme is innovative in the sense that both the teachers and the students are learning the language almost simultaneously. Most teachers have an A₀ level of English and they are being taught basic vocabulary and structures to teach children so they teach in their classrooms what they learn in their training.

The fact that teachers are also learning re-dimensions the roles in the classroom. The teacher is not the one who knows and the students the ones who do not, they both are learning so to a certain extent, a relation of equals emerges between them. This triggers a favourable environment for learning because teachers are not authoritative so anxiety and pressure on students are reduced.

Children know their teachers are also learning so they are understanding when their teachers do not have all the answers.

Emerging cooperative learning

The traditional idea of cooperative learning implies the student-student interaction in order to help each other in the learning process but in these classes there is a new phenomenon which is the cooperation student-teacher.

As both, the teacher and the students, are learning the language, they help each other. For example, some teachers say they have in their classes students who know some words (because they have watched them on TV, because they have taken private English courses...) and they help them with the pronunciation or the meaning. The innovation lies in the fact that students are helping the teacher learn things he/she did not know. The teacher also helps the students and the students help each other as well.

Towards a communicative class

The methodology to teach English to children triggers changes, even in the classroom arrangements. The classes observed evidenced high participation of children, resources different from the board like flashcards, wordcards, posters, models, realia, among others.

The positive changes in the classroom make the class enjoyable and create a positive environment for learning. New elements like games and songs have added more memorable experiences to both the teacher and the students. Besides, the fact that children are learning by doing, by using the language make both the teacher and children perceive they are learning.

However, the interaction is mostly teacher-students. Pair work and group work is scarcely observed. This indicates the class seems to be moving towards a communicative class but it is still in the process.

The emerging facilitator

Another innovative phenomenon of this programme is what we

might call the emerging facilitator. This study is framed in the second cohort of the PNFA. Some of the facilitators, differently from the first cohort, are not English teachers but generalist teachers who graduated from the first cohort.

These facilitators have positive attributes. They are highly motivated and have become motivators for the participants to be in the programme and to remain. Some teachers affirmed that they were going to give up because of the multiple obstacles they face but they stayed because the facilitators encouraged them.

They know the reality of a public primary school classroom and they know the methodology to teach English to children so they are able to foresee possible problems or difficulties and advise teachers accordingly.

Because they graduated from the first cohort, they have gone through the programme themselves and have witnessed the results with their own students. For that reason, they believe firmly in the programme and the results it generates.

However, they still need more English. They are generalist teachers and in most cases their level of English is very basic. They need more support in order to avoid passing mistakes onto teachers and children.

Integration school-community

The programme has promoted integration school-community. Parents have got involved by helping teachers create resources for the English class. They are collecting recycled materials to give the teacher for the creation of resources and some make the resources themselves.

School staff like janitors, secretaries, cooks are also getting involved too. Students greet them in English and some of them have asked the teachers how they should reply.

Some students of other classes have shown interest in participating

in the English lessons. Actually, in one of the schools, the teacher participating in the programme teaches 4th grade but students from kindergarten to 6th grade stand at the window to see the English lessons and some of them get into the classroom and participate in the games and activities.

Final Thoughts

The impact of the programme on teachers, students, parents and school community have been evidenced through class observations, interviews and surveys which give account of the progress teachers and children are having in learning the language.

A strength from the programme is the methodology, the strategies teachers are learning have helped them have motivating lessons that have kept children's attention and participation.

Children's enjoyment and motivation are keys in the process. Their enthusiasm and willingness fill the classroom and at the same time motivate teachers to keep going.

Teachers and students are being empowered by this programme. The fact that they are learning a language makes them feel they are doing something different and innovative. For the children, this has been something that before this programme they would not have access to, but now they have the opportunity. That is why they show with pride, in and outside the classroom, what they have learnt.

The programme has also had an impact on the schools. Other students and other teachers want to participate. Principals and parents are pleased that their children are having English lessons.

This programme is innovative because the fact that teachers and students are learning almost simultaneously gives it particular characteristics. The teacher in this dual learning process is not authoritative, he/she knows that as his/her students, he/she is learning

as well. It triggers a relationship of equals which reduces anxiety in the classroom and encourages the emerging cooperative learning.

There have been some obstacles faced by teachers to participate in the programme like: problems with electricity, transportation, money, among others, that made some of the teachers drop, as in the case of one of the teachers from this study. However, those who remain in the programme keep going despite these difficulties and the results of their efforts are evidenced in their classrooms.

The programme works because of the efforts made by tutors, facilitators and teachers. That is why it is important that they receive continuous support to improve their English. A follow-up programme is necessary to give support to these teachers and facilitators.

This programme has had a considerable impact in the country in these first steps but there is still a long way to go. So far, a cohort has graduated and the second cohort is still in progress. The programme has yielded positive results despite the difficulties that have been faced.

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TEACHING ENGLISH IN PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR GENERALIST TEACHERS

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This paper presents achievements of the graduate programme Specialization in Teaching English for Primary Education, one of the Graduate Training Programmes set up by The National Centre for the Improvement of Teaching and Science (CENAMEC) and the Ministry of Popular Power for Education (MPPE) in Venezuela. It is divided into five parts: a brief review of the literature on language learning, the framework of the syllabus of the programme, methodology, results, including comments and opinions from participants in the programme, and, finally, some concluding remarks.

Literature Review

Although the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Venezuela has a long history, results in terms of successful learning have been disappointing (López de D'Amico, 2010; 2015). To begin to understand the reasons for this, a review of some basic principles in learning a foreign language is called for. It is well known that the learning of a language is better if begun at an early age and that practice in the target language must be maintained over time. The importance of initiating such learning at an early age is supported by various studies related to the functioning of the brain (e.g., Brown, 2001; Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010). Learning foreign languages at the same time as the

child's growth favours the development of languages due to the plasticity of the brain and provides a better opportunity to develop a pronunciation similar to a native one as well as an empirical understanding of syntax (e.g, Knudsen, 2004; Krashen, 1982). Children are more enthusiastic, active, uninhibited and learn when they play.

In terms of theories of learning, Skinner has pointed out that learning a language is the result of imitation, practice and the acquisition of habits whereas the innatist theory based on biological factors (Brown, 2001; Chomsky, 1989; Krashen, 1982; Lenneberg, 1967), claims that children have an innate ability to learn languages that should be activated in the early stages of childhood. The hypothesis of the critical period (Singleton & Ryan, 2004) underlines that children learn languages better during the first six years. Piagetian theory and many others focus on the importance of language learning from an early age. It is a fact that habits are created from an early age and that the need to communicate and explore the world must start at the time children and adolescents can apprehend that knowledge that will be useful for them. In order to achieve this, coherence and synchronization between what is done during infant, primary and secondary education are necessary.

UNESCO (2005) recommended promoting in the 21st century a minimum bilingual education and, as far as possible, trilingual in all countries that have the means to do so from primary school, harmonizing the teaching of the mother tongue and other languages, to promote reciprocal knowledge of cultures among the citizens of the world.

Among countries that have transformed their educational systems in order to include English from primary school, the case of China stands out, which, after 1977 includes mandatory English in primary schools with classes three times per week. In Asia, there are further examples such as Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. In Europe, the Nordic countries and Luxembourg initiated it during the 1960s and '70s, after which it spread to many countries across Europe in the 1980s. Enever

(2011) shows the cases of 23 countries of the European community where English teaching has been implemented since primary school. In Latin America, the country that is at the forefront in the inclusion of English in primary public education is Cuba, as a national policy; other more recent cases in Latin America, for example as a national policy are Colombia, and Chile. It is also found in Argentina and Brazil.

In Venezuela, the teaching of English in the public education system became official policy in 2007, it was not systematically implemented. Some initiatives were taken at regional level to teach English at Primary School but it was not until 2014 that the Ministry of Education began to transform English Language Teaching through the 'Simón Rodríguez Micromisión' (MMSR), set up to bring about curricular pedagogical transformation and to create the graduate programme (PNFA) - Specialization in Foreign Languages English for Primary Education. This programme is extended all over the country since it started in late 2016. In this chapter, its highly positive results are described.

Framework

By the end of 2016, the Specialization of Teaching English in Primary Education began in Venezuela (see Sagaray, Fernandez & Rodríguez, 2017; Salas & Carrillo, 2017). The programme was officially approved the same year together with other graduate programmes (MPPE, 2018). The pensum is made up of nine curricular subjects representing a total of 27 credits. Participants also present a research paper based on Action Research methodology and an English test which they must pass. Because of the strategic alliance between the MPPE and the British Council, each participant also takes an online English course.

The curriculum of the Specialization has three main components: 1) Research to transform teaching practice; 2) Pedagogical Reflexion; 3) Specialization and integration of knowledge. Each component has three courses; the participant studies three courses per term. The graduate programme is for generalist teachers: they are referred to as

‘participants’ and their teachers are ‘facilitators’. The students are the ones the ‘participants’ work with during the week.

The axis/component *Research to transform teaching practice* is based on Action Research methodology. It is a process that starts from the first day of the school year. Therefore, the observation, action plan, implementation, reflexion and writing of the paper is a process that lasts the entire school year.

The axis of pedagogical reflection looks at building common references for a transformative and dynamic process in all areas of knowledge. It focuses on pedagogical practice based on the complementary work of integrating areas of knowledge but moreover to teach the basic principle of love and care towards participants and the value of team work.

The axis of specialization aims at incorporating the generalist teacher into the area of English as a foreign language. The process is to learn and take advantage of new vocabulary so they can develop their own language skills. They learn English and later in the week they share the acquired skills with their students, so they all learn in harness. Each term lasts 16 weeks, face-to-face meetings of eight hours are held weekly. Saturday is class day, so during the weekend they replicate the strategies and games they also use in their learning process.

Methodology

This is a descriptive field study with the support of the participants and authorities of the MPPE. A monitoring process has been followed since the programme started: a) first cohort (2016 – 2018), b) second cohort (2018 - 2019), and the third cohort starting in October 2019. Monitoring was carried out from the beginning of the programme in November 2016; through the three (2016-2017) school year terms. In addition to the numerical information that indicates the number of participants, they were asked to voluntarily share their experiences in the programme. Some quotes are presented in the results section.

Results

In November 2016, 801 participants started in the training centres nationwide. They were studying in parallel with the school year 2016-2017. They should have culminated at the end of 2017, but due to political instability in some parts of the country, some had to continue their research and practice in the following school year 2017-2018. These participants' groups were observed for two school terms. The first cohort was approached as a 'pilot study' and there were training centres in all states, 30 in total.

The second cohort started with 1909 participants but, because of the complex political situation Venezuela was going through, two training centres were closed. Fortunately, 930 participants ended the training on schedule. The third cohort started with 1093 participants in October 2019. It is important to highlight that all the participants are teachers in service.

The following table contains the number of primary school students who have received English classes during the week from participants (teachers) of the programme. The number of municipalities indicated are the ones in which the schools the children attend are located; there are in total 335 municipalities in the country.

Number of children who received English classes 2016-2019 in public schools in Venezuela

STATES	2017	2018	2019	MUNICIPALITY
Amazonas	1050	400	354	1
Anzoátegui	307	292	1254	3
Apure	480	515	527	2
Aragua	459	478	1292	7
Barinas	559	841	794	1
Bolívar	562	495	2494	1
Carabobo	443	506	657	4
Cojedes	434	451	729	1
Delta Amacuro	487	724	170	1
Distrito Capital	443	458	1285	1
Falcón	1153	1055	1465	5
Guárico	718	717	1073	7
La Gualira	101	194	310	1
Lara	458	453	1465	7
Mérida	237	239	2119	6
Miranda	885	895	906	8
Monagas	1022	1024	647	5
Nueva Esparta	225	219	645	5
Portuguesa	598	591	411	6
Sucre	942	990	3167	7
Táchira	301	292	721	2
Trujillo	496	782	666	6
Yaracuy	571	568	1186	8
Zulia	684	724	195	4
TOTAL	13615	13903	24532	99

Opinions

The opinions reviewed in the compiled writings are extremely rich in information related with methodological and pedagogical experiences, anecdotes, activities with the communities, among others. For the purposes of this research, they were classified into five categories: a) Methodology and motivation; b) Personal transformation; c) Interdisciplinarity; d) Community integration; e) Interculturality. Some quotes were selected from the stories from the participants and are presented below to support the categories. In brackets next to the participants names, the state the participant comes from is identified:

Methodology and motivation

Participants (generalist teachers) are convinced of the importance of the methodology used in the programme since it allowed them to generate a high level of enthusiasm and motivation in their students, for example:

“The different activities and dynamics used in the PNFA along the way produced an important change in the students, mainly in their enthusiasm in learning the language, allowing them to obtain basic knowledge such as the alphabet, numbers, colours, days of the week, months, and hours, among others... The most common activity used in the teaching of English have been recreational activities, song, group work, flash cards, dictionary, group work, board, laptop (Canaima)”.

(Grenda Jaramillo, Bolivar).

“The change was remarkable since during the teaching process they learned words and pronunciation, spelt words and new resources found in their daily activities, telephone numbers of their relatives and friends, description of clothes, etc”.

(Alejandra Morao - San Félix, Bolívar).

These opinions highlight the importance of the techniques and materials used with the students. Another aspect mentioned by several teachers was the change of attitude they observed in some of their students, who at first seemed not to be interested in English but eventually became involved through the process itself. Another opinion related to the change of attitude in the students is presented in the following quotation:

“With the inclusion of English and new teaching techniques in our school, I could clearly see an increase in the students’ motivation and interest to learn this language. Basically, because the approach to teach breaks the traditional memoristic method, which almost robotized our students. The use of new and innovating learning strategies and resources allowed us to live pleasant experiences in increasing the levels of participation in our children, especially in those from the sixth grade”.

(Raúl Barrios, Sucre).

In the participant’s profile, it was specified that they had to be generalist teachers and that the knowledge of English language was not necessary, meaning it was not a barrier. However, in the sample we also found teachers graduated as English teachers who are working as generalist teachers. Here is the opinion of one of them related to methodology:

“The training received through this graduate programme was amazing because of the strategies, activities and resources learned about the importance of these innovating learning teaching skills. In spite of the fact that I am a specialist of EFL I knew nothing about the methodology to teach children”.

(Lerys Diaz, Sucre)

This opinion is very important because it reinforces results from previous research which indicate that in the English teachers' training in Venezuelan universities, there was no emphasis on the teaching of English to children (e.g., López de D'Amico, 2015).

Personal transformation

In this category, some comments are presented in which participants talk about their transformation, change of attitude, their fears. The latter is because mentioned before, this programme was structured for generalist teachers with no English knowledge at all, and even some of them had negative experiences with the English language in the past:

“Even though I did not have any knowledge of English, for me this was a very enriching and interesting experience in many aspects. During my training, I received the necessary tools and strategies to teach the classes. These strategies learned were useful for me in the class development of other learning areas”.

(Belkys Rivero Acuña, - Sucre)

“Last year was extraordinary: at first it was difficult, but my students were so excited with the drawings, videos, songs, chants etc. Their enthusiasm to learn grew as the days passed by. I felt excited when I looked at their smiling faces and shining eyes because they were learning English”.

(Laura Salaya, Sucre)

There are also opinions focused on the interest for learning English:

“In regard to my personal and academic growth, the training activities in the programme filled me with great satisfaction because I am doing what that I like the most; studying English”.

(María Petit, Yaracuy).

Another interesting aspect observed was the participants' self-esteem. They show great satisfaction since they can understand and communicate themselves in English and even though they recognize their limitations in the English language, they strive that their students reach the English level needed. The participants also have a great talent when it comes to creating classroom resources, making the teaching process an art, as it should be. They understand that their role is to introduce the English language to the primary school student: "We can take English to school in a more practical and easy way so when children start in high school, they won't think of English as a strange and difficult subject." (Rejannis Cova, Cumaná).

The fact that the participants (generalist teachers) are learning English in parallel with their students reinforces their confidence and self-affirmation:

"As time went by, during the development of the strategies, boys and girls lost their fear to pronounce the words learnt in class. Children and teacher trusted each other; this confidence was obtained through motivation as well as the integration of their parents along the process".

(María Vegas, Cojedes).

During the socialization processes, the pride of these participating teachers has been evident. They can communicate using Basic English, but with a lot of passion and dedication. The result is that their students are better than them using the English language. For example, in Amazonas, Yaritza Solano managed to make her students perform dialogues, with excellent pronunciation, fulfilling the maxim that "the student should surpass the teacher", which should be the goal of all teachers.

Interdisciplinarity

In this category, we find a basic element of the approach that is used in the teaching of English as a foreign language in the Venezuelan education system. The interdisciplinary approach is evident in the books of the Bicentennial Collection *My Victory* (English text books for secondary school provided by the MPPE to the students). In the curricular units of the PNFA emphasis is placed on the meaningful links between different areas of knowledge. Here are some examples:

“The topic “Numbers”, created a kind of special enthusiasm in children for learning English. They used the numbers in English in games during the breaks, and in Physical Education classes. The same enthusiasm was also found in their parents, since they participated in some classes and they observed their children using the English language, children and parents felt pleased”.

(Heika Rada, Sucre).

“In relation to my experience during the 2016-2017 school year, it was highly important. In addition to providing me knowledge in teaching English for elementary school I had the opportunity to articulate the contents to all subjects, the use of recycling materials was quite interesting in order to plan each daily teaching activities. These all motivated children in learning and understanding English”.

(Margeidi Millán, Sucre).

Community Integration

English was taught inside and outside the classrooms, as it is described in the following examples:

“I develop my English classes in a rural area; children are

pretty motivated in attending their activities. This same experience is seen in children from other grades that I did not teach English to, but when I was teaching my students they approached the classroom window and later checked their classmates' notebooks. It is also necessary to point out those teachers who work with other subjects felt the need to include English as part of their planning due to the demand of the students themselves. To learn English has become a "kind of a craze" in our institution. Parents have also been very supportive in the preparation of resources and commitment to bring their children on time to class".

(Stefani Palumbo Bruna - Sucre)

"The good impact of the Basic English for primary school lays in the teachers training they received (PNFA). Personally, I like to share this new teaching experience with my students, parents and other teachers, also at home with my husband and children".

(Alejandra Morao - Bolívar).

There are instances where children have begun to greet all the people in the school using English, from the school principal down and teachers from other subjects also love to attend the English classes, taking part in them together with the students. Another experience was seeing parents with tears in their eyes, excited when they saw their children speaking in English. There were situations in which parents began to study English with their children. Small learning communities have been created to learn the language; some teachers have created their interest groups to reinforce English in school.

There are also very important experiences with children with special needs, for example:

“Children with special educational needs and disabilities show greater interest and skill in practicing the pronunciation of this new vocabulary. The incorporation of this language into their daily pedagogical routine achieved a great favourable impact because children -through some strategies -such as ‘flash cards’ for the recognition of people, objects, animals; we as teachers, were able to work with the educational board to know the alphabet and its pronunciation, among other teaching materials that were used and created in the classroom to develop the class. Children with special needs sometimes projected ideas for upcoming classes; they also participated in the small micro classes that were developed in and out of the classrooms”.

(Salazar Yolimar, Bolívar)

Interculturality

The opinions centred on the experiences of working in a multilingual environment are found in this category. In the states of Delta Amacuro, Monagas and Amazonas, participants worked with students who speak indigenous languages. This is of great importance since their work helps to counteract the belief that multiple languages cannot be learned or that the mother tongue will be minimized. Quite the contrary, these experiences reinforce the theory that multilingualism strengthens languages and recognizes the importance of our children speaking different languages. Some opinions are cited below:

“My experience in 6th grade, section C, was enjoyable, proactive and meaningful, since there was a meeting of cultures. The group of students belonging to the Warao ethnic group showed interest in each class, the ones that most caught their attention were the resource used (cards, illustrated stories). They understood the content of our daily food we consume in our region, numbers from 1 to 5 and how to greet

people; this influenced positively because they learned how to use words in the three different languages: Spanish, English and Warao. Bilingual intercultural education fosters the maintenance of oral and written use of the native language in indigenous peoples; reading and writing must be part of everyday life, due to the experience and emotion that allow learners to understand the world in which we live in”.

(Aracelia González, Delta Amacuro)

In Delta Amacuro, the teachers Danmarlys Cabrera and Glamerys Rengifo (5th grade) developed a basic dictionary project illustrated in Spanish, English and Warao. They also developed - in the school ‘Ceferino Rojas Diaz’ - various joint activities based on the three languages:

Children showed a lot of motivation because they were able to create their own booklets using disposable materials; they investigated words in English and the equivalent in their native Warao language. Their parents also got excited and took part in such research by handling the words helping their children.

The children wrote some poems related to conservation and the environment in the three languages, which were then recited by children of the 4th, 5th and 6th grades in a meeting on the environment day. Each grade recited the poems in one language for better understanding of the audience. A cultural activity was carried out for the closing of the project ... children took part with a typical dance of the Warao Indians called “The Nijarabaka”. They performed telling the story and then sang the song in Warao and English, with the same rhythm and melody that our indigenous people do. This dance was merged with the ‘Alma Llanera’, sung in English to close the activity with our Venezuelan joropo.

It is important to note that children have taken more interest in both languages, especially when it comes to participating in cultural activities in which love for our indigenous people is the most important thing. On the other hand, it is shown that English does not displace our mother tongue, on the contrary it becomes integrated and serves as motivation for our students learning.

(Danmarlys Cabrera & Glamerys Rengifo - Delta Amacuro).

In Amazonas, there are teachers who worked with groups of students in multilingual contexts: Spanish, English and Yekuana, Baré, Currupaco, Huottöja or Jivi.

To close this section, the following quotation is used to demonstrate the impact many teachers pointed out regarding this training experience:

The teaching of the English language in Primary Education has provided equal opportunities to the children of our educational system. This allows the development of skills in children to strengthen their knowledge and experiences in their training. In addition, they are trained to use the language in everyday situations. As a professional, I'm proud for being one of the first teachers trained to take this language to school, as well as to acquire certain language skills.

(Heika Rada Anton, Sucre)

Final remarks

The importance of language teaching to children from an early age or at the elementary level has been the subject of analysis by many authors. The inclusion of the English language in primary education (national education system) is a great step towards making important changes in

the teaching and learning process to children throughout the country. The collected opinions give weight to the importance of language acquisition in young learners. Furthermore, Venezuela has become part of the group of countries that incorporate the study of English as a foreign language as a national policy. This first cohort showed that it is possible for children to speak English, after receiving classes at school with their generalist teachers. The methodology used to make them acquire English in primary school is very important, not as an isolated subject, but as part of a whole where they can use words and expressions in everyday life. This practical experience encompasses the vision that the Vice Minister of Education Humberto González had, when in 2016 this PNFA English for Primary school was proposed. Below is an extract from an interview with him at that time:

The generalist teacher should teach English and all areas in their grade during the school year. The formation is integral, so the training would be much richer if they are formed in an integral way. English is in our daily lives since technologies use information in English.... Neither banning nor segmenting areas is important for the generalist teacher It is important to understand that they are not properly English class, but a field that opens within the integral teaching. A teacher, who is learning, can help kids ... to have a training of English and is able to work or incorporate aspects of English even in other areas. It is to make training teachers feel confidence, the idea is to open up at holistic education Teachers are not prepared and that is why this formation is taking place. It is to open a new land.... A teacher who is learning is just the best possible teacher for a kid who also wants to be learning”.

(Interview conducted on 12/26/2016).

Since the experience of a pedagogical transformation in the area of English in basic education began in 2014, changes of authorities have been made at the ministerial level; however, the vision of the importance of the

presence of English in the curriculum has been maintained. The integration of the areas (Interdisciplinarity) and Interculturality have been two of the most important elements that have been acknowledged by the authorities (eg, Zeuch & Gregson 2015; López de D'Amico & Gregson, 2017).

This has been a new and successful programme because of the results obtained so far. It is observed in the smiling faces on girls and boys, teachers who feel that they not only can communicate in English but also share basic knowledge in the language. The programme also contributes with the academic development of teachers in service. Maria Eugenia Piñero proudly highlighted that:

The National Advanced Training Programme 'teaching English for Primary school', which no other university has, exists thanks to the policies of the Ministry of the Popular Power for Education through the Micromisión Simón Rodríguez, we are giving this training to teachers so that our children, and teenagers receive their English classes from the education approach that we propose. That is, training from the pedagogical practice which includes pedagogical reflections and transformations based on research, innovations, pedagogical expeditions and the sharing of experiences that teachers have. This vision is a response to the philosophy of comprehensiveness that we manage and consider in the curriculum. Teachers should integrate all the pedagogical processes in the school as the natural space of concretion in the formation of our children. It seems to me that this is a new and interesting experience that gives concreteness to the vision of the curricular pedagogical proposal we manage the curriculum as a whole, integrates, articulates, and leads to a formation that does not fragment the process. Knowledge is integrated and formed in the consciousness of our children as a whole.

(Interview with María Eugenia Piñero - Vice Minister of Education at the moment of the interview, 05/02/2018).

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ENGLISH FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION: IN THE VOICES OF TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS

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Introduction

Throughout Latin America, the teaching of foreign languages, English, in the public system, is for the most part, compulsory at high school and is being increasingly included at primary level.

For example, Ruiz (2018) reports that in Costa Rica “in 2008, after the National Plan for the Development of the Country, the program *Costa Rica Multilingual 2008-2017* was initiated, to answer to the need expressed by young people in the country to learn the English language” (p.14) though it is unknown how many English teachers the nation needs for this endeavor and the 3,600 teachers they already have just reach an intermediate level (Cordaba & Araya, 2010).

In the case of Colombia, after the Colombian Framework for English -COFE- project of 1995, they addressed the need not only provide initial teacher training, but also set up professional development programs aimed at primary and secondary school teachers who were working on the basis of international models and national experiences. Thus,

in 2007 they launched the National Bilingual Programme (Cárdenas, González and Álvarez, 2010).

Cuba, on the other hand, recently announced that all Cuban university graduates should attain a B1+ level in English according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) standards as a graduation requirement. For this reason, in 2018 a new edition of the ELT Roadshow project was implemented for the training of English language teachers in a partnership between the Ministry of Higher Education and the British Council to reformulate language policies (Cuban university students for more quality, 2018).

In Venezuela, the education system is divided into subsystems, levels and modalities. In the first place, the basic education subsystems comprise of: initial education (from 0 to 6 years old), primary (1st to 6th grade) and high-school in two options: general high-school (1st to 5th year) and technical high-school (1st to 6th year); universities grant bachelor's and master's degrees. There are also educational options for those people who may require curricular adaptation such as: special education, adult education, rural education, arts education, military education, intercultural education, border education and bilingual education (LOE, 2009). Learning a foreign language in this system is limited, since it is only mandatory in high-school, though in the search for quality, programs and projects have been implemented.

In 2007, The Ministry of Popular Power for Education in the primary subsystem curriculum included the teaching of English for 4th, 5th and 6th grade in the area of language, communication and culture (MPPE, 2007). However, lack of clear guidelines led to unsuccessful results.

In 2016, the Ministry established, via the Micromisión Simón Rodríguez, The National Advanced Training Program (PNFA). In the area of English language teaching, English as Foreign Language for Primary School, a program intended to train public school teachers to initiate young learners in the use of the English language, was offered

in partnership with the British Council. In this framework, a national research project supported by the Education Ministry and the British Council aims to discover the importance of this program through the voices the school teachers and their facilitators.

In this project, the facilitators (trainers) were English language teachers, some of them graduated in the MMSR National Training Program (PNF, in Spanish) and trained by the British Council in best practices, planning, assessment, and professional development. The facilitators' views in the light of Micromisión values and beliefs, that is, permanent development, shared growth and knowledge, collective empowerment, action-research and continued self-analysis, would grant insight on the praxis. We thus propose the following questions:

1.- What is the meaning of the program according to the opinions of the teacher-facilitators who participated in the Micromisión Simón Rodríguez, National Advanced Training Program: English for Primary?

2.- What contribution has the National Advanced Training Program: English for Primary made to primary school teacher education?

The National Advanced Training Program Specialization in English As A Foreign Language: English For Primary Education

This programme emerged out of a national study into educational quality carried out in Venezuela in 2014 as a response to the demand for teacher training. It visualizes the generalist primary school teacher responsible for initiating young learners in the use of English. This vision is based on several studies reported by Sagaray, Fernandez and Rodriguez (2017) in the book: "Se Respira Cambio":

In the current context, the Ministry of Education and the British Council have joined efforts and, based on the previous experience with the Micromisión Simón Rodríguez in foreign languages that produced very good results the National

Advanced Training Programme: Specialisation in English for Primary Education was developed aiming at the training of general teachers to work with English in primary school all over the country.

At the beginning of the program in 2016, 801 participants enrolled, primary school teachers all of them and by mid-2018 it included 470 teachers teaching children from 4th to 6th grade in the 24 states of the country, with 31 training centers, 46 facilitators, 25 tutors and a national coordinator (see, Lopez de D'Amico & Morao).

Methodology and Analysis

This is a qualitative research aiming at the understanding of social phenomena from our own experiences, considering the social context where the processes take place, personal, social and institutional phenomena (Martínez, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2002). In this study, the methodology will be oriented towards the phenomenological-hermeneutical aspect (Van Manen, 2003)

Research Participants

Specifically, in this study, a sample of 46 facilitators was taken and 13 of them answered the survey. They became key informants who allowed us to understand from their views what the PNFA- English means for primary school (See Table 1).

Data collection

For this research project, three different methods were carried out: classroom observation, document review and semi-structured interview. Thirteen (13) teachers-facilitators were interviewed between January and April 2018. These were informal, friendly encounters where the facilitators had the opportunity to freely express thoughts and feelings. Social networks were also used to clarify information or go deeper in some topics.

Table 1. Teachers- Facilitators interviewed

	SEX	AGE	BACHELOR DEGREE	STATE
1	F	25	Lic. Integral Education/ Lic. English teacher	APURE
2	F	60	English teacher	ARAGUA
3	M	37	English teacher	ARAGUA
4	F	44	Lic. Integral Education/ Lic. English teacher	BOLIVAR
5	M	63	Lic. In Philosophy/ Lic. English teacher for high school	DIST CAPITAL
6	F	34	Lic. Integral Education/ Lic. English teacher	DELTA AMACURO
7	M	32	Lic. English as a foreign language	FALCON
8	M	34	Lic. English as a foreign language	FALCON
9	F	27	Lic. English teacher for high school	GUARICO
10	F	41	Lic. Integral Education/ Lic. English teacher	MIRANDA
11	F	35	Lic. Integral Education/ Lic. English teacher	TACHIRA
12	F	39	English teacher	VARGAS
13	F		Lic education in modern languages	ZULIA

Information Analysis

The procedure selected to analyze the information followed the Inductive Method suggested by Strauss and Corbin (2003), dividing and fragmenting the information in significant connected units.

First the information was transcribed and divided into paragraphs.

Secondly, paragraphs were coded according to words or phrases that allowed the organization in units (Properties), and separate information not relevant to the project.

Thirdly, discursive coincidence allowed the formation of clusters of information and their conceptualization and unification in a category.

Table 2: Process of Categorization

Properties	Concepts	Categories
<p>Training Preparation Resources Didactic contribution Strategies Planning Contextualization</p>	<p>Learning English in Venezuelan public schools. A change in teacher's perceptions. Implementing many new strategies that have favored the teaching process and made the use of English language more significant. Humanistic education aligned to our working context. Highlight the use of recycling material for construction of didactic resources. Parents' motivation led to enthusiastic participation in projects. Creativity to design strategies and resources. Collaborative work and interest in research evident in discussions and presentations. Students' English language awareness. Excellent training received and given by facilitators. A response to a felt need in Venezuelan education: Foreign language learning in primary school.</p>	<p>National Advanced Training Program</p>
<p>Training Preparation Inclusion Capacitation Experience Living experience Continuity</p>	<p>English is taught through games and fun activities. A great opportunity to boost ELT in primary school children through the training of teachers It will allow the development of linguistic skills in English (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Specially speaking. Children will be prepared for high school requirements in foreign language. Children are more motivated.</p>	<p>Benefits for primary school children</p>
<p>Selection Technologies Mentoring Flexibility Autochthonous material</p>	<p>Careful selection of teachers Consider technological aspects Provide mentors right from the start for graduate research projects. Attractive monetary rewards for facilitators Flexibility for schedules and attendance Effective communication among authorities to provide clear guidelines Technological support (Canaimas) for participants and facilitators.</p>	<p>Future cohorts</p>

Category: An Innovative National Training Program

This category arises from the concurrent insights and views expressed by the facilitators. The PNFA is perceived as a revolutionary option to undertake English language teaching in public schools in Venezuela. It represents inclusion because families are motivated to participate and value the possibility their children now have to learn English at school.

Facilitators realize the relevance of learning English at a young age and a timely preparation for high school, together with the importance of learning a foreign language for the children's cognitive and social development, not forgetting the relevance in today's world of English as an international and technological language.

From the teacher's professional development point of view, the PNFA EIP provides an opportunity unheard of for primary school teachers until this programme was launched. It allows the exchange of knowledge (strategies and methodologies) between secondary school teachers and primary school teachers.

Category: Benefits for children in public education

The PNFA is an answer to two-fold issue of Venezuelan education. Firstly, it addresses the felt need of professional development expressed by primary school teachers. And secondly, it provides public school children with an opportunity access to EFL classes guided by teachers trained in an official educational program. These teachers accepted the challenge of simultaneously learning and teaching a language not completely unknown but striving to gain gradual command. They recognize that creativity, motivation, and courage were the tools they used to overcome their own limitations and their children's.

Category: Future Cohorts

Parents and families, and even the children themselves, in many settings demand the opportunity to have English classes. Facilitators

claim for the PNFA EIP must continue until we train the necessary number of teachers in the schools, at least one specialist in each school. In order to reach this goal, it is necessary:

An efficient enrollment system and policies.

Fulfill the technological demands for teachers and participants (Internet connection, access to computers or tablets)

Schedule adaptability

Support for research projects (mentors and guidelines)

Some Recommendations and Reflections

Experiences, views and contributions expressed by teachers-facilitators in these pages reflect a variety and depth that deserves to be listened to and registered. This program, they claim, is at the same time innovative, for the first time teachers are especially trained to teach English in public schools, and challenging, resources (both material and human) are limited. However, exchanging learning experiences, developing as facilitators' leadership skills, and witnessing actual results have produced professional and personal growth evident in language acquisition, research capabilities, and methodological growth. Even more, they are thankful for the opportunity.

The PNFA has allowed to transform the way ELT was perceived by the educational system and regarding the teaching practice it has made classroom activities more interactive changing the traditional approach and moving towards a more communicative way.

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IMPACT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL ENGLISH ON SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

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Introduction

The inclusion of English in national primary school curricula in Latin America has been a feature of the twenty-first century, notably in countries such as Costa Rica, Cuba, Colombia and Uruguay. Venezuela is no exception and in 2007, the Bolivarian Primary Education Subsystem Curriculum proposed the teaching of Foreign Languages, in this case English, from 4th, 5th, and 6th grade levels. This trend recognizes the importance of students learning foreign languages from an early age, as mentioned by several authors in the area, such as Ellis (1997) and Brown (2007).

In the case of Venezuela, one of the main obstacles to overcome has been the need to train enough teachers able to teach English at primary level. To help meet this need, in 2106, the Venezuelan Ministry of Education, through its Micromisión Simón Rodríguez (MMSR), established the National Advanced Training Program (PNFA, for its initials in Spanish) in Foreign Languages: English for Primary Education, with the support of the British Council. The aim of the programme is to train generalist primary school teachers to take on the additional role

of teaching English. The teachers are given training in second language teaching methodology to be able to teach English at that level.

At the end of 2019, the third cohort of teachers are starting the program which has training centers for participants in each of the country's twenty-four states. Classes are given by facilitators who, in turn, work under the supervision of a tutor, an experienced English teaching professional. Each state has one tutor.

The aim of this study is to find out how the introduction of English in the primary school has had an impact on the children themselves: to see it from their perspective, to know something of their expectations, advances, difficulties and experiences with the language. It is also important to see it from the perspective of parents and representatives, school principals and the community as a whole, to know how the programme has been received and supported through the reception and support they have provided to learning.

To date, most information on this has been anecdotal, from the impressions of the state tutors who, when visiting the training centers and the urban and rural schools where participants engage in teaching practice, agree that the teachers are motivated, very creative both in the classroom and in making their own teaching resources, and that they feel comfortable with the teaching methodology they are learning. Likewise, children seem to enjoy learning English and the parents/representatives, and the community are happy with it and willing to become part of this process.

We thus propose the following research questions:

- How has the experience of children learning English been in the framework of the National Advanced Programme for Teaching English in primary schools?
- How has the experience of children learning English in schools

been perceived by parents, representative and principals?

- How has the experience of children learning English in schools been perceived by the community? How has the community participated?

Methodology

The study is an example of qualitative research with the aim of understanding and interpreting experiences and social phenomena from the perspective of those directly involved, as well as learning of the experiences lived by primary school students, parents and representatives and the community.

Research participants

The participants of this study are: state tutors, facilitators, participants in the National Programme of Advanced Training: Teaching English Primary Education, as well as parents and representatives of students, supervisors and school directors, children from the states Apure, Bolívar, Nueva Esparta, Zulia and Sucre. They voluntarily answered the questionnaire sent and some of their opinions are described in the results. The instrument was sent through the tutors in each state.

Analysis of the information

The analysis of the information obtained was carried out taking into account the opinions, reflections and points of view expressed. Responses were organized according to three aspects highlighted in the responses: experiences of students learning English, the performance of parents, representatives, school directors and the experiences with communities.

Student Experiences:

To describe the experiences of children learning English in the

framework of the PNFA EIP, it is necessary to highlight some of their comments.

Some of them agreed as to the pleasure of using resources with reusable material to learn the language, as shown by the following comments:

“What I like the most about my school is studying English. I like the images and drawings that my teacher brings to the class and she teaches us the new words and I really like to draw”.

Ana Carreño, fourth grade.

“We have classes on Tuesday and what I like the most is the big book that my teacher brings with the story in English. And we also make up a story and it was great. It was about professions and we presented it in class”.

Yolfren Marchan, fifth grade

“I like to learn English. I was scared before but now it’s very easy. I like the drawings and my teacher likes drawings too. We order the words, we make big books and dice, puppets too. I like the drawings in the books. I put them big in drawings and I put them in my room. Now I know enough English, so I gave an excellent presentation and my mom congratulated me”.

Jaider Luis Garcia, fourth grade

The pleasure that children show for the resources that teachers use to teach their English class indicates that they have been interested in learning naturally and have also been involved in their leaning process in a way that is perhaps not conscious.

Other opinions describe the pleasure towards recreational activities,

songs and group exercises, as described below:

“I have always liked English but before they did not give me that subject. My English teacher is always happy. We play bingo, memory, word searches and I always do them fast because I know many words in English and I am always the leader of the group. I have to help my classmates to finish because if we don’t, we lose, it’s fine but time is running out quickly”.

Jesús Velasquez, fifth grade

“Studying English has been great. I already have two years learning in my school and I know to pronounce because I practice a lot. We have learned a lot because we sing, play and have fun”.

Mariemi Valderrama, fifth grade.

“I think it’s very good to study English. We play, sing and work in groups, we help each other, it’s fun, and we always do something new. When we go to high school, we are going to be ready and it will be easier”.

Angel Morales, sixth grade

This last opinion also emphasizes how pertinent it is for children to learn English from an early age to be able to start high school better prepared to take on five more years of English classes. Take, for example the experiences of the children at the Unidad Educativa Francisco Aristigueta Badaracco, a school that includes both Primary and Secondary education. Contact with English from primary level seems to improve their oral production when they are in secondary:

“In my English class, all the activities we do are really nice. What I like the most is the way we can talk and pronounce.

My classmates and I speak in English as much as we can. We started since fifth grade and now in the secondary, we practice conversations from “My First Victory” book and also we practice all the time out of classroom”.

Sebastian Chimaras, first year student.

“Since I was in fifth grade, I have received English classes in my school. It has helped me to speak English better; writing is hard but I can speak, pronounce, and learn new vocabulary easily. We are a very big group and now we have a conversational team at high school, we practice all the time and our parents are happy for this. My father is studying English for primary school”.

Nelson Figueroa, first year student.

“I am learning English since primary school. My fifth-year teacher helped us to practice. He told me that I had a very good pronunciation and now in high school we participate in a conversational team only to speak in English, we practice with songs, “My fifth Victory” book and other materials that our teacher and us use in our meetings. We have the same teacher since fifth grade. It is great to understand English”.

José Alejandro Serrano. First year Student.

“In our institution, since we were in elementary school, we start to learn English, that helped us to understand in a better way in high school classes, most of us like activities to speak, pronounce and practice dialogues, I speak English with very good pronunciation and I’m not embarrassed to speak in public”.

Samuel Teruel (1st year). First year Student.

According to Rincones, J. (2019) “The influence of teaching English in primary education in the pursuit of this area towards the level of general secondary education is evidenced in an easier way in the development of oral production in students, they develop more security and self-confidence, they appropriate their learning process naturally; they do not suffer the impact of having contact with the language only from high school.”

Opinions of principals and supervisors

School principals and supervisory staff underline the great motivation and interest that children show in learning English in their schools but also point to ways in which the English learning programme has brought about a general change in student performance. Here are some of their replies:

“In the schools it has been an achievement, from these two years the students are receiving English classes. At this moment I have eight teachers in the classroom who are attending all grades, parents want it to be from the first grade, we have requested it in educational zone, this is what we are doing, the students are very willing to learn English every day, that has influenced other areas, they participate in a very natural way and without pressure, they like to make resources for their activities and close of projects they are very dynamic, children impact with their samples in English and their parents come to the schools”.

Luis Miguel Lemus Director,
U. E “ Francisco Aristigueta Badaracco”

It has been wonderful, the experience with the children in their English classes, their teachers put the games a lot into practice as a didactic strategy that has shown highly positive results, they cooperate more with each other and are even more disciplined, in all the areas they also want to work in groups, we are doing

everything possible for all our teachers to do this specialization”

Santiago Rojas, Principal

“The experience has been very good in the institution, students would like to see English classes more frequently, they look enthusiastic and they are dedicated to developing all the activities, there has been greater receptivity in parents and representatives, and in students a lot of effort and eager to continue learning the language, every day they are faster, it would be excellent if more teachers of the school join the training”.

Carmen Jimenez,
School Supervisor “República de Haití”

“The discipline has improved, our enrolment is small and everyone is receiving their English classes, it has been observed that children are very comfortable, their academic performance has improved not only in this area of English but in the other areas, they have been very creative, parents have also reacted favourably and have integrated into school activities. Students already demand new things; the English class strategies keep them busy”

José Reyes.(Principal)
School “Isaías Ruiz de Coronado.

“The English classes have helped improve the methods of study in children, the learning process has been motivational and spontaneous, and the methodology used gives good results”.

Ingris Morillo (principal)
School “Clarisa Este de Trejo”

These opinions express the benefit that has resulted from promoting team work in English classes, also the level of cooperation, discipline, enthusiasm and interest in children. Another important aspect is the achievements obtained with the inclusion of games and resources in classroom practice, and the most important thing is that children are very keen to participate in their construction and development. In addition, improvements in performance have been noticeable and have gone hand in hand with the children's increased interest, as mentioned in the opinions, now they are acquiring new ways and strategies to learn and participate. According to Carlos Mora, Vice-academic principal, Badaracco School, with the teaching strategies that he has observed in English classes, the students have become very active participants in the classroom, they are directly and voluntarily involved in all activities and they like interacting with real objects and simulate real situations. According to this opinion, the children enjoy themselves while they learn English and respond positively to the activities that the teachers set up with and that makes learning easier.

These opinions reflect the positive reception that English for Primary has had in schools and this is shown in the feelings of the children, who have improved their levels of participation and cooperation, as expressed in the following opinion:

"In the accompaniment processes it has been observed that the constant participation of students in English classes is noticeable, even in those more introverted, we have observed in the institution that the way in which the classroom is organized and work in groups it has allowed them to be more active, dynamic and, incredibly they have become more disciplined, in the institution we have several charts of English topics now and they are made by children".

Yulemni Olivares
Supervisor, School "Ignacia Campos"

The children want to have English classes more days a week, there are groups that do not have an English teacher and they are asking to be attended, we need more teachers every day, there is a lot of enthusiasm in the children, we only have two teachers attending all the groups, and the representatives want their children to have their classes in the area, so we are motivating other teachers to enrol in the training

Marisol Orihuela Basic School “Javier Alcalá Vásquez”.

In the same way, José Martinez, principal of the “Jose Antonio Ramos” school, expresses:

“The integration of the parents has been very satisfactory. Since they knew that their children were learning English they came and said they were happy and grateful because their children would be promoted for the first year and it was important that they had a good base in this language. In this rural area it is of great importance that our teachers are trained to serve our students in this foreign language, according to the Bolivarian curriculum”.

It is very interesting that this is happening, especially in rural areas that previously had little support compared to schools in urban areas.

The important thing is that the children are enjoying learning English and, as observed by some principals, this enjoyment is in no small way thanks to the methodology used in class which has had a very positive effect on performance. Pair work and small group work stand out particularly in this sense.

Integration and support among students have been progressive, school life has improved, children treat each other with respect, collaboration and companionship and this is due to work in pairs and groups, and children feel different, and in the other

areas they do not want to sit behind each other in rows.

Janeth Cortez, Vice-principal of the Luis Beltran Prieto
Figueroa Basic School.

According to the interviewees, they concur on the subject of student progress and attitude: students are described as enthusiastic, self-assured, participatory, and proactive and demanding and learning is aided by the resources and didactic strategies employed. Furthermore, in their day-to-day interaction, children treat each other with respect and companionship, a transformation that is reflected in the way children act has even started being felt in other subject areas.

Parents and representatives

In relation to the reactions of the parents and representatives, a series of opinions are described that allow us to know what the impact on them has been, considering that the support of the parents is very significant for the motivation of children to learn.

According to Yumaira Diaz, a participating teacher in Sucre State:

“For their part, parents and/or representative say they are very happy that their children study English, some of them say they are grateful that this is for free in their own school. They have given me a lot of support and have told me they are willing to help out when needed. They underline that the children will surely do very well in high school because they already know English. Here in Carupano only families who have money can pay for English courses for their children but now they have English in school, that pleases the representatives, I think that is why they have given so much support”.

According to this opinion, parents value and appreciate the fact that their children are learning English in their schools and the fact that is free of charge, and that their regular class teacher is teaching them. These factors make them willing to collaborate and integrate. Another opinion highlights that:

“The fact that the children are learning English has motivated us, it makes the activities and meetings more meaningful. We always help organising things with the children, I remember one time when we worked on topic of the family; it was very significant that the children talked about their family accompanied by their parents, or some brother or sister, even teachers, representatives or some of my students, attended to accompany them. The experience was very beautiful”.

Yenifer Raposo Edo. Sucre

The fact that the parents are involved in their children's learning is highly positive; the programme has been well received and many agree on the importance of their children coming into contact with English before entering High School to give them a better chance of success at that level. At the same time, children benefit enormously from the support of parents and representatives, as shown by the following:

“The parents have been very happy because their children are learning despite it being a rural school. They have answered the calls attend some class sessions and they have observed how children express themselves in English and take what they learn in school home with them. Parents know about “I point, you say” children practice with each other, children come to their houses pronouncing words in English in a very cheerful and self-confident way”.

Jimmy Pineda, Apure State.

Likewise, Luz Cedeño, Counselor Teacher, “Antonio José de Sucre” school, states:

“Among other aspects, it is worth mentioning the willingness of parents and representatives to want to participate in projects and to help in the development of the suggested activities, even the most disinterested have seen the need to turn up at the school at the request of their children. This has had a positive effect on the school, attracting the other teachers and workers in the school to explore the way children learn English; and the participation of representatives in meetings, to see their children expressing commands and simple phrases related to the English learning project, they bring a lot of satisfaction in the children, they get excited when they look at their family attending their activities”.

The high level of collaboration and participation helps strengthen the students’ sense of security and self-esteem:

For the representatives it has been very satisfying to know that their children are learning a new language from an early age and also they are happy to see the motivation they show in receiving this knowledge, because the parents have shown me the gratitude they feel when their children tell them about the life experiences in English classes and give them support by reinforcing what they have learned at home.

Maria Cabrera Apure state.

“As for parents, it is important to emphasize that in this rural community, with an important presence of indigenous people, they have been surprised with this experience that their children would see English in this school year, although not all children have English in my school”.

Cristina Rivas

Parents see the classes as advantageous for their children's academic progress as a great and personal growth. On the other hand, there is some concern that not all children have English classes in the same school and points to the need for each school year to train more teachers.

"I am working the English class with games, songs, dynamics and contests and the representatives have become very involved with great motivation; they help their children in the activities that are carried out with recycled material, they help them to do the memory games, in the school the teachers that are in the programme for primary English organize activities with the children of 5th and 6th grade and parents are our allies. This experience has been new for us".

Nancy Guevara. Edo Bolívar Caroni Municipality.

According to the participant Luisa Tineo from Sucre State, the ways in which parents have contributed to their children's education is now more effective and meaningful. Her students have special needs since they have hearing impairments and thus benefit from visual resources, flash words, posters and so on. For each topic, these were made with the support of parents and representatives. Parents stressed how happy they were that their children were learning English and have become much more involved in school activities than before.

In the opinion of the representative María Vargas de Barroso:

"My daughter has always been shy and introverted; however, in the English class she was very well integrated, motivated. She began to tell me that she has always liked English and she even knows a lot of words. I have a hard time motivating her to attend school but the English class has interested her and the teacher gives her roles to participate. That's why I felt grateful, I want my daughter also to be integrated in the other areas"

This relationship between parents and representatives with the process of learning English as a foreign language for their children, from the point of view of the participants, has strengthened the development of students. They have become more self-confident and always want to do more activities. Furthermore, the teachers themselves feel that their work is appreciated and supported but also agree that all children must receive English classes in their schools and are concerned that there are cases where in the same family not all children are having classes making the continuing training of generalist teachers even more necessary.

Community

Many responses indicate that the teaching of English in primary schools, motivated by the training, has been felt to be very positive with communities committing themselves to high levels of participation and support with teachers and children. Take for example:

“The great impact of teaching English in primary schools has been noticeable in the community of” Los Chaimas because parents and representatives show joy, interest and satisfaction to see their children learning English and repeating at home what they learn at school, even more so when they see them singing and dancing in school activities organized by the English area. They suggested that we do an activity in the community with their children for Christmas, so I organized it with the children and we prepared a very popular Christmas bonus like the “burrito sabanero” but in English, so we have incorporated other Christmas bonuses that will be presented at Christmas at school and in the community, they organize everything. Because of the great motivation and support of the community, my partner and I are teaching all sections with only English”.

Jose Antonio Gonzalez edo. Sucre

According to this, parents and representatives have been motivated to support activities related to learning English and have made efforts to persuade school directors to incorporate more teachers into the programme so that all the students have English classes.

Other examples also underline how English teaching in public primary schools has had a positive effect on the community include the following:

“Due to the fact that Jobo Dulce is a rural area dedicated mostly to agriculture, people do not take much interest in academic topics; however, it is evident that with the inclusion of English classes in the school, they have become involved because children speak about it at home and with their mates so now parents have started going to the school more often to check on their kids’ progress and talk with other families about what the children are doing. The community is very grateful for it”.

Maria Cabrera Apure State.

“In the Bolivarian School “Las Praderas de Tunapuy”, the children come from a rural community, dedicated to agriculture and the families are farmers; now they are proud that children are studying English at the school. The community as a whole believes that it implies quality education and it represents a wonderful opportunity for the students, and, apart from that, by the teachers from this community appreciate this program”.

Cruz Garcia Tunapuy Community.

To those comments, we could also add these from Casanay, Andrés Eloy Blanco municipality, Sucre state, a rural community where the programme is being developed in four schools at primary level:

“The community is really involved, all the kids in town are receiving English classes since first grade, parents go as companions of different activities and closing projects, I have seen mothers with tears of emotion when their children say words and simple phrases in English. Here people are very humble, and it is a privilege that this program has come. It has been very well received. People are happy and grateful”.

Betsy Gonzalez . Citizen from Casanay

The community is helping so much, they are so happy that children in our schools already have a first contact with English, something that has never happened here. Now, in the meetings they are suggesting that children of kindergarten level also receive English classes, we have many kindergarten teachers interested in participating in the programme.

Luisa Lopez . Citizen from Casanay.

These expressions are similar in that they point to the gratefulness felt that in their schools, children are learning English. This feeling of gratitude involves children, parents and the community in general. The communities are motivated and this in turn helps students keep their interest in learning. Another example of the community involvement is described in a collaborative activity carried out in Bolívar state:

The involvement of parents and representatives with the English learning process in children, has motivated the community in many ways, for example in Chirika, Caroni Municipality, we organized a contest of English with fifth and sixth grade students, two PNFA teachers participated in organising it. We use recycled materials, parents participated in the making of the resources, they also help with the decoration and organization of the street; children work in teams and all the activities were related with the English topics worked in class. This gave the

students confidence and the experience was shared with the community”

Niurcaris Ares. Bolivar State.

From the points of view of the participants, the community has become motivated by the fact that children are learning English at primary school and this motivation has made it possible for them to become more actively involved, something that has enhanced the learning process itself.

Final Reflections

The National Advanced Training Programme Specialization in English Foreign Languages for Primary Education has provided those teachers involved valuable and rewarding experience in applying a teaching methodology that has enabled learning. It has thus far proved to be an excellent response to the need to strengthen pedagogical transformation in Venezuela, incorporating as it does the teaching of a foreign language together with humanizing strategies that help strengthen mutual respect, cooperation and teamwork. The links between each topic and everyday life has involved families in sharing that experience in the understanding of a foreign language in a Venezuelan context.

A very important aspect is that the students are not only seeing this learning process as just another school subject, but rather as a novel and motivating experience, which has made them even aware of what they like to do to learn and how they like to work in class. Classroom tasks are directly focused on them and their creativity and this releases them, as it were, from any feelings of insecurity or pressure and allows them to act naturally. Furthermore, support from the families involved has helped children in that they feel that they are not learning in isolation but as part of something bigger, beginning with the home and extending into the community.

It is also clear that this programme has had a significant impact in rural communities. Classes have been received with humility and gratitude, children are keen to learn, teachers are motivated and the communities as a whole feel that they are part of something. It is worth mentioning that the program has reached many of these communities thanks to the participation of facilitators of the first cohort who since graduating have prepared to train others.

Finally, extracurricular activities organized by teachers, families and the community to promote learning English as a foreign language have helped contextualize the topics and strengthened the interaction of children in the communities.

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THE ROLE OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL IN TEACHER TRAINING

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Introduction

Teacher training in Venezuela has been characterized not only by the high number of institutes that offer courses but also by its increasing diversity, both in public and private sectors. Graduates, however, have not been sufficiently monitored and systematic in-service teacher training and opportunity for development has been limited. Venezuelan lawmakers have sought to redress this situation by including in articles 37, 38 and 39 of the 2009 Organic Law of Education (LOE Spanish abbreviation) 2009, the need to formulate, regulate, monitor and control training policies for teachers, to raise levels of knowledge and performance levels of teaching staff in the understanding that continuing education is a right and duty of teachers during their working lifetime.

The Venezuelan Ministry of Education (hereafter referred to in this article by its Spanish abbreviation MPPE) thus actively pursues policies that allow access to lifelong learning for all in-service staff to guarantee educational quality through programmes that transform teaching practice and ultimately bring about significant changes in the education system in Venezuela. Within this framework, several new

training programmes have been set up in the country to offer in-service teachers the opportunity to continue their professional development. At national level, continuing education is coordinated by the CENAMEC foundation (the Ministry of Education research unit), made up of 426 Regional and Local Research and Training Centers all over Venezuelan.

In terms of the teaching of English in schools, there are four important projects that are being developed, namely, the Seminars on the *Colección Bicentenario* Books written and published for High School, The National Training Programme in English Language Teaching for High School level (PNF –bachelor’s degree), and two postgraduate courses (*PNFA*): English Language Teaching for High School level and Teaching English as a Foreign Language for Primary Schools. In all these initiatives the Ministry of Education has worked in partnership with the British Council.

Context

The British Council, renowned worldwide in the field of teaching English as a foreign language, and as a leader in teacher training programmes, has been working in Venezuela since 1940. Two events held by the Council, namely, “Who needs English- The Future of English Language Teaching in Venezuela” in March, 2012 and “Time for English – Transformations of English Language Teaching in Venezuela” in March, 2013, were fundamental in forging this ever important link between the Council and the MPPE, the latter recognizing the need to count the expertise and support of the Council to achieve its own agenda of transformation.

Together, the MPPE and the British Council have worked together in a number of ways, with the seminars and workshops on the *Colección Bicentenario* English books for high school as well as training workshops, publications, course and events associated with the PNF and *PNFA* programmes

For the purpose of this study, we have restricted ourselves to three activities. In each case, we sought the opinions of the participants about the training they were receiving and their suggestions concerning continuing training and development for English teachers.

The first activity centres on the books written and published locally for high school, the *Colección Bicentenario* series of five books, each titled *My Victory* (I to V). These textbooks represented a challenge for high school English teachers since they were based on a communicative approach to learning which, for teachers inclined to more traditional grammar-translation methodology, meant a considerable shift in classroom practice. The British Council was thus invited to hold a series of Workshops across the country, aimed at training teachers how to make the most of these new resources. Held between May 2015 - July 2015 and May 2016 - June 2016, these practical workshop sessions showed participants how to use different techniques to encourage and improve the learning-teaching process. In all, 2,380 participants attended at 10 different venues around the country in 2015 and a further 754 took part in the sessions held the following year, making a total of 3134 altogether. A total of 1617 assessment forms were taken as sample for this study, chosen from both events.

The second activity was the event coordinated by the British Council and the MPPE which was titled “Bringing English to Primary Schools”, held in Caracas, October 2-3, 2017. This event was aimed at teachers enrolled in the PNFA – Teaching English for Primary Education course as well as the tutors and facilitators from all around the country responsible for overseeing and teaching the PNFA participants through a process of cascading in which the British Council plays a fundamental role. One of the purposes of this workshop was to form participants of English for Primary Education Programme for implementing the pilot project “English for Primary Education.” A total of 484 participants took part in the event and 446 assessment forms were revised.

The third activity is the initial training workshop for facilitators and tutors who were going to work in the second cohort of the National Training Programme – EFL. It was held between March 30th and April 4th, 2017 with ELT Consultant Wendy Arnold invited by the British Council to lead a training session on English language teaching methodology. A total of 173 teachers participated; the same number of samples were revised.

Methodology

The design used in this study is based on the exploratory and interpretative paradigm and linked into the qualitative approach. Data was collected during events and assessment forms given to participants.

The instrument itself consisted of 11 questions which focused on personal data (gender, age, labor condition and workplace), event assessment, expectations and suggestions. Questions and specific statements below are examples:

1. What benefit did you expect to obtain for participating in this event /workshop?
2. This event / workshop went beyond your expectations?
3. This event / workshop was a top-quality activity.
4. I have obtained new knowledge and/or abilities from participating in this event / workshop.
5. Comment about whether this event went or did not go beyond your expectations.
6. Do you have any suggestions for improving future activities similar to this?

Participant comments were chosen according to the research purpose. Comments with common repeated elements were put into groups. Some participants gave short answers and others longer ones. Answers were classified according to the reaction of participants to questions, using their own words in order to make the use of lexical units more valuable (Certeau, 1984). The multiple-voice approach was used to present the data (see, Hertz, 1997). The voices of interviewees are used and gives us the opportunity to hear different voices, know stories better and understand the perceptions of human beings (see Charmaz and Mitchell, 1997). Voices and points of view are important elements towards understanding organizational behaviour. Nevertheless, the presentation of the results emphasises the qualitative nature of this research.

Results

Results are divided into three sections, statistical elements of the answers of the participants are presented and opinions.

Participants who attended CB workshops (2015 and 2016) were made up of 70% women and 30% men. Answers related to question number 1, regarding the benefit that participants expected to obtain from these activities are quoted below:

'To obtain new teaching and learning strategies. To share experiences. To incorporate new knowledge and practice'.

'To acquire new strategies to work with Colección Bicentenario in order to teach the English language'.

'A quality formation to make our high school students fall in love with the English language'.

'The benefit was to know how to work in groups effectively with the Colección Bicentenario'.

'More organization in the English language work / planning / correct application of the Colección Bicentenario'

'Improve my teaching skills'.

Regarding the evaluation of the events, 98% of participants stated that the workshop went beyond their expectations and 2 % of them voiced neither agreement nor disagreement. Participants expressed that the workshop went beyond their expectations. Here are some examples:

'100%, besides learning it was a fun and dynamic workshop'.

'It was a pleasant experience and undoubtedly, it went beyond my expectations'.

'Yes, it did. And I learnt that there are many tools for teaching and learning English'.

'Yes, it went beyond my expectations because it has given me new ideas for teaching English in the classroom'.

'Excellent, because techniques taught by the work team remind us the proper use of didactics and besides, it injected motivation into the teaching and learning process for using it in our school'.

The previous information is confirmed by the percentage of answers related to the quality of the events where 98% stated that it was a top-quality activity, 1% stated neither agreement nor disagreement, and 1 % expressed disagreement. Answers confirmed that the goal was reached and the correct use of CB books – ELT was promoted, 98% confirmed it, and previous question 1% stated neither agreement nor disagreement and 1% voiced their disagreement.

Suggestions made in question 7 are summed up in the following opinions:

'Keep doing these events, they are very important and basis on learning planning in the education system'.

'Keep this opportunities programme going for our future'.

'I'd like that you keep doing this sort of workshops because they help us to improve our teaching professional development'.

'I suggest these activities to be done repeatedly. Although we are already specialists, we have to evolve every day with new strategies according to the evolution of our students and new technology'.

Participants expressed their feelings and the need to keep participating in these types of activities, stressing that they had not previously participated in this kind of event organized by the MPPE. Facilitators and tutors also participated in this event, some of them talked about their experiences as authors of the CB books and others talked on behalf of the group they represented.

The following comments are from teachers that attended the 2015 workshop in the state of Monagas. They are identified by name because they participated in assignments during the event:

The experience of Sucre state was highly significant, it was hard work and the organization took several days, meetings with teachers of the municipalities (Regional Coordinator José Gregorio Martínez, helped); during this process we could see the satisfaction of the English teachers from our state because it was the first time they were taken into account in a such necessary training for teaching practice, in the same way, it was useful to reflect and to meet friends again. On behalf of the 138 attendees from Sucre state, I want to give thanks for the opportunity it has given us to reflect on our teaching practice... attendees enjoyed the workshop, they are willing to and very interested in new

opportunities. This workshop was a great success and besides, treatment given to us was very nice.

(Johanna Romero – Facilitator from Sucre state, 5/29/2015)

Second comment belongs to Isabel Faneyth (former tutor and currently facilitator) who was speaker in Monagas state representing the authors' team of the CBbooks;

The experience in Maturín was interesting. Attendance was massive and receptive. The activity was well organized and in perfect calm. It is always a pleasure to work with colleagues from the British Council. They are highly professional and know a lot about the teaching and learning process of the English language and contribute valuable ideas to our work. They are organised, responsible, punctual, respectful and with an avant-garde vision of this work.

The second activity is the event “Bringing English to Primary Schools”, held for participants of the PNFA-English for Primary Education. Participants, of whom 78% were women and 22% men and were almost exclusively MPPE employees (94%). Regarding the benefits they expected to obtain from this event (question number 1), below we include a sample of their opinions:

‘To share experiences about the English language teaching in primary, clarify ideas on the reach and incorporation of this programme in the national education system’.

‘First of all, information generated clear expectations. Thanks for this opportunity’.

‘It was beneficial to acquire new and positive experiences while sharing with colleagues from other ‘states and, in the same way, clarifying questions about this teaching programme’.

'Excellent, congratulations. I feel more motivated every day. This is an indispensable project for our children (students).'

'Deep pedagogical knowledge about the English language teaching supported by the British Council and to know, up to what point, this programme is being recognized in public schools.

To share experiences with teachers from other states of the country about this new approach which is promoted by the Ministry of Popular Power for Education on the teaching of English for Primary Education working together with the British Council'.

'To share experiences with every state of the country, minister, Ministry of Popular Power for Education and the British Council'.

These comments above complement the event assessment, which is presented in the following percentage:

99% of participants stated that the workshop went beyond their expectations and only 1% expressed neither agreement nor disagreement. 100% stated it was a top-quality workshop and consequently, 100% voiced that they acquired new knowledge, abilities and reinforce their English language skills.

Comments referring to statement 5 reinforce the evidence of the percentage where 100% of the participants expressed positive statements according to the aims of the research:

'Yes, this workshop informed teachers about the formation programme with the MPPE and the British Council'.

'It went beyond my expectations. It was a quality process of transmitting and imparting knowledge'.

'I thank for treatment, logistics, sharing experiences with colleagues from other states of the country. All excellent. Thanks'.

'I thank you because it went beyond my expectations and the service was excellent. Congratulations'.

Suggestions made in question number 7 are the following:

"To keep supporting primary education teachers in order to reach more schools which are willing to participate".

"It was an interesting activity. I suggest to keep doing activities like this to support primary education teachers because it represents a window to acquire new knowledge to make easier our work with the students".

"I suggest we could teach English from first grade to sixth grade, it would be wonderful because our students get enthusiastic".

"You have made more than your best effort. I can't say anything negatively at all, since I have been privileged for being part of this wonderful work and I will be able to transform my context and reality. Beyond the personal benefit that this event could generate, I'm focused on my work with my students in order to transform our community".

"Excellent. Keep bringing this knowledge to keep forming teachers, I'm so very grateful".

"To extend these events to every state of Venezuela and take them to places and remote rural communities".

"I suggest that do not let anything or anybody to stop what you are doing. These are some top-quality activities and you have to keep doing them".

"To keep giving continuous teaching formation because this programme has been outstanding".

"This event did totally go beyond my expectations, it feeds our English language knowledge, and I shared this wonderful experience of participating in this event organized by the Ministry of Popular Power for Education working together with the British Council. Thank you for this opportunity".

Participants in this activity, generalist primary teachers, expressed their gratitude for being taken into account in this teacher training and development programme and for the chance to meet and share ideas with colleagues from different parts of the country in the belief that these sorts of events are very important and represent a significant need at present.

The third activity was the initial training for tutors and facilitators of the second cohort of National Teacher Training Programme (PNF). Attendance was represented by 53% women and 47% men. It is important to know that it was the first training workshop for tutors and facilitators of the second cohort of PNF and there were teachers among them who had already been working with this project since 2015. Some of them were graduates from the first cohort. They came from every state of Venezuela; all of the 24 states were represented.

Answers to question number 1 related to the expectations of participants included the following:

'Improve my English language skills, especially on phonetics and strategies to teach this language in different levels'.

'Increase my knowledge, on my writing skills and pronunciation'.

'To acquire learning strategies to teach better my students'.

"To obtain new strategies in order to use the Colección

Bicentenario books properly’.

‘To get new strategies for teaching our participants’.

‘To improve my English language teaching strategies’.

‘To improve the use of the texts for all of the grades and make these books more understandable for our students’.

‘To get knowledge on the communicative approach of the language’.

‘To acquire new strategies for learning and teaching English as a foreign language’.

‘Improve my teaching skills’.

Regarding the assessment of the event, 100% of participants stated that it went beyond their expectations and it was a top-quality activity because they acquired new knowledge. Answers to question 5 evidence the previous statement:

‘This project does really favor the learning and teaching process’.

‘Excellent, it helps us to improve our teaching performance to offer a high-quality education for our country’.

‘It is good for English language teachers and to improve their speaking skills’.

‘They should do it frequently for our future generations’.

‘Ministry of Popular Power for Education must do more workshops similar to this one for English language teachers.’

‘It was a top-quality workshop and we needed it urgently’.

The following suggestions were made by teachers of English (specialists):

'To keep doing this type of activities for formation of teachers.

'These activities must be done with smaller groups.

'These activities should be done frequently to exchange information'.

Based on the analysis of the opinions of the teachers who participated in these three chosen events, it was possible to compile the visions of three large groups of professionals who work with English language teaching in Basic Education. The most important element is that all of the participants received teacher training and development in the English language area, and participants showed commitment and love for improving their teaching performance and giving the best to their students.

Reflection

The Organic Law of Education of Venezuela in its article 39 states that continuing teacher training and development is a right and duty of teachers during their working lives to be guaranteed by the State. The MPPE through its continuing education schemes is constantly seeking to improve teaching methodology and practice as well as allowing teachers to develop as individuals, citizens and professionals. Previously, opportunities in the English language teaching area had been very limited but over the last four years this situation has changed thanks, in great part, to the partnership with the British Council which has strived to provide our English teachers with a top-quality education that will impact on Venezuelan students.

Our analysis of the answers to questions were positive. Many comments were received during the activity, most of them were grateful words because it was the first time, and they were participating in a

top-quality workshop for English teachers organized by the MPPE. There were a lot of positive expressions and they wanted this event to take place again. Tutors, consultants, facilitators, participants and the British Council team have a relationship full of respect and desire for the development of English language teaching. Highly positive results obtained in these activities are based on solid research.

Workshops and activities became multiple events, they were productive, and teachers were very enthusiastic and interested. These activities became spaces for: a) promoting English as a foreign language; b) promoting the *Colección Bicentenario* books for teaching English; c) professional development for English teachers; d) academic spaces for meeting people and meeting friends again; e) continuous research to transform the education practice of the foreign language and respect for local, regional and national culture.

The British Council is a non-profit institution dedicated to developing and maintaining cultural relationships and is working with the Ministry through a range of activities. Owing to the fact that English language teaching is one of its main purposes and knowledge of this language is very important for communication between nations and for the development of countries, it has provided ways for sharing knowledge in this field in order to contribute to quality continuing development of English teachers and, in the same way, to enrich their own experience on this area.

Based on the initial questions for this study: What were the opinions of the participants as to the continuing teacher training and development they were receiving? And what were their suggestions for the continuous teaching formation on the English language area? Workshops and events went beyond their expectations, these were top-quality events and participants want them to be done repeatedly. To conclude, the partnership has been favourably met by participants, facilitators, tutors as well as the educational authorities that have been working with us in this project since 2014.

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DON'T FORGET LEARNER RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR THE TEACHERS!

Wendy Arnold

Introduction

Much has been researched, published and discussed about the need for trained teachers of English in both Primary and Secondary school contexts in Venezuela (López de D'Amico, 2010; Sagaray, Fernandez, Rodriguez, 2017). The *Programa Nacional de Formación Avanzada* (PNFA) “English in the Primary School” a programme from the *Micromisión Simón Rodríguez* of the Ministry of Education supported by the British Council, started training generalist teachers to introduce English in the public primary schools in Venezuela in 2016. Sagaray and Fernandez discuss the history of the introduction of teaching English at Primary school in their chapter of this publication.

What has not been discussed in any detail of note is the need for learner materials for the generalist Primary teachers to use with their learners when they are teaching English. Learners of English for the Secondary level have already received the Bicentennial Collection *My Victory* (English text books for secondary school provided by the MPPE to the students). D'Amico, Sequera and Medina discuss the secondary level materials and the teacher training in their chapter of this publication.

Although the PNFA “English in the Primary School” programme

trains teachers to make resources for the classroom, which include picture cards, word cards and a Big Book, there were no learner resources, these were left to the discretion of teachers once they select topics they want to explore with their learners.

This chapter will discuss why the PNFA trained generalist Primary teachers and their learners need learner resources to be used in the classroom when they are learning English. These materials need to align to the Primary English curriculum and to have been designed with global standards but meeting local needs. The content of the learner resources will be explored, as well as the need for the generalist teachers to receive explicit training on how to deliver the new English learner materials.

Teacher training programme but what about learner materials?

The PNFA trained generalist teachers have received training in appropriate methodology for teaching language in a classroom. This included how to deliver language using teacher designed resources based on contexts selected by them. In order to motivate and engage with the teachers' and learners' creativity the topics were not prescribed. Neither was the language prescribed, this was deliberate in order to move away from a grammar-focused traditional curriculum.

Anecdotal feedback from the learners described by Pizzoferrato, Rivas and Prieto's research in their chapter of this publication shows that the teacher's selection of content, activities and delivery materials was highly appreciated by their learners. Some learners expressed a clear desire to see their teacher's drawings, as well as to draw themselves. Other learners enjoyed the Big Books designed by teachers and then the opportunity for the learners to make up their own story. The range of activities and materials used by the teachers also seem to motivate the learners to enjoy the English lesson. The teacher and learner's creativity should not be downplayed and certainly not replaced by published material which leaves no room for creativity.

In 2017 there was a realisation that in addition to the PNFA teacher training for the generalist Primary teachers, there was also a need to guide them with materials for the learners which gave both teachers and learners a direction. It needs to be understood that this was not designed to undermine either the teacher or learners' creativity but to augment the experience. The content of the Primary English teacher training was used as a guide to ensure that the same methodology was used and it was decided that there needed to be both a teacher's book with scripted lesson plans, alongside engaging learner material.

Description of learner materials

There are Pupil's Books, as well as Teacher's Book. The Pupil's books contain the 5 topic materials. Each topic has 6 lessons. Each lesson has 4 activities. Each activity is 15 minutes long. The rationale behind producing 15 minute activities was to give the teacher flexibility in how they delivered the lessons. As the teachers are the generalist teachers, they deliver all the curriculum to the learners and so can decide when during the day English can be included. The teacher can also decide the number of activities (in 15 minute slots/activity) to deliver based on their own schedule, English language proficiency and how the topic fits into the rest of the curriculum.

Teacher's Books



Topic-Animals-Grade4-T...
ers.pdf



Topic-Environment-Gra...
ers.pdf



Topic-Geography-Grade...
ers.pdf



Topic-HEALTH-Grade4-T...
ers.pdf



Topic-US-Grade4-
Teachers.pdf



Topic-Animals-Grade5-Teachers.pdf



Topic-Environment-Grade5-Teachers.pdf



Topic-Geography-Grade5-Teachers.pdf



Topic-HEALTH-Grade5-Teachers.pdf



Topic-US-Grade5-Teachers.pdf



Topic-Animals-Grade6-Teachers.pdf



Topic-Environment-Grade6-Teachers.pdf



Topic-Geography-Grade6-Teachers.pdf



Topic-HEALTH-Grade6-Teachers.pdf



Topic-US-Grade6-Teachers.pdf

The Pupil's Books similarly have the same number of books per grade.

Pupil's Books



4toGradoStudents-AllTo...-V2.pdf



5toGradoStudents-AllTo...-V2.pdf



6toGradoStudents-AllTo...-V2.pdf

Description of curriculum topics

A spiral curriculum has been used. Five general topics were selected which are based on global good practice and appear in most language learning curriculums. Four of the topics are based on the cross-curricular subjects of science (animals, health, geography and environment). Each topic is re-visited each year in order to recycle the language and develop the concepts. As English is only experienced in the classroom and in order to provide additional recycling opportunities the order of the topics is fixed in every grade.



Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
Animals Wild animals Farm animals Pets	Animals Habitat	Animals Animals in danger
Health Parts of the body	Health Food and drink	Health Illnesses
Us (identity) My family My friends Appearance	Us (identity) My school Routines Free time	Us (identity) Jobs
Geography Places where we shop	Geography The world around us	Geography Urban and rural
Environment Weather	Environment Pollution	Environment Conservation

Rationale for components in learner materials

Early literacy in any language is complex. Arnold & Rixon (2015) caution that ‘in English native speaker primary education the development of reading skills is an area which is seen as both technically complex and of huge importance ...’. Surveys carried out on the state of training for Young Learner teaching worldwide (Emery:2012; Rixon:2007) found that many current teachers of English for Young Learners have had little if any training on how to teach reading skills. Rixon (2011) analysed 12 different contexts of sets of English for Young Learner beginner materials and in all cases found that there was text on the page from the beginning grades. However, having text on the page does not mean that the learners start to read! Reading is a complex process as has already been identified. Arnold’s (2010) longitudinal study in teaching reading using a published graded reading scheme found that introducing letters and sounds was critical to successful decoding, in parallel to instruction on encoding (making meaning). So the Venezuelan Primary English coursebooks start with ‘visual literacy’, which encourages the learners to use their own background knowledge of what they can see and develop their understanding in English from their own foundation.

See Figure 1 below to see the build of visual skills in Grade 4, going from:

Figure 1





Consistency is also important in language learning in a classroom, for both the learner and the teacher so the format of topic is:

- Lesson 1 – introduction to a lexical set
- Lessons 2 to 5 – practising language
- Lesson 6 – producing language with a project to exemplify what has been taught

The Teacher's Books are supportive of teachers who are learning English in parallel to their learners. Their features include guided lesson plans:

- steps in Spanish with Teacher language identified for the delivery in English
- each 60 minute lesson is divided into 4 x 15 minute parts to give teachers more flexibility about when to deliver the lesson
- clear learner language identified
- a wide range of language activities and games, which are age appropriate, are used, e.g.

- I say, you say
- I point ,you say
- I say, you point
- drilling to help learners to hear, repeat, chorus practise, 50:50, open and closed pairs before pairwork (the goal is teaching for success)
- I see something beginning with the sound (also known as I spy with my little eye).... Linking initial sounds of words to symbols
- Teacher says (also known as Simon says) which is based on total physical response (TPR) theory

Figures 2 and 3 show examples of Grade 5 and 6 topics to illustrate the language development and text on the page. The use of inquiry questions leads the learners to develop the topics at ever increasing depth. The Teacher's Book has the Teacher's steps together with the visual pages that the Pupil's Books include. Creative teachers can of course develop their own materials such as word cards, posters which they have already been trained to design.



Figure 2



Figure 3

Each grade has a main focus on a linguistic area:

Grade 4 = listening and speaking

Grade 5 = learning to read

Grade 6 = learning to write

Lesson 6 in each grade is a project. Learning language through projects is a methodology based on a constructivist, learner-centred approach to inquiry-based learning, and has been part of mainstream education for decades, according to Arnold, Bradshaw & Gregson (2019).

Challenges and successes

The innovative PNFA programme deserves to be successful, it has highly motivated generalist classroom teachers and facilitators. However, ongoing challenges include lack of dissemination of both the new classroom materials and the accompanying teacher training.

Conclusion and Way Forward

Education is the single most powerful definer of a developing country's route out of challenging situations. The evidence that despite all the challenges the PNFA has been continuing adding new cohorts is exemplary. Now solutions need to be sought for the printing and distribution of the classroom materials and the generalist classroom teachers need training on how to use them.

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