TOURISM, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNITY INTERACTING IN SHARING AND CONSERVING THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF PURACÉ: A FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL.

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DEGREE WORK PROJECT
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ABSTRACT

Regarding that tourism is becoming an important element in our society, and profiting the knowledge we have gotten on English, we wanted to carry out the degree work project **"TOURISM, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNITY INTERACTING IN SHARING AND CONSERVING THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF PURACÉ: A FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL"** which presents our experience in developing a pedagogical proposal to teach English to the community tourist guides who work in Puracé National Natural Park, based on their needs, interests and the difficulties they face when communicating with foreigners, and in light of some authors such as: Freinet, Bachelard, Freire, Wittgenstein and Ipiña who guided the theoretical part of this work. (Key concepts: Language, education, real participation, culture and ecotourism).

RESUMEN

Teniendo en cuenta que el turismo se está convirtiendo en un elemento importante en nuestra sociedad, y aprovechando el conocimiento que hemos adquirido en inglés, quisimos desarrollar el trabajo de grado: **"TOURISM, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNITY INTERACTING IN SHARING AND CONSERVING THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF PURACÉ: A FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL"** el cual presenta nuestra experiencia al desarrollar una propuesta pedagógica para enseñar inglés a los guías comunitarios que trabajan en el Parque Nacional Natural Puracé basada en sus necesidades, intereses y las dificultades que enfrentan al comunicarse con extranjeros, y a la luz de algunos autores como: Freinet, Bachelard, Freire, Wittgenstein e Ipiña quienes guiaron la parte teórica de este trabajo. (Conceptos claves: lenguaje, educación, participación real, cultura y ecoturismo.)

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INTRODUCTION

The Modern Languages Licenciatura Program (English – French) of the University of Cauca throughout its history has been expanding its work into different fields. Tourism has been one of the fields involved in this process and several works that deal with the interaction between the tourist diversity of communities and foreign languages have been done. In this line of interest the main purpose of our research is to create a pedagogical proposal for teaching and learning English based on *Realizing Processes*[1] directed towards some tourist guides from Puracé.

Due to the great amount of tourist activity in Puracé, it is quite common that both community tourist guides and foreigners, especially those who speak English, face communication problems which hinder interaction intended to give and receive information about the cultural and natural diversity that this area has; those problems take place due to the fact that they communicate in different languages.

Our pedagogical work as students in the Modern Languages Licenciatura Program has given us the possibility of undertaking educational work in different contexts and on this occasion, to present a pedagogical proposal to the community of Puracé looking for a possible answer to this difficulty of communication in the tourist field.

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[1] Introduced by Gastón Bachelard.

This pedagogical research proposal is organized in the following way: the first three chapters present the Justification, the Statement of the Problem, and the Main and Complementary Purposes. Chapter four refers to our first approximations to the tourist work which helped us to shape our proposal.

The fifth chapter introduces the State of the Art in which some research works related to Puracé, tourism and pedagogy are described. This research allows us to realize the relevance of our research proposal and encourages us to continue working on this.

In the sixth chapter is found the Referential Framework including the Contextual, Conceptual and Theoretical Considerations. In the Contextual Considerations, some different elements are presented like: the place where we carried out our research, general information about the main authority there: the Cabildo Indígena de Puracé, likewise the Unidad Administrativa Especial De Sistema De Parques Nacionales Naturales De Colombia and Puracé National Natural Park (Henceforth PNNP), and a detailed description of the participants. The conceptual considerations introduce the key concepts that supported our work such as: Language, Education, Real participation, Realization, Evaluation, Culture and Ecotourism. Finally, the section Theoretical Considerations in which some important authors and theories that provided us with the basis in the development of the proposal are included.

The following chapter, Methodology, presents the way the process was performed through a description of various experiences we had to go through in order to complete this proposal such as: the work with National Natural Parks, with an

indigenous group from Purace community, with the participants, the work as a group, the work in Puracé and the most important one, our pedagogical experience. In this last part we make a description of the process including some special aspects that support our work. This chapter also presents the analysis of the experience by means of a general analysis, and an analysis of the following points: participants, materials and activities, intercultural aspect, evaluation and results and interviews. Finally, this charter contents the pedagogical proposal to teach English to tourist guides.

The chapter named Activities details the process we followed with the community and the actions we took during each semester which helped us to have a broader perspective on the conclusion of this proposal.

At the end we describe the conclusion we have arrived at after having come to the end of this process and the recommendations that must be taken into account in carrying out a similar project.

Finally, with the development of this pedagogical proposal for the learning and teaching of some basic elements of English language we took into account their reality, needs and interests.

2. JUSTIFICATION

During the past few years the National Government has shown interest in the development of the tourist industry by favoring those projects that guarantee the improvement of its services, as is the case of the "*Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2006 - 2010: Estado Comunitario: desarrollo para todos*". This plan looks at promoting tourism during these four years as one of the most important economic activities of the country. It was to be done by following seven strategies, four of which provided the elements to be considered that contributed to the achievement of our proposal´s objectives.

These four strategies were: "*improvement and consolidation of competitively, including the quality of the providers, of the destinations, and tourist products*", "*creation of a system of tourist information*", "*appropriation of resources to support community's productive initiatives*" and, "*education for the strengthening of a tourist culture*"[2].

In addition to this, we concluded from previous conversations with some employees of the PNNP[3] and with other people who work in the tourist field in the Department of Cauca, that our proposal for the educational work with the

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[2] Plan sectorial de turismo 2008 - 2010

[3] La señora María Teresa Amaya (Head of program of PNNP) and Mr. Juan Carlos Gaitán (Ex-administrative Technologist of the PNNP).

English Language directed to the community tourist guides who belong to "El *Cabildo* Indigena de Puracé" who have had the opportunity to interact with foreign visitors, was an alternative that would benefit not only the Puracé community but also those communities or tourist guides who live in tourist places facing the same or similar communication problems.

Regarding the action field of the present project, that is to say, the interaction between tourist guides and English speaking tourists, Mr. Edgar Taimal affirmed that they faced some communication problems, *"Hay unos que entienden el español, hay otros que no lo entienden, entonces, toca por señas, algunos a traves de señas entienden lo que uno les dice, otros traen diccionarios y consultan ahí"*. This assertion was evidence of the fact that community tourist guides with basic knowledge of English could improve their communication with foreigners allowing them to get to know the Puracé culture.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Colombia has several natural and cultural resources, which is why a lot of foreigners decide to visit our country, because they want to learn as much as possible about our traditions and ethnicity; for some indigenous communities this can be an opportunity to talk about their worldview, and about how they understand the relationship between the natural resources and human beings.

The PNNP is one of those places that, thanks to its natural beauty and by being an indigenous territory as well, has significant foreign tourist activity, which is a valuable source of working for its inhabitants, especially those who work as tourist guides in the area, for this reason, having a basic knowledge of a foreign language is a meaningful tool that allows them to accomplish the tasks related to their labor. However, the tourist guides in Puracé do not count with this knowledge, turning into a difficulty of communication in carrying out their work and in offering an appropriate guidance service to the tourists. In the same way, it restricts the possibility of passing on the message of conservation of the region that Purace`s *Cabildo* and the PNNP staff are interested in.

In helping to solve this problem we had the initiative to put forward a pedagogical proposal concerned with teaching English to a group of tourist guides in this specific case they were part of an indigenous community taking into account their needs and interests.

4. PURPOSES

4.1 MAIN PURPOSE

To develop a pedagogical proposal to introduce English learning and teaching as a foreign language directed to tourist guides who work in the Puracé National Natural Park taking into account their reality.

4.2 COMPLEMENTARY PURPOSES

❖ To carry out research field work in order to get to know about the community involved in this proposal.

❖ To visit the main tourist places in the region to get in contact with some inhabitants in order to get information about the region and their culture.

❖ To design material for teaching and learning English, according to the context of the region, including a handbook.

❖ To analyze the pedagogical practice carried out with the guides in light of pedagogical theories.

5. BACKGROUND

During our educational process as students in the Foreign Languages program, we worked with a strong pedagogical component in English and French learning; this allowed us to acquire a solid basis for the development of our work inside and outside educational institutions.

Due to the link between different institutions related to the tourist activity and the University of Cauca, some agreements were made, in which members of our research group participated. That is the case of the agreement between the University of Cauca and the SENA[4], in which 18 students of the Modern Languages Program participated; one of them was a member of our group[5].

In 2007, thanks to the agreement between the Popayán City Council and the Tourism Office, two of the members of the research group had the chance to participate in a course, where they received the title of "*Informadores turísticos*" (community tourist guides).

Besides, we could not overlook the experiences that some of us had as community tourist guides in different tourist places of Cauca and Huila. Another important element we took into account was the family link that existed between one of the members of the group and some employees of the PNNP.

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[4] Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje
[5] She got the tittle of "Técnico en Guianza Turística Bilingüe" 2008 – 2009.

6. STATE OF THE ART

In order to start developing our research project, it was necessary to look for the documents, books, degree works, magazines, investigations, and some other sources that could provide us with information about what had been already done in relation to the topic we wanted to deal with.

First of all, we visited the libraries in some of the Schools at the University of Cauca; we found some remarkable works which helped in the development of our project.

We began our research at UNIDPEL[6] where we found two degree works which were associated with our project: "**ALTERNATIVA PARA EL DESARROLLO DEL TURISMO ECOLÓGICO EN EL PARQUE NACIONAL NATURAL DE PURACÉ**" and **"COCONUCO–PURACE RICHESSE ECOLOGIQUE POUR LE TOURISME".**

The first project was carried out by Magnolia Mera Terán and Alexandra Tomassoni Vidal, and led by Professor Jorge Hernán Perez in 1990. This work talked about the importance of promoting ecological tourism in our country but mainly in the Department of Cauca, because in this region there were not trained people who spoke English and could work as tourist guides. The main objective of

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[6] Unidad de Desarrollo Profesional de Educadores y Estudiantes de Lenguas (UNIDPEL), Dpto. Lenguas Extranjeras.

this work was to promote the region through tourism. The group designed audiovisual material in both languages: English and French. The members of this degree work published two handbooks for tourist guidance, the first one is about Purace Natural Park and the second one is about the path to San Juan hot springs. The work introduced some socio-cultural aspects of tourism and the principal tourist places of the region.

The second work was carried out in 1993 in French, and advised by Mr. Silvio Arboleda. It focused on the tourist component and had several similarities with our research work. Nevertheless its statement of the problem differed from ours: "La région Coconuco-Puracé est un endroit comportant beaucoup d'attraits touristiques qui ne sont pas utilisés de façon adéquate. *Des services de base sont offerts au visiteur, mais ils ne sont pas appropriés aux besoins du touriste*"[7.] This project was developed in 1993, when the conditions of the park were very different from the ones we find today: it has a comfortable infrastructure where the visitors' needs are efficiently covered.

Another important aspect that made that project different from ours is the Educational Strategies developed:

1.   To promote trips among students to establish a direct contact with nature, and make students aware of natural resources conservation.

2.   To introduce "le tourisme" as a new subject in the Foreign Language Program.

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[7] The Puracé- Coconuco region is a place composed by many tourist attractions that are not used adequately. Basic services are offered to visitors, but they do not respond to the tourist's needs.

3.   To foster readings in order to motivate nature conservation.

4.   To provide the inhabitants of this region with readings about ecological tourism to contribute to its improvement.

These strategies helped us to understand that preceding works were more interested in promoting tourism, ecotourism and nature preservation; whereas our purpose sought to create a pedagogical proposal where a link between the cultural diversity of Puracé and English learning was possible. Besides, they worked with students of 8th and 12th courses at Guillermo León Valencia High School offering them ecological and tourist readings two times in July. They worked in Puracé and Coconuco.

In addition to them, we found some degree works at the Human and Social Sciences Library that provided us relevant infomation for our research. Among them were:

"ESCENARIOS DE REFLEXIÓN SOBRE EL PROCESO DE FORMULACIÓN EN EL PLAN DE MANEJO AMBIENTAL COMUNITARIO DEL RESGUARDO INDÍGENA DE PURACE", developed by Olmedo Mazabuel Quilindo from the Licenciatura in Ethnoeducation Program and directed by the biologist Martha Mendoza in 2003. This work proposed the creation of a new plan for the use and management of the natural resources of Puracé. It was a strategy which looked at guaranteeing the participative, autonomous and integrated management of the territory.

During this work, an identification of the environmental potential existing in Puracé was done, as well as the recognition of its problems in order to find some solutions where the relationship between community and environment could be strengthened.

The degree work "**ELEMENTOS Y REFLEXION SOBRE EL PROCESO DE FORMULACION DEL PLAN DE VIDA DEL RESGUARDO INDIGENA DE PURACE**" done by Nelson Mazabuel Quilindo, a student of same Licenciatura Program and inhabitant of the town of Puracé, revealed his efforts in organizing the community in order for them to develop what he called "plan of life". The methodology he used in achieving his aim was the "Investigación Accion Participante" which involved the members of social groups´ active participation. This project was directed by lecturer Carolyn Wenholz.

In this project we could find very relevant aspects about the region we were interested in, such as: the history, cultural and natural diversity, population characteristics, education, economical activities, as well as some proposals for improving the quality of life of Puracé's residents.

This work was useful for us, because it provided information about the conditions we might find in the zone, and, the resources that could be available for us in order to carry out our research.

In regard to the Economy Program, a degree work entitled "**INFORME DE LA PASANTIA EN LA GOBERNACIÓN DEL CAUCA SOBRE PROYECTOS TURISTICOS. EVENTO: SEMANA SANTA Y CONGRESO GASTRONOMICO EN**

POPAYÁN" was found. It was developed by Paula Andrea Mosquera Moreno and directed by Mg. Enrique Peña Forero and Aurelio Velasco Mosquera, business adviser.

This work did a deep study on tourism including aspects such as the effects, theoretical elements and economic tools that could be helpful in developing tourist projects. Then, it took into account the most significant features of tourism in the Department of Cauca such as its advancements and tourist attractions, where Puracé National Natural Park is mentioned. Some explanations about the implications of Law 300 of 1996 related to tourism and about the problems in relation to supply and demand in this field. Finally, this work made a description of two important events in Popayán: Holy Week and the Gastronomy Congress.

Additionally, we searched for information related to Puracé on Internet; it was a valuable source that helped us to get to know more about the importance and image of Puracé as a tourist place world-wide. Puracé is visited by many foreign visitors; therefore there is a lot of information on internet designed to provide basic information about Puracé Volcano and the most popular and interesting places that the PNNP has, including a partial description of the community and the location, access, geology and geography of this municipality.

Furthermore, it was possible to find in web pages such as http://intranet.ingeo00minas.gov.co, http://www.eturismoviajes.com and www.alcaldiadepurace.gov.co, where we found marvelous pictures about the volcano, different landscapes, lakes, waterfalls, and we also found several stories about experiences of tourists in Puracé.

We also had the opportunity to talk with lecturer Edgar Cristóbal Delgado Delgado who gave us important information related to tourism in the region. He referred to the text "**GUIA TURISTICA PURACÉ - CAUCA**" he wrote with the collaboration of: Olmedo Mazabuel, Nicolás Aguilar Díaz, Maria Deysi Venachí and James Adolfo Rivera Zambrano[8].

This guide provides information about the town, its history, and some of its most beautiful attractions and tourist places in Spanish, English and French.

We also talked to Andrés Narváez, a graduate of The Geography Program of the University of Cauca who told us about a traveler group called "*Caminando Ando, Rutas camineras de la ciudad de Popayán y sus alrededores alternativos de recreación. Un estudio desde la Geografía del Ocio";[9]* which has been working on the recognition of our department for more than five years. Their main purpose was to identify and show some of the places of Popayán and its surroundings in order to help to solve some problems regarding leisure activities that our city faces nowadays.

Our meeting with him was very interesting because he told us about his experience in this group and gave us a lot of advices and many ideas about the way we could develop our project and the preventative measures we had to consider in its development.

Finally, we met Deysi Sánchez from the group "*Modelos Regionales de Competitivad*" of the University of Cauca, who told us about the importance of developing a project related to the improvement of tourism in Puracé and referred us to other projects which could be related to our work.

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[8] Translator

[9] Andrés Narváez and Alexander Paruma founded this group.

7. REFERENTIAL FRAMEWORK

7.1 CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1.1 Puracé Municipality

"Land of volcanoes"

Our degree work was undertaken in Puracé, a municipality that belongs to the Department of Cauca. Puracé was founded by Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera in 1840 and became a municipality in 1915. According to 2005 data, its population is approximately 15.688 inhabitants.

Puracé is located 30 kilometers from Popayán city. It has an altitude of 2.850 meters and its temperature varies from 2º to 15º Celsius, belonging to a humid forest with a cold climatic area and high altitude with low vegetation. Since it is located in the Central Range of the Colombian Andes and the "Macizo Colombiano", most of its territory is mountainous.

People from Puracé belong to two Indigenous communities: that of Coconuco and Puracé; they are from the Paéz family and are organized under the authority of Coconuco, Paletará and Puracé *Cabildo*s. Their main economical activities are: agriculture (corn, bean), mining (sulfur) and cattle rising.

Puracé is a very relevant tourist place due to its cultural diversity and its interesting places such as the volcanic ranges of Los Coconucos, the Pandeazúcar, Puracé, and Sotará volcanoes, San Antonio, San Nicolás and Bedón waterfalls, San Rafael lagoon, Buey and Verde lakes, the sulfur mine and the San Juan hot springs. The PNNP has 24.4 percent of Puracé lands.

7.1.2 Cabildo **Indígena de Puracé**

According to Ricardo Manzano[10], the Indigenous Reservation of Puracé has colonial origins whose titles date back to 1892 and came from the Spanish Colony, through Title Deed 492. In that time, the word "indigenous reservation" made reference to the places where the indigenous communities were located in order that they did not disappear because they were cheap labor for the Spanish.

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[10] Governor *Cabildo* Indígena de Puracé 2010

The "*Cabildo* Indígena de Puracé" is the administrative body in charge of the territory and its window to the outside world; it is a public authority with a special character that started exercising its functions based on Law 89 of 1890 which states that it must be recognized as an authority by the State and by all the national and international instances.

It is composed of fourteen authorities: governor, mayor, general captain, commissioner, treasurer, secretary, sheriff, and their respective deputies. All these are nominated as authorities by the community and have the same mandate to make decisions. There is also a supportive committee composed of council of elders, the environmental and territorial committee, and the socio-cultural committee.

Regarding the work with the community tourist guides, the *Cabildo* is organizing a plan in order to improve their work and regulate tourist activity in Puracé.

7.1.3 Unidad Administrativa Especial de Sistema de Parques Nacionales Naturales de Colombia (UAESPNN)

The UAESPNN is an administrative organization that belongs to the Ministerio de Ambiente, Vivienda y Desarrollo Territorial. Colombia has 54 national natural parks which have administrative and financial autonomy. The UAESPNN is in charge of the management and administration of these natural parks as well as the coordination of Sistema Nacional de Áreas Protegidas – SINAP according to the

environmental demarcation of territory. Among the places that this unit manages is the PNNP.

The UAESPNN's mission is to preserve the biological diversity and ecosystems of our country, to provide and support environmental services and goods, to protect cultural heritage and natural habitats where traditional cultures develop and finally, to contribute to sustainable human development.

Through this organization it was possible for us to connect with the PNNP as volunteer park rangers. The volunteering service is an opportunity to engage in the preservation of natural reserves; it is also a formative experience that makes it possible to get close to our biological diversity and to raise cultural awareness, in this case about the Puracé culture and its environment.

7.1.3.1   The Puracé National Natural Park

The Puracé National Natural Park is part of a translape area, meaning that the park belongs to both National Parks and The *Cabildo* Indigena de Puracé; due to this fact, all decisions about the management of the park must be discussed between these two institutions.

The PNNP is a volcanic area and natural reserve located 44 kilometers from Popayán in the Department of Cauca. This zone is recognized for being a hydrographic source in the country, where the Cauca, Magdalena and Caquetá rivers have their sources. Therefore, it constitutes an important factor for the regional development due to its enormous water and sulphur resources. Additionally, the Park contains a great variety of fauna and flora thanks to its appropriate weather conditions and the correct management of its resources.

According to Juan Carlos Gaitán, the Administrative Center of PNNP includes 83.000 hectares; it is located in the Macizo Colombiano between Cauca and Huila Departments and has nine control stations, among them Pilimbalá and San Juan. Two roads pass through the park: Popayán – La Plata road and Popayán – San José de Isnos road. The latter is going to be paved, which will affect the fauna of the Park; so there should be an agreement between INVIAS and the Park to prevent the violation of its ecosystem. These two roads make the park an integration point for four Colombian sub regions: Alto Patía, Bota Caucana, Alto Cauca y Alto Magdalena.

Regarding its fauna, the park contains 26 species of mammals; the most important are: the oso de anteojos, the danta de montaña, the venado conejo, the venado colorado, the puma, the tiger, the mono aullador, the mono negro, among others. Besides, 246 species of birds have been registered; the most relevant to be preserved is the Condor de los Andes because this species is an endanger specie. As the Guía Turistica Puracé – Cauca states: it is called "The Messenger of the Sun", a symbol of strength, freedom and purity. Some time ago eleven condors were released in this area by the RENACER Foundation and the Cali Zoo but nowadays only three condors remain since some of them emigrated and some others died because they did not adapt to the liberation process. As this bird feed

on carrion it is important in balancing the ecosystem. Some of them may be observed in the Canyon of San Francisco River.

In relation to its flora, the park is home of exotic and varied species of plants, for instance, achaparrados of small size, trepadoras, beautiful exotic and small orchids, pajonales, chusques, frailejones, moss, bushes, lichens, chaparrales, canelos, mandures, encenillos, among others. The flora plays an important role in this ecosystem, because it not only embellishes the landscape but also provides food, medicine, wood, and shelter.

The Park has four kinds of ecosystems: forest, high Andean forest, Andean forest that is about 2.100 m. above sea level, and a cold climatic area with a high altitude and low vegetation that is 3.350 m. above sea level. Our country is one of the few in the world having these kinds of ecosystems described as wonderful sponges of water where Cauca and Magdalena River are born. In this, there are organisms that have developed the capacity to survive at low temperatures and strong winds.

The Puracé volcano is 7.800 m. from Pilimbalá; it is recognized as the "*Mountain of Fire*" in Quechua language and considered to be heaven to travelers and climbers. It is the most interesting attraction in the park and the beginning of a volcanic chain of approximately 11 volcanic craters; the diameter of each crater is about 800m. The only active one is the

Puracé volcano. The end of this chain is the Pan de Azúcar volcano which is 5.000 m. above sea level.

Some attractions include San Juan hot springs, San Rafael lagoon, Frailejones valley and the Sulfur miners.

7.1.3.2   Pilimbalá

Pilimbalá is located in the PNNP and one of the nine control stations of the PNNP. It is the only place for sheltering people in this area; it offers a comfortable infrastructure to visitors: three cabins, a camping area for housing about thirty people, a restaurant, pools and beautiful ecological paths. Most of these services rates are managed directly from Bogotá, according to several criteria established for this region; for instance, the rate for housing is $30.000 per person in high season; in the camping zone it is $7.000 per person, the rate for the entrance to the Park is $7.000 for national visitors, $4.000 for students and $17.000 for foreigners.

The infrastructure is located on the border of the park and it expands beyond "La Meseta" hill where pasture, livestock and monoculture zones that belong to the indigenous community surround it.

Some parts of the current infrastructure in Pilimbalá were made by the INDERENA[11,] that was in charge of the Natural Parks in Colombia until 1998; there were some hot springs that after the landslide at Paéz River in 1995 changed because the cold water of this river mixed with the thermal springs, so they got cold and became swimming pools that conserve mineral richness, and sulfur essence.

In Pilimbalá there is also an orchid path built by Roberto de Angulo, who is an expert on this kind of flowers. The varied species of orchids are brought from different places in the Park.

This year the PNNP has a project to add new attractions to this path; that is, they plan to build and decorate some thatched huts, so that they become adequate places to tell traditional stories related to Puracé mythology.

7.1.4 Community tourist guides

The PNNP has a group of tourist guides belonging to the Indigenous Reservation of Puracé and who lend a hand to the employees of each sector. They live in the zone that is part of the Park and because of the knowledge they have of the area, they are able to share general information with the visitors that frequently arrive at the Park. This has given them the chance of providing their services as community

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[11] Instituto Nacional de Recursos Naturales.

tourist guides; it is also a way of earning extra money that benefits their families' incomes.

Currently, according to Edgar Taimal[12] there are three community tourist guides who permanently work in Pilimbalá. They usually go with the visitors to the Puracé Volcano crater and sometimes to other places within the Park such as: San Juan hot springs, Kokonukos Volcanic Range, San Nicolas waterfall and so forth. Their activity depends on the number of visitors, so when the group of tourists is large they hire two or three guides. Besides the work the community guides carry out in the park, they devote time to other activities, such as handcrafting and farming.

To improve the Park's service, organizations like: C.R.C, Cámara de Comercio, the Cali Zoo, SENA (Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje) and National Natural Parks have offered these community guides training related to tourism; however, the group is not consolidated as an association, for this reason they do not have official identification that protects them from armed groups because it hasn't been possible for them to get an agreement with the *Cabildo* Indigena de Puracé or the local government.

7.1.5 Participants in the Project

The community tourist guides are people who do not have specialized education on guidance, but whose knowledge and experience in the zone provide them with the necessary elements to offer this service.

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[12] Community tourist guide, Indigenous guard, craftsman, and, farmer from Puracé

In carrying out this degree Project, we worked with 9 community tourist guides, four women and five men whose ages range from 14 to 50 years. Four of them live in Puracé while the other five in small farming communities near the town.

There is also a group of five young people who are studying from sixth to eleventh year in high school in different institutions, some of whom, like Nixon and Alfonso,

have previous experience in these kinds of activities, since they make some trips with Colombian and foreign visitors whereas Aidé and Sandra do not have experience in interacting with tourists, but they know the zone and they are motivated to start their training as guides. The other ones work in different activities related to the land and tourism. Besides there are two young men who have already finished their high school studies and at this moment are doing a technical training course in the SENA.

Other remarkable aspects about our group of participants are that one of the guides has some knowledge of technical English regarding mechanics, six of them participated in a tourist project named: *"Puracé, Andulbio y Vida"*[13] , one woman is a traditional healer, and a couple who, as well as dedicating themselves to agriculture and farming, work as independent tourist guides, organizing different tourist routes in Puracé.

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[13] This course was promoted by SENA, in order to create a touristic office in this zone and organize different projects related to tourism.

7.2   CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

This project development was supported by some concepts the group kept studying and analyzing at all stages. The leading concepts were: language, realization, education, real participation, evaluation, culture and ecotourism.

When starting this project, we searched for a concept of **Language** that fitted the approach we wanted to apply in the pedagogical proposal. Throughout that search, we found two that underpinned our project during all our pedagogical work. These were: "*lenguaje es pensamiento, nosotros somos lenguaje y nada está fuera del lenguaje*[14]".stated by Wittgenstein and the one proposed by Walter Benjamin: *"no existe cosa o acontecimiento, tanto en el mundo animado como en el inanimado que no participe de alguna manera del lenguaje. La realidad de éste, entonces, no solo se relaciona con las diversas formas de expresión espiritual humana, sino que se extiende a todo ámbito de la naturaleza animada o inanimada"*[15.] This, in expressing a wide idea of language and being less restrictive than other conceptions, gave us freedom to act in the pedagogical field and allowed us to be as creative as possible with all the available resources we had within the specific context we were working in.

The two above-mentioned conceptions of language are opposed to the one given by the Modern Structural Linguistics. However, we considered it important to

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[14] **WITTGENSTEIN,** Ludwing. Investigaciones Filosóficas. Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1988.

[15] It was taken of http: hum.unne.edu.ar/revistas/postgrado/revista2/8_gonzalez_oliver.pdf. March 14th, 2010

include it here in order to give a clearer idea of what was the line of thought and the epistemological considerations that ruled the English teaching/learning process carried out within this pedagogical proposal.

That structuralist conception of language was a result of a historic process and the contribution of several movements which considers language as a system of codes supported by Ferdinand de Saussure. In the same way, the School of Prague supplied it with its emphasis on speech, the sounds of the language and the symbols used to identify them. In addition, Functionalism added to it the importance of the context as part of a community and language functioning taking into account that context. Here it is necessary to point out that context within this perspective of language is understood as the purpose for which the language is used, in order to communicate. Finally, Noam Chomsky proposed a generative grammar, where a series of grammar rules could generate infinitive series of sentences.

Summing up, as Perafán asserts, "*la lingüística estructural surge cuando se vuelve sobre la lengua en si misma y se presenta como sistema. Esto es, un conjunto de elementos interrelacionados entre si. Plantea que la función básica del lenguaje es la comunicación y que el lenguaje es el medio de la comunicación*"[16]. From this perspective, language is understood to be an element that is outside the human being, a group of rules and codes that must be followed in order to communicate that is why we agreed with Wittgenstein and Benjamin since, for us, language is part of everything we do, of our life, the things around us, that is, we are all language.

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[16] Perafán Lucy. Concepciones de la lingüística estructural a la lingüística pragmática., Page 43

Another meaningful concept in our proposal was **education** which is defined by Carlos Puerto as: "*el proceso por el cual se crean las condiciones para alimentar, animar y respetar el desarrollo integral de los participantes en el mismo*"[17]. We decided to follow this line of thinking since our experience as students made us reflect upon the educational system which has governed our society, finding that few times students are given the opportunity to develop themselves in an open way that guarantees them any real participation in their learning process. Besides, they are hardly ever asked about their interests or their needs, being ignored, in some occasions, at the time of creating an educational plan. After having reflected on these specific aspects, we concluded that our proposal should be based on another way of edifying knowledge.

To go deeper on this point, it was necessary to clear up an important issue: **real participation** is understood to be "*tipo de participación que ocurre en un ambiente de respeto teniendo en cuenta diferencias individuales, diferencias que deben ser criterios para la distribución de las acciones a realizar, no elementos de discriminación o segregación*"[18]. This perspective on participation was appropriate for our pedagogical work, taking into account that the group of participants in the process was diverse; they differed on several aspects such as age, educational level, experience as guides and motivation for being part of it. This was a key concept in this pedagogical proposal with a foreign language since the participants' previous knowledge and their reality provided the basic elements to develop it.

Linked to the preceding concept we found the one about **realization** proposed by Gaston Bachelard, in which he implies the importance of rationalizing knowledge

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[17]MONTEALEGRE, Carmen E. y PUERTO, Carlos Julio. Lengua, Pensamiento Universo. Popayán, 2002. Pág18.

[18]MONTEALEGRE, Carmen E. y PUERTO, Carlos Julio. Lengua, Pensamiento Universo. Popayán, 2002. Pág. 19

acquired by experience and reality throughout a realization program "*Bachelard propone entonces un racionalismo aplicado —nada tiene que ver con el racionalismo tradicional—,* [*…retoma las enseñanzas suministradas por la realidad para traducirlas en un programa de realización*] [19], in our particular case we developed that realization through the English learning and teaching process.

Along with the previous concepts, it was necessary to establish a concept referred to as **evaluation.** This has been defined by many authors among them we found Montealegre and Puerto who state: " *evaluar es observar cuidadosamente, sensiblemente, respetuosamente, conscientemente y en conjunto, educadores y estudiantes, el ritmo, el progreso y el crecimiento de la seguridad en sí mismo, el desarrollo de la creatividad, de la auto-expresión, de la capacidad investigativa, de la capacidad de respetar y escuchar al otro y, de importancia esencial, el desarrollo de la consciencia social con miras a mejorar las condiciones para impulsar y alimentar el progreso en el movimiento ascendente por la espiral infinita del conocimiento*"[20]. This concept gave us the patterns to observe and analyze each of the participants' progress in the educational process, in a detailed way. In the same way, this way of evaluation assured a real commitment from the participants. Besides, it allowed the members of the group to do a constant evaluation of the project itself during all its stages in order to identify the progress it had reached and the necessary convenient adjustments to assure the achievement of the main purpose of it.

As we mentioned above, the community tourist guides had different characteristics. However, they shared a cultural background which made us take into account the

[19] GASTON BACHELARD. Racionalismo aplicado. Paidos, Buenos Aires. 1978. Pág:113

[20] MONTEALEGRE, Carmen E. y PUERTO, Carlos Julio. Lengua, Pensamiento Universo. Popayán, 2002. Pág. 41.

concept of **culture** that helped us to understand and value the context where the pedagogical actions of our project were carried out. Searching about this concept was not an easy job, since for decades, anthropologists and other academics in the Social Sciences have proposed different approaches to the concept of culture, and sadly, due to its complexity, up to this moment, one that completely covers its meaning has not been established. Nevertheless, from an anthropological perspective, authors like Clifford Geertz propose a semiotic concept that we consider allows us to approach the pedagogical proposal of this project. Geertz believed "*that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning*"[21].

Finally, **ecotourism** was also a central concept in the development of our research project since it was directed to community tourist guides who work in a natural reserve with a great deal of tourist activity. We based the study of it on the publication "COMITÉ INTERINSTICIONAL DE ECOTURISMO"[22]. In the year 2006, the Interinstitutional Committee of Ecotourism published a handbook in which some relevant concepts and constitutional laws related to tourist activity in Colombia are explained. According to Article 26, Law 300, 1996, ecotourism is defined as: "*aquella forma de turismo especializado y dirigido que se desarrolla en áreas con un atractivo natural especial y se enmarca dentro de los parámetros del desarrollo humano sostenible*" [23], that is, the tourist activity whose attractions are those landscapes that, because of their ecological importance, become interesting

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[21] GEERTZ, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 1973
[22] Ministerio de Ambiente Vivienda y Desarrollo Territorial, 2006.
[23] Ministerio de Ambiente Vivienda y Desarrollo Territorial, 2006.

areas for conservation. This activity has to be done by taking into account that the natural resources are vulnerable and that their overuse threatens their life cycle.

7.3 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The work with the guides, specifically that which is related to the language itself was done by taking into account most of the concepts mentioned in the previous chapter and some authors who throughout history have made contributions to the pedagogical field and that during our formation as Licenciados we have had the opportunity to study.

Considering Wittgenstein's conceptualization of *language as thought*, we decided to design the materials for each meeting taking into account the information the guides gave us during the whole process. In the same way the content of the "curriculum" we applied during the whole process was a result of the initial search we did about their economic activity, that is to say, the tourist guidance. We also took into account the data they considered important to share with the tourists including their myths and legends. In this way, we wanted the topics worked on during the meetings to be significant for them, so that they would be able to feel like they owned them and not as something alien to them, so they would understand them better.

Another important reference on which we based our pedagogical practice was Freinet who proposes not separating school from life "*No separar la escuela de la*

vida"[24]. In his work with children we could realize how he tried to link school with real life, bringing different elements from the context and making them useful tools in the classroom.

From our pedagogical proposal approach, even though we were not working with children but with young people and adults, we tried to incorporate all those touristic aspects that are part of the Puracé reality, and to bring them to the class, in such a way that our participants felt more comfortable about what they were learning.

We were aware that learning a foreign language is a slow process, and much more so for our participants, who did not have close contact with this language, so we decided to use all the knowledge from the cultural and natural diversity of Puracé, which on many occasions came from the participants. This fact was the principal stimulus for learning and teaching a foreign language, in this way, they realized the importance of their culture, and context in our lessons, making it easier for them to feel a sense of belonging to the learning process.

For us, the participation of the students was a really vital factor, since the source of knowledge came from their experience, so each lesson was planned with the needs of our participants engaged in real participation with foreigners in mind, so the topics we presented, the activities we carried out and the material we designed were all thinking about the reality present in Puracé, which was like showing them another version of their reality but in English.

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[24] FREINET, Celestin. Técnicas Freinet de la Escuela Moderna. Siglo XXI de España Editores S.A. 1969. Pag .41

Along the same lines and working on one of the most significant contribution established at the very beginning in our pedagogical proposal based on the concept of "realization" proposed by Bachelard, which says that "*Bachelard propone entonces un racionalismo aplicado —nada tiene que ver con el racionalismo tradicional—,* [*…retoma las enseñanzas suministradas por la realidad para traducirlas en un programa de realización"*][25]. It is possible to recognize that we took all the information and basic elements on which we based our pedagogical proposal from the participants' experiences and reality, that is to say, the different topics, materials and activities we made up, designed, worked on and carried out were linked to their work in tourist Guidance. For example, in some cases we worked on the general information about PNNP or its interesting places and in order to plan these kinds of classes we researched some information about that topic and try to share it in English, with the advantage that they already know all this information because it is part of their life and daily reality.

The knowledge was always taken from the participants' real world and then rationalized throughout the English learning process in order for it to be better comprehended, assimilated and valued by the participants and making it possible for this process to be meaningful for us.

Bearing in mind that we were interested in teaching English to tourist guides belonging to an indigenous community, it was necessary to search other sources that had a link to this specific aspect. This was how we found Enrique Ipiña, a Bolivian man who during the last years has been promoting educational reform in his country that attempts to establish some parameters for bilingual and intercultural education. Although his work is focused on the Spanish and the native

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[25] BACHELARD, Gaston. Racionalismo aplicado. Paidos, Buenos Aires. 1978. Pág:113

languages existing in Bolivia, he gave us some keys elements referring to the relationships between the students and the educator in this particular case. Respect, tolerance, and having an open mind regarding innovations and progress are characteristics that according to Ipiña are essential in order to get good results. When we worked with the guides we tried to show real respect to their beliefs, opinions, behaviors, etc, no matter how different they were from ours. We considered this experience to be a chance to learn and to take the best they offered us.

Ipiña also asserts: "*cuando los maestros del aula no investigan, los investigadores se convierten en meros especuladores y formuladores de hipótesis que no toman en cuenta la realidad[26].* Fortunately, in our case, we had the chance to get to know the reality of the Project's participants personally because, through our experience as tourists, we were able to witness the performance of each one of them. We corroborated the information they gave us, and the importance that their work has in society which allowed us to have the required elements to go, thanks to experimentation and by trial and error, from the hypothesis that teaching a foreign language through the reality of a group of people could assure better results to a real product with the aim of taking the first steps in teaching English to an indigenous group.

While staying with this line of thought, but focused on the concept of culture that we introduced in the conceptual considerations, appeared Paulo Freire and his Pedagogy of Hope[27]. In this book, Paulo Freire emphasizes that "*Education must be a practice of freedom*" and that was how we carried out our work with the

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[26]IPIÑA, Enrique. Condiciones y perfil del docente de educación intercultural bilingüe. Revista Iberoamericana de Educación. http://www.oei.org.co/oeivirt/rie13a04.htm- March 25th
[27] FREIRE, Paulo. La Pedagogía de la Esperanza. Siglo XXI Editores.1992

community tourist guides. Being aware that we were working with people that belong to an "oppressed" culture, we did not impose at any moment the beliefs of the Western culture, despite working with English. Our only purpose was to show all the values that their own culture has, and that are worth showing to foreigners.

During the meetings, we organized activities for the guides in order to practice English in which we did not act as teachers, but as coordinators, which helped them to understand better their specific roles in the activity so that they became individuals, capable of influencing the consciousness of some others while they got more awareness of their own learning.

What we did was to try to establish a balance in which the pleasure of learning compensates for any cultural predispositions which delay the process of actualization and adaptation, without committing the mistake of underestimating our own culture.

Finally, taking into account that our main purpose was to introduce English learning and teaching as a foreign language based on Purace's reality as a tourist place and the concept of evaluation supporting our pedagogical actions, we carried out a follow-up to the learning process of the participants in their real interaction with visitors. In this process several aspects such as their attitude, their participation in classes, workshops and outings provided the elements to assess their advancement.

8. METHODOLOGY

8.1 EXPERIENCE

Making this dream come true was a really exciting experience since it was full of emotions, feelings and hopes. Fortunately, all members of the research group had what it took to achieve the goals we had at the beginning. Although all was not as we expected or wanted, now, looking back, we have the satisfaction of having given of ourselves and having accomplished the commitment we assumed with the community, the PNN Puracé and ourselves.

Taking into account that our degree project involved work with an indigenous community, it was necessary to base each one of its stages within the line of social research. For this reason, we looked at authors who supported our actions: Ezequiel Ander-Egg was one of them. He makes a distinction between basic and applied research, the latter being the one that fits more to the process we carried out. According to him, applied research *"busca el conocer para hacer, para actuar (modificar, mantener, reformar o cambiar radicalmente algún aspecto de la realidad social) […] se trata de investigaciones que se caracterizan por su interés en la aplicación, utilización y consecuencias prácticas de los conocimientos"* [28], which is what we did during the first stage when we traveled in order to get to know the place where we were going to work. Then, we did a diagnosis of the conditions, needs, the available materials, the people who would be part of the process, and the possible obstacles we could find during the process. After that, we

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[28] Técnicas de investigación social. Editorial Lumen, 24ª edición, Buenos Aires, 1995. Pag. 68

defined our approach in a way that it had a real impact on this specific community, and finally, as a result, we produced a handbook with its corresponding audio which summaries the pedagogical process with the community tourist guides. In order to explain the entire process in a more detailed way, we refer here to the different proceedings that led us to the fulfillment of the project. Among them we included: the work with National Parks, the work with an indigenous group, working in Puracé, the work with the participants of the project, the pedagogical experience and our work as a group.

8.1.1   Working with National Natural Parks

The work with the "*Unidad Administrativa Especial de Sistema de Parques Nacionales Naturales de Colombia*" was so relevant for us because it was the first contact we had with the Puracé National Natural Park and with the community tourist guides who work in it; in the same way, through this organization, it was possible for us to become volunteer park rangers and receive the multiple benefits that come with that such as a decrease in some costs related to the entrance to the park, accommodation and food.

First of all, we talked to Juan Carlos Gaitán who helped us get to know the PNNP, to get our cards as volunteer park rangers and to contact the guides. This all happened during the first stage of our project when he was the person in charge of Puracé Park in Pilimbalá. We had some meetings with Juan Carlos in which we talked about our degree project and listened to his recommendations and advice; likewise, he gave us some general information about the PNNP, and gave us our park rangers' uniforms that consisted of two t-shirts, a cap and a vest.

Our second contact with PNNP was through a meeting with Liliana Mosquera, an officer of the PNNP and Maria Teresa Amaya, chief of PNN- Puracé in which we shared the most relevant aspects about our degree work proposal, and listened to their opinions and suggestions. We realized in this meeting that it was not possible for Parks to help us with the budget to publish the handbook[29] as a product of our work, but they told us we could look for support in some other institutions.

Since this meeting we have had other one with Liliana Mosquera to receive information about the management of the PNNP. On one occasion she offered us an alternative when we realized that the work with Manuel María Mosquera High School was not possible, which involved working in a primary school located in a place near Puracé called Campamento with children of fifth grade. On another occasion, she told us that we had to stop the project until we received the necessary approval to work with an Indigenous Community from the *Cabildo* Indígena de Puracé, because all decisions about works or projects to be undertaken in this zone have to receive the respective authorization from the community government, without which it could be a big problem for PNNP.

The last meetings we had with her were about an ecological outing to the PNNP we wanted to hold out in order to get the money we needed to publish the handbook; in these meetings we received the basic requirements to carry out this outing, which included the prices, the number of people and the places to visit. It was hard work because we planned this outing from December 2009 but some obstacles appeared so it was postponed several times. Happily, it took place on March 2010 with the help of park workers, the *Cabildo*, the community tourist

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[29] This is a little book we want to leave the guides and some other people about the pedagogical process we carried out with them.

guides, and some classmates and friends who accepted our invitation. Thanks to this activity and the collaboration of the people in charge of the administration of the park, we were able to get enough money to produce the handbook (See appendix 4).

Other contacts we established with PNNP were through the employees, who at the beginning helped us a lot with our project since they were part of our classes but due to some circumstances they did not return. Among them we could name Ramiro Manquillo, Hector Pizo, John Jairo Ordoñez, and Diomar Castro who was the new person in charge of Pilimbalá as replacement for Juan Carlos Gaitán.

When we presented our degree work proposal we also agreed with Parks to deliver them reports about the work we were carrying out with the guides, the inconveniences, problems and important events we found during the process.

8.1.2 Working with an indigenous group

Despite the fact that Colombia is a country with a great cultural diversity, there is almost no interaction between the cultures living here, which is the result of some prejudice based on the assumptions people have about the way of life of the groups that are different from them. That was our case before working with the *Cabildo* Indigena de Puracé; we used to think that the indigenous people had very strong feelings of belonging which would be an impediment for the proposal we had for them, since it involved teaching English that is not only a language different from theirs but also a foreign one with which they had very little or no contact.

However, we found that they were really interested in the topic and eager to learn and to attend the "classes" due to the fact that they were very aware about the importance English has with the globalization process that has been affecting modern life, especially about the harm it could produce on their culture. They considered this proposal as an opportunity for them to start thinking about the possible ways they could prepare themselves to face the consequences of the events of the modern world.

Another aspect that really impressed us and with which we had some problems was their administrative and political organization. At the very beginning, we were told that we must ask for permission from the authorities of the *Cabildo* in order to be able to start our work, which we did, but we only talked to the second-in-charge in the *Cabildo* and some other *Cabildante*s. They gave us their opinions and their approval but without any written document in which they expressed their agreement. We thought it was not necessary, and we started the activities we had planned. Unfortunately, some time later, we were asked to stop our activities for some weeks and called for a meeting in the *Cabildo* office. At that moment, we realized the strong conviction they have for the old customs and their laws. At that meeting we witnessed the great power the old men have when it was time to make decisions and how respectful the young ones are of that knowledge and the wisdom they have gotten with their experiences.

That day, we spent four hours hoping to get a positive answer, and we were asked and questioned about the benefits and the relevance our proposal would have for their community. Finally, after having defended our project and having understood that the big problem had been that we started working without a letter of approval together with the fact that we were working with National Natural Parks which, had attempted to go against the authority they have over their territory, we were able to

come to an agreement under some conditions in a way so that we would be able to continue the work we had already began. However, this uncertainty affected the rhythm of work we already had and delayed our schedule until the next year.

In 2010, we had to talk again with the governor since each year the *Cabildo* elects another one, so we had to tell him everything about the proposal and the activities we planned to carry out. Luckily, he did not have any problem with it and we were able to do the things as we had planned.

From that moment on, we learned our lesson. Since then, we have not done or changed anything without consulting the governor and without leaving some written register of the agreements reached with him; this guaranteed the normal workings of the project.

8.1.3 Experience with the participants

While working on our degree project, we had the chance to work with different kinds of participants: at the beginning, we planned to work with a group of community tourist guides contacted by Juan Carlos Gaitán. We met some of them such as: Noé Puliche, Edgar Taimal, Claudia Jimena Escobar, William Pizo and Felisa, the chef. Most of them were farmers who lived in Campamento or close to Pilimbalá. The park calls them when visitors arrive and ask for their services.

Juan Carlos also introduced us to some park employees interested in our project, like: Ramiro Manquillo, Hector Pizo and John Jairo Ordoñez, who were hired by

the park in order to take care of and control its different sections. Another group of 15 students in tenth and eleventh grade from Manuel María Mosquera School were interested in working with us; they were doing their social work in the park.

Unfortunately, we could not work with all these people and we had to look for different possibilities to continue with our work, involving different people in our project, who in some way were related to the park and to the touristic activity carried out in Puracé. When we started our project in September, we found the following problems:

First at all, the students from Manuel María Mosquera School were finishing their social work, so they did not consider it necessary to work with us. Just few of them wanted to participate in our project, but our schedule and the distance from the high school infrastructure to Pilimbalá made their participation difficult. For this reason, they could not continue working with us.

Secondly, the attendance of the community tourist guides and the park employees was very irregular, the former having some problems like distance and the schedule, and the latter sometimes having to work in another sector of the park. This part of our work was really discouraging, since in some cases we traveled to Puracé and we only found two or three students, making their learning difficult.

Due to these facts, we had to reconsider our situation and think of including another group. In a meeting with Liliana Mosquera of National Park Office in Popayán, she proposed that we include the primary school students from

Campamento near Pilimbalá, so we met with the principal of this school and agreed to work with the students in fourth and fifth grade.

At that point, we were working with people from Pilimbalá and the children from Campamento School simultaneously, and things were working pretty well, until we had to face the problem of getting approval from the *Cabildo* Indígena de Puracé, so we had to stop our classes with them until we solved this problem. Sadly, we only got the approval in December 2009, when they were already on Christmas holidays and they had already finished their school year, which forced us to decide not to continue working with them.

Once we got the approval to work in Puracé, and talked to the Governor, he introduced us to a small group who were consolidated as community tourist guides in the *Cabildo*. On this occasion, we met new people like Wilson Aguilar and Patricia Caldón who are a couple involved in tourism, not only in the park, but also outside of it, organizing different routes to visit the popular interesting places in Puracé; Maria Nolia Quira, a traditional doctor; Noé Puliche, a community tourist guide, who was the only one involved in the whole of our project; Ayde Maribel Calapsu, Sandra Milena Pizo, Nixon Libardo Calapsu and Eimar Alfonso Yacumal from the Manuela María School, and Gabriel Quirá, a graduated student

To keep a group together was very difficult since our work was carried out in a town where transportation is a little bit expensive, and the people who we were working with were farmers that sometimes had to do other things related to farming. In spite of all the inconveniences we had to face, the participants always were very pleasant and polite with us. Despite not knowing a foreign language like

English, their interest and their curiosity for learning was noticeable, and their knowledge about Puracé was very useful for us.

8.1.4 Working as a group

To carry out the degree work, we did different activities, in which each member of the group participated actively. Not only did we assign individual research but we also held several meetings where we discussed and analyzed the information that each one of us found.

During the first stage of this process, we worked well with the teacher Carmen Elena Montealegre, who was our first project advisor. With her, we did some seminars or workshops, which helped us to focus our work, and we also worked in an organized way, which allowed us to make good progress in our degree work. Thanks to the teacher's advice we designed our lesson plans, which were very useful in the second stage of our work. Each member of the group contributed with materials to do the activities in class.

One aspect, which is appropriate to point out in this work is that the change of adviser affected us seriously as the teacher Carmen Elena Montealegre and the teacher Paul Victor Ashford not only had different pedagogical training but also both had different styles for working and fitting in these changes at the very beginning was complicated. Fortunately, we understood that undertaking a degree project was not a responsibility of the teacher but of us as students, as the teacher was only a person who advises us and helps us to clear up some doubts.

Regarding the activities that we did in order to collect money for our trips to Puracé, we worked hard. Our teachers, classmates and friends were always ready to help us and thanks to their collaboration we got good results to finance part of our work.

Taking into account the community tourist guides' active participation, we, as a group, decided to give each participant a certificate, where it specified the number of hours of classes that each participant attended. The purpose of this activity was to motivate the guides so that they could continue with some course in the SENA or in other Institutes that would give them a better quality of live. All this procedure was done thanks to the collaboration of the Dr. Alfonso Buelvas who is in charge of the Department of Foreign Languages.

To get an agreement among several people was hard work; because each person not only had a different style of working but his/her point of view could change at any moment. On many occasions this situation can seriously affect the rhythm and the environment of the group but fortunately we were able to manage this situation and at the end of the project, we achieved the goals we had when starting the work.

8.1.5 Working in Puracé

Although we chose our degree project based on different aspects, one of them was to have the chance to work in a special place like Puracé with a magnificent landscape; we ought to clarify that when we work in a unique location away from where we live, we have to take some important aspects into account such as

transportation costs, food, and the security issue, so now we are going to see how we dealt with those aspects.

First, regarding transportation we traveled every fortnight to Puracé and sometimes every week, when the governor of the *Cabildo* planned a meeting. All of us had to get to the *Cabildo*'s office which meant spending more money on tickets, as well as having to get up early in the morning in order to be able to get public transportation in "La Virgen de los Hoyos".

Second, when we worked in Pilimbalá we had no trouble with food since there was a restaurant so the only thing we were concerned about was money, and in the school we were offered a snack, but in order to get lunch we had to go to the town, and near the *Cabildo*'s office there was no restaurant, so we had to wait until we got to Puracé or to Popayán.

Third, we had to face the security issue. During some months of our practice, the Cauca Department was hit by a wave of violence and Puracé was not an exception that was why we had to postpone a class due to some disturbances. However we never had to confront a complex situation in the area.

As a common factor among the above-mentioned aspects, we found that money was important during our project, and we were really concerned about it. Consequently we planned some activities in order to collect money to undertake our work, and our classmates helped us with raffles, outings and with other kind of activities.

As a conclusion we found that work in a rural area has many positive aspects such as having the chance to work in places full of natural diversity and of warm people. Nevertheless, there are negative aspects or difficulties which we have to be aware of, because we have to be prepared in order to look for some strategies that help us to confront those situations.

8.1.6 Pedagogical Experience

The methodology we followed in the realization process in the English language learning experience with the tourist guides in PNNP was based on meaningful contributions that several scholars such as Bachelard, Freinet, and Freire have done in the fields of education, pedagogy, language; and some others. Although we did not confine ourselves to a specific educational model, we can state that we are closely related to the Humanists in the sense that, since the very beginning we tried to create an entertaining learning environment, in which respect and motivation were two of the most important factors for our work.

Following Freinet's statement: "*No separar la escuela de la vida* [30]", we researched the situation of tourism in our country, especially for the place in which we planned to work: Puracé National Natural Park in order to get to know the reality surrounding the participants of the project and, afterwards include it in the development of the activities within the classroom. After providing ourselves with enough information about this place (location, natural resources, culture,

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[30] FREINET, Celestin. Técnicas Freinet de la Escuela Moderna. Siglo XXI de España Editores S.A. 1969. Pag .41

costumes), we visited the Park and met some people who worked there, this meeting helped us a lot to define the cultural context in which we worked.

Besides, when sharing personal experiences about English learning with the community tourist guides, we found out that the younger people were more familiar with English than the elder ones, though some of the latter could understand some words. This information gave us a clue of how our work had to be carried out and what the requirements were for its appropriate development: we had to teach English to an organized indigenous community, respecting their culture, beliefs and their particular way of learning a language, as well as their decisions about learning English or not, becoming all these aspects important tools in the development of this learning process because they gave us the basis to carry out our proposal.

After getting involved with the place and the people who we worked with, we could start thinking of the possibilities we had for the development of our pedagogical proposal. Here, the conceptions of language proposed by Wittgenstein and Benjamin were crucial in terms of material and activities. Games, listening exercises, and role plays were activities that helped us to succeed in teaching the guides the basics of English with the purpose of giving them the chance of enlarging their field of work as guides since they gave us freedom to plan all kind of actions that stimulated the interest and creativity of the students; that motivated language learning through other fields of knowledge, mainly arts such as: music, dancing, drawing and painting and that, at the same time, aimed at improving two of the four language skills: listening and speaking.

In addition to this, the visual factor was also relevant for English learning, which is why we always used colorful material for teaching. It is necessary to mention that the production of materials was not only a task of the teachers but also of the guides who, as participative actors of their learning process, were in charge of the creation of some of them.

Other aspects that are worth mentioning are: first, the fact that every decision taken was a result of an agreement between guides and us because we had to consider the fact that they had other duties, which was why we agreed to meet, for four months, every week on Mondays for four hours, which, for us, was enough time to accomplish the goals of our proposal. Second, the board, contrary to what is usually seen in classrooms, did not have a main role during the process, given the fact that we looked for other resources such as: visual aids, word cards and real objects taken from the reality of Puracé in order to explain the meanings and the expressions they needed to put into practice. Third, the topics were constantly reviewed in a way that allowed us to both evaluate the participants' progress as well as reinforce them. Fourth, English was used as much as possible with the aim of familiarizing the participants with the sounds, vocabulary, and expressions and so strengthen their listening skill. Finally, in order to evaluate the participants and the proposal itself, we invited some teachers of the program, a foreigner and a employee of the park to attend a presentation in Pilimbalá, in which the guides shared personal information and general information of the interesting places in the park, and at the end of it, there was a short discussion about the feelings, the thoughts and the recommendations that all participants and attendants had on the proposal.

Thanks to this way of working, we can say that we succeeded in getting our students to learn some Basic English and be able to share some information about the park in this foreign language since all elements we used to develop each class and activity were designed taking into account their knowledge about their cultural and natural background which was rationalized through this English learning process.

Our pedagogical work was undertaken in an environment of contentment and intercultural acceptance: we always respected the guides' opinions and listened to their advice carefully, now we can say that the work was very beneficial for all of us, because everybody learnt from it.

8.2 ANALYSIS

8.2.1 General Analysis

To start analyzing our pedagogical experience in Puracé we have to name that the population who we worked with was a group of people from an indigenous community so taking into account this factor, we had to establish the kind of pedagogy we will use in order to respect their way to see the world and things around them which are part of their life, the knowledge to be shared, the impact of English on the community tourist guides and the means and purposes of evaluation.

Talking about the knowledge shared, we discovered that our conception of it was different from the conception they have because our knowledge comes from Western world view whereas they feel and live an ancestral view; for that reason, we have to look for a strategy to teach linked to the concept of education in which our work was based: "*el proceso por el cual se crean las condiciones para alimentar, animar y respetar el desarrollo integral de los participantes en el mismo*"[31]. To understand that position in front of kind of knowledge and education, we took up again our experience in learning and teaching at public schools and private institutions in Popayán, as a result it was possible for us to do a reflection between those institutions from Popayán and the community tourist guides from Puracé bearing in mind the roles of those concepts in an educational process. Sometimes public schools or private institutions are only worried about transmitting

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[31] MONTEALEGRE, Carme n E. y Puerto, Carlos Julio. Lengua, pensamiento, universo. Popayán, 2002. Pág 20

a particular knowledge without reflecting on it or unknowing its importance to students life, making of the education an isolated process from their reality. In our case, it was very vital to realize the importance of our educational action in participants' life, and the kind of knowledge to be used and shared; for instance, it is not the same to teach about volcanoes in a public school from Popayan, where students do not have a real contact with them, only through teachers' explanation or printed images, than talk about volcanoes with the community tourist guides who not only have a real contact with this element but also have a background and especial significance for them according to their cultural values.

Regarding Bachelard's concept on realization "*Bachelard propone entonces un racionalismo aplicado —nada tiene que ver con el racionalismo tradicional—,* [...*retoma las enseñanzas suministradas por la realidad para traducirlas en un programa de realización*] [32], which was also an essential tool for us in carrying out the learning and teaching process with the community tourist guides, for instance, when they shared their experiences, we took from them what we needed in order to design the corresponding materials and the activities, then we shared them with the guides through some basic English elements linked to the information they gave us. It was a feedback process in which both involved parts (guides and Language Students) interacted all time.

According to the above information, we can conclude that, on one hand, in the teaching process in general, if guides have the topics to be studied clear in their first language; it will be easier for them to recognize those subjects in a foreign language. On the other hand, this process of realization remain unfinished because there were much information that we could not work due to the short time of the process and great natural and cultural richness they have, a clear example is

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[32] GASTON BACHELARD. Racionalismo aplicado. Paidos, Buenos Aires. 1978. Pág:113

the fact that we are aware that the community tourist guides can share the information about the Condor Stone, but if a foreigner asks them about the Canyon next to it, it is possible that they cannot give that answer in English making clear some limitations in our project.

In this line, it is possible for us to say that our teaching and learning process also involved a translation process, as we could not teach them some knowledge that they already knew, we only give them some tools to express it in English and in carrying out it we used the translation of some words, stories, myths and legends.

In this process of translation, we had to take into account that it was impossible to do a literary translation, due to some different factors such as, there are some names of several interesting places which are in the participants' Native language: "*Coconuco language*", which also express a sacred sense to them; these same places have also received a Spanish denomination according to the kind of place, "*Laguna de…, Cascada de…*"; so , in our teaching action we took those latter to translate into English   promoting an encounter among three languages, "*Coconuco*", "*Spanish*" and "*English*" and an intercultural communication process. For example, there is a tourist place named in Coconuco language: "*Andulbio*", where the spirit of the water called *Andulbio* lives, in Spanish, it is called *"Laguna de San Rafael*" and in English "*San Rafael Lagoon*". So, in the work of doing the corresponding translation we tried to understand the meaning of those aspects, in order to give them the sense they have for the participants. It was a difficult task because to comprehend completely the significance and sense of indigenous people in front of these sacred places is very hard, it is necessary to understand also their belief and their culture and we only got to know a little part of it through our work.

Another point about translation is related to the work we did during our carrier, firstly, as Harris and Sherwood stated: [...*natural translation ability, a kind of innate ability possessed by any multilingual speaker as the basis of TC(translation competence).*] so according to that we can say that to have been studying this career allowed us to develop and strength this natural ability, and for that reason, it was possible for us to use translation in some many cases in which it was required. Besides, to carry out the corresponding translation we have to do a searching process to get a closer translation; in this process English native teachers were a great support for us. We also could notice the importance of this in the learning and teaching process as an implicit element which is used by teachers in the classrooms without realizing, for example, when students ask teachers how they can say a statement in English, sometimes, teacher translates the statement in his/her mind and then give the answer to his/her students, in this process translation is a implicit aspect in learning and teaching. Regarding our work, we used translation to express the information guides gave us into English in order to they could shared it with foreigners.

All this process of learning and teaching in which were included the preceding concepts was also related to Freinte's statement "*No separar la escuela de la vida*"[33], why? Because for undertaking this process we needed a place, which was not exactly the "common school"; the Cabildo's library represented "*school*" since it was the place in which we carried out the classes; but, this place also mean for us the space for sharing, for getting to know better different things and for carrying out the teaching and learning process, for interacting with our students, for allowing that students' reality made part of the class, in this way, we could say that with each new thing they told us, activity or material we used to prepare our

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[33] FREINET, Celestin. Técnicas Freinet de la Escuela Moderna. Siglo XXI de España Editores S.A. 1969. Pag .41

classes school and life were linked. However, we also had the opportunity to take school to the life, because the paths, the interesting places and Pilimbalá, were part of the process as they helped us to construct our work and to practice what we were studied; these places, that represent life, were important practical elements for the guides.

8.2.2 Participants

PARTICIPANTS	AGES	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH
SUBJECT 1	48	Elementary	Some technical English referred to cars
SUBJECT 2	14	Elementary	None
SUBJECT 3	16	High school	High school
SUBJECT 4	16	High school	High school
SUBJECT 5	14	Media	High school
SUBJECT 6	16	High school	High school
SUBJECT 7	16	High school	High school
SUBJECT 8	32	Media	None
SUBJECT 9	28	Media	None

This group of participants had a common reason for learning English; which was for a special purpose: improve their performance as community tourist guides in this way they have the chance to communicate with foreign people who speak English. Nevertheless their process was marked by some particular aspects that made the experience different for each of them.

A relevant aspect we can analyze from the information above is the difference of age, so we can inferred that we worked with two specific groups: **adolescents** and **adults,** as a general information about these two groups we have that adolescents are passionate for things they are interested in and adults are more disciplined due to the fact that they have a large previous learning experience; but in some of our

cases it did not apply because we had a person who was 32 years old and he was so enthusiastic that he had energy to participate in the activities as well as to disturb their classmates.

Another significant case we had: was a boy of 14 years old, he was an introverted guide, it was a hard work to encourage him to participate in the activities, and he also showed some difficulties in his oral performance in Spanish. In the other cases, we did not have remarkable issues, talking about their behavior related to the age.

In this group we found two levels of English beginners and some others in pre-intermediate and we found that for those who had a previous contact with this foreign language was easier to pronounce and participate in the activities than those who did not have it. We want to point out that the previous contact came from high school where the younger participants were still studying which improved their performance.

Learners style were also different in each case, for example some participants were more visual, some others were more active and enthusiastic, but, although they had similar purposes, each one of them was unique, and this particular characteristic was what gave an important relevance to our work, because, this pushed us to be more ingenious and resourceful in the moment of proposing the activities for each meeting in a way that all participants felt motivated and taken into account.

8.2.3 Materials and activities

During the development of our degree work we had to design specific material which fitted the context in which we worked, focusing on two skills of language: speaking and listening. Within this process, we must establish some criteria and make decisions concerning the purpose of the activities proposed for each meeting. Although, in this process we found some limitations and difficulties, the results achieved at the end of it were noticeable. For instance, the criteria that ruled the design of material were related to the purpose of itself, the available resources, and the abilities of each one of the members of the group.

Concerning its purpose we always had in mind that we wanted the guides to feel identify with it, to practice the oral skill, and to convey meaning in a way that English was used as much as possible. For achieving this, the visual aids made with real photos of the interesting places of the park and with food were really successful, since the participants were able to identify the corresponding words in English for each one of them. Besides, the visual factor including in it proved to be essential when it was time for the participants to identify and to learn new words. They showed more interest and a bigger capacity to apprehend the words when this kind of material was used.

Talking about the available resources, it can be said that the production of any kind of material requires an investment of money, and also, a great amount of creativity in order to take the most of it. Here, the digital aids such as CDs, computer programs among them photo shop and audition provided an excellent alternative to create some audio and visual aids. However, most of the resources used were cardboard, markers, watercolors, paintbrushes and other that were easy to carry to

the meetings given that in some occasions, the materials were produced by the participants who really enjoy the opportunities in which they played an active role that allowed them to show their artistic skills, what proved that a language class can be an excuse for students to explore other expression ways that enrich the knowledge they have about themselves as well as the language knowledge. The material created by the participants generated a feeling of belonging that gave them confidence to be more participative when they had the chance to speak about their creations proving that involving students in their own learning process provided them with the enough autonomy to make decisions about it and to be more aware about their progress.

Regarding the abilities of each member of the group, it can be stated that the Modern Languages program do not have a strong component on material production which was evident when we began to produce it. In most of cases, we did it in an instinctive way trying to take advantage of the manual skills each one of us had. Thanks of this, some of us discovered some unknown skills, but it also made noticeable the lack of a subject within the curriculum of the program that give to the language students the chance to look at this field and that provide the theoretical support for designing material for a specific context and purpose.

In conclusion, the criteria for designing material for our pedagogical proposal were established by taking into account the conditions in which we were working, the purpose for which it was designed, and the individual characteristics of the members of the research group.

The activities and the materials that we designed to give our classes had several purposes. In relation to the activities, the first one was to make of each meeting an

enjoyable moment, where each participant had the chance to put into practice and to reinforce the worked topics. The second one was to see the advancement of each participant after a session, and the last one was to look for helping with each activity to the community tourist guides to overcome their fears particularly the fear to speak in public, since, many times they did not have confidence in themselves to say or to express something in English, and this part was very crucial for us, because, as it was said before our pedagogical proposal was focused on promoting two of the four skills of language that is, listening and speaking, which are very important to establish a conversation with a foreign tourist. In relation to the materials, they had a purpose in common, to help us to introduce new vocabulary and expressions related to a specific topic, besides with this material we got that our classes were more dynamic.

It was in this way how most of the activities proposed for each session were developed taken into account the previous purposes, we got good results with activities such as: dialogue performance, map activity, find it if you can, telling stories, dancing chairs, project runway and forming sentences, through these activities we not only got attention and the active participation of the guides in each one of them but it allowed the participants to reinforce topics studied in previous sessions and the most important achievement was that they began to overcome a little the fear to speak in front of their own classmates, this small triumph was achieved thanks to activities that we did and the support we always gave them during all the process, expressions such as: " try, try" or "you can do it", motivated the participants to do a good work.

Another significant matter was the fact that some of the participants of the project were not able to work at home with the audio that we provided them, because in some cases they did not have a CD player, and some others did not know how to

[64]

work with them, in this case digital aids were a limitation for the successful development of an activity we had planned.

8.2.4 Intercultural aspect

The Department of Cauca has some indigenous communities, which are doing everything they can in order to preserve not only their customs and beliefs but to preserve and to protect the natural richness they have in their territory. Several of these communities have a significant tourist activity and they are often visited by national and foreign tourists. That is the case of Puracé municipality, which has several tourist places to visit. It represents a big opportunity for this community especially for community tourist guides because they can share not only knowledge that they have about the region but they can express the message of preservation and respect for the nature. It is in this circumstance in where is necessary to have some basic elements in English to share this information especially with the foreign tourists, who come to Colombia, motivated by the wonderful landscapes our country has. Taken as reference this need, some doubts and difficulties came up in relation to our proposal, however it was approved by all members of the Cabildo given that they considered that our work could gave them key elements to improve their performance as guides and the quality of their services.

One aspect which is very important to point out in this analysis is that for some guides who belong to "EL CABILDO INDIGENA DE PURACE" the fact of learning another language in this case English had a serious political implication in their community because a foreign language initially appeared for them to be a mechanism that a dominant culture uses to oppress a weak one, that conception

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sometimes is shared not only by some indigenous communities but also by some professionals who have a similar opinion. Fortunately, during the development of our work the guides understood that our proposal was never focused on that purpose or idea, that we only wanted to help to the community tourist guides in a way that they could share the knowledge they have about the region with the foreign visitors.

Regarding difficulties we had in the initial stage of our work, we want to point out that, all this had its origin, due to the lack of knowledge about the laws that govern a Cabildo. Through history these communities have had a constant fight with the National Government not only for keeping their authority within their territories but for getting a national and international recognition as an organization which has right to participate in the political field of our country. That is why how our actions attempted against that authority which they have fight for years since we started to work in their territory without having an approval from each one of the members of the Cabildo. This inconvenient was overcome thanks to agreements that we did with them and to the cooperation that they gave us.

Finally, we can say that our pedagogical proposal attended to participants' needs, in view of the fact that we gave them some key elements in English that will contribute to establish a better communication with foreign tourists and in this way, they could share the message of preservation for each one of the tourist places the Puracé park has.

8.2.5 Evaluation and results

The teaching and learning process carried out with the guides had an evaluation system different from that applied in traditional education. For instance, grades were not important; tests were not the main tools for evaluating participants' progress and the correction of the mistakes was done in a way that participants would feel more comfortable and a little less fearful when they spoke. All this was done by taking into account the purposes of the pedagogical proposal and the particular characteristics of the participants which guaranteed the achievement of the most of the results we wanted at the beginning of the project.

Throughout our experience as students and teachers, we have realized that grades do not necessarily reflect the knowledge or the abilities a student has, and do not say anything about the students' progress, being just numbers that classify students into good or poor ones without taking into account very much the variables affecting their process; they are the requirement for passing a subject and consequently receiving a diploma. In addition to this, the specific conditions in which the guides were learning, the language goals we had established for them and the specific characteristics of the group of guides, made us opt for a qualitative and subjective way of evaluating. As a result, we found that participants' motivation was not affected in any time of the process since they were learning not to get a good grade but, for real life communication, they knew that, what we were teaching them was going to be useful when they have the chance to interact with a foreign visitor. Besides, all the efforts they did, their attitude toward the activities proposed for each class, the great interest they showed for improving were relevant at the moment of evaluating their performance. Along with this, contrary to what happens in traditional schools and high schools where it is possible to notice a lot of competition related to grades, in our group of guides it was possible to notice a

great feeling of cooperation amongst themselves which contribute to the purpose we had about their active role in their learning process.

In the same way, and trying to follow the thoughts and ideas of the authors in which we based our proposal, we decided to avoid the use of the conventional tests that are usually applied in a language course, since the two target skills of language we were interested in developing were speaking and listening and they could be tested in a way that all activities proposed for each meeting were enough to do it. Consequently, we realized that participants' anxiety was noticeable diminished which guaranteed that their initial motivation remained during all the process and that they were less afraid of making mistakes. This was corroborated the day in which they were told that they had to do a presentation in front of foreign visitors as a kind of final evaluation. When they hear the word evaluation, they immediately felt anxious and afraid, and they began to doubt their abilities, so much so that some of them were not able to do it, which did not mean that they had not learned but that the pressure they felt for knowing they were going to be tested was an obstacle in proving that their process had been successful.

Not applying tests had one negative aspect. Some of the guides, specially the younger men, showed a little bit of irresponsibility with their process as a result of this measure. In our perception this could be so because they were so used to the traditional system of evaluation that they felt that it was not worth to make an effort if there would not be a test and therefore a grade.

Concerning mistakes, they were corrected immediately they were made, in this way, participants were aware of them and it was an opportunity for the others to practice. Besides, this was a job not only of the teachers but also of the

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participants due to the cooperation existing within the group. This way of correction made it evident that the community tourist guides remembered more those words that had been corrected by their "classmates" than those corrected by the teachers.

In conclusion, it can be stated that each meeting was a chance to test and evaluate each one of the participants and their performance as well as the activities and the teacher's performance assuring in this way a constant improvement which was clear during the last meeting when most of the participants demonstrated the great advancement they had achieved. However, now we look back, we consider that it would have been convenient to design an evaluation tool that would have allowed us to have more specific data on the participants' performance and would have given us more elements to analyze them with.

8.2.6 Interviews

Undertaking our field work we did some interviews which helped us to get to know better some different aspects about the community in general, the PNNP and the participants in our project.

The first one interview to Edgar Taimal, a community tourist guide from Puracé, helped us to focus our proposal because talking to him we had the opportunity to know some community tourist guides' interests and needs what helped us to shape our proposal taking into account that information. So to carry out any project it is very relevant to know about what the participants really need in order to carry out something adequate and meaningful for them.

The second interview was to Juan Carlos Gaitan who helped us to get to know the context about which we were working on, its important and relevance; in this way was possible affirm the value of the community tourist guides in this place and how much relevant was our proposal to complement the training they had.

The third interview was to Ricardo Manzano, Governor of *Cabildo indigena*, 2010, who helped us to get information about the function of Cabildo inside the community, its organization and its importance in taking some decisions that affects the community, for that reason we understood their reaction to us and the inconvenient we had with them when we presented our proposal. The community is very important and they have to study all process people want to carry out inside it in order to know its advantages and disadvantages thus all proposals have to follow an established order to be approved.

Besides, this interview allowed to know what is the role of guides inside the community and the support the Cabildo gives them, we could notice that Cabildo considers tourism as very important tools at this time, they are aware of the importance their territory has as sacred land, so they try to strengthen the guides work without forgetting that their culture is something that have to be value, respected and cared by people.

The guides are working on doing a project in which they received support in their labor, taking into account those elements. So in this way this interview allows us to recognize the importance and value of the Cabildo inside an indigenous community.

8.3 PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL TO TEACH ENGLISH TO COMMUNITY TOURIST GUIDES

8.3.1 PRESENTATION

As Foreign Language students, we propose to teach Basic English elements related to tourism to tourist guides taking into account their reality. This process looks at improving the communication existing between tourist guides and foreign visitors who speak English. (See fig. 1)

8.3.2 PURPOSES

MAIN PURPOSE

➢ To focus English learning and teaching process on tourist reality directed to guides.

COMPLEMENTARY PURPOSES

➢ To awaken the participants' desire to learn English and to develop the realization process in the educational work with languages.

➢ To familiarize students with English language applied to their context.

➢ To encourage students to acquire listening and speaking skills in order to interact with foreign visitors.

8.3.3 METHODOLOGY

For the development of this pedagogical proposal different topics taken from Puracé tourist reality were selected and organized as the main content of it. For this, we defined specific vocabulary and possible expressions that could help in guidance. We took this information from the participants' experience as community tourist guides.

With that information it was possible to determine the topics, the order they should follow and the best techniques to put them into practice during each meeting taking into account factors as age, educational background, cultural worldview, learning styles and their rural context.

Another important factor to focus on was: listening and speaking, since we were teaching English for a specific purpose, "to guide", that is why it was essential to develop these skills in the participants, so most of the activities were thought up bearing in mind the active participation of the student, in order to encourage them in these skills.

8.3.4 CONTENTS

CLASS Nº 1

PERSONAL INFORMATION
- ➢ Name
- ➢ Age
- ➢ Where they come from.
- ➢ Occupation

➢ Formal and informal greetings

PARK GENERALITIES

➢ Location

➢ Natural resources

➢ Temperature

➢ Altitude - area

➢ Interesting places:

    ✓ Condor Stone

    ✓ San Rafael Lagoon

    ✓ Orchid Path

    ✓ Purace Volcano

    ✓ Sulphur Mine

    ✓ San Juan Hot Springs

    ✓ Bedon Waterfall

    ✓ San Nicolas

    ✓ Waterfall

CLASS Nº 2

PILIMBALA SERVICES

➢ **ACCOMMODATION**

    ✓ Description and prices

    ✓ Cabins

    ✓ Camping zone

    ✓ The apartment

    ✓ Bathroom

CLASS Nº 3

> **FOOD**
> - ✓ Restaurant
> - ✓ Kitchen tools
> - ✓ Menu: *Breakfast
>   * Lunch
>   * Dinner
> - ✓ Kitchen expressions
> - ✓ Prices and description

CLASS Nº 4 – 5

PLACES TO VISIT
> **PURACE VOLCANO**
> - • Recommendations – previous-
>   - ✓ Clothes
>   - ✓ Ways to walk and rest
>   - ✓ Food
>   - ✓ Seasons
>   - ✓ Health care
>
> - • During
>   - ✓ Flora and fauna
>   - ✓ Legends

CLASS Nº 6

➢ **ORCHID PATH AND POOLS**
  ✓ General information
  ✓ Legends

➢ **THE CONDOR STONE**
  ✓ General information
  ✓ Legends

➢ **SAN RAFAEL LAGOON**
  ✓ General information
  ✓ Legends

CLASS Nº 7

➢ **SAN JUAN HOT SPRINGS**
  ✓ General information
  ✓ Clothes
  ✓ Legends
  ✓ Health care

8.3.5 FOLLOWING UP AND EVALUATION

An essential part of this process was evaluation. It is important to mention that we did not grade the students' information about tourist guidance but their performance in expressing it in English through a subjective evaluation based on some activities such as: sketches, dialogues, games, listening exercises, dictations, among others.

The individual and group participation during the meetings, the development and the response to the different activities were also taken into consideration as evaluation and to realize the different difficulties the students had in order to look for a way to overcome them. Nevertheless, factors as age, worldview, and performance were relevant in carrying out the subjective evaluation.
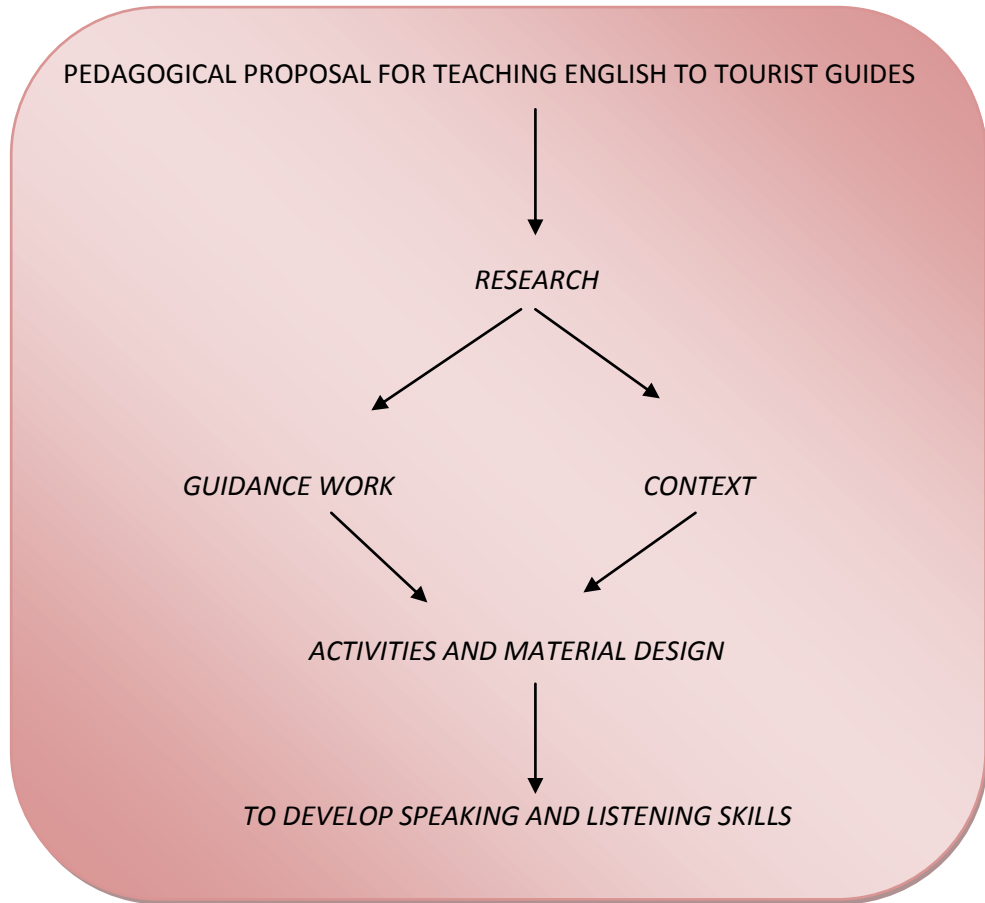
8.3.6 STUDENTS' ROLE

The basis of this proposal is the knowledge that the participants had about Puracé, so they were the source of most of the vital information necessary to carry out this experience. Moreover, in the meetings, the guides were the main actors, since all the activities were planned taking into account the community tourist guides' participation and their development on them. In this way the meetings were learner centered giving them lots of opportunities to put the language they were learning into practice. With this way of working their interest and motivation were fostered.

8.3.7 TEACHERS ROLE

First at all, the role of the teacher is as a researcher, since he/she is in charge of collecting information from different sources in order to create and organize a curriculum, in the same way, the material design has to be in concordance with the specific interest and needs of the toward group of guides. Besides, the teacher accompanies and helps the participants with their difficulties during the learning process, in such a way that they progressed in their learning.

Figure1.Pedagogical Proposal

PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL FOR TEACHING ENGLISH TO TOURIST GUIDES

RESEARCH

GUIDANCE WORK　　　　*CONTEXT*

ACTIVITIES AND MATERIAL DESIGN

TO DEVELOP SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS

9. ACTIVITIES

Our degree work was developed in three stages. In the first one, we did different activities such as: group meetings to work on project elaboration, we assigned individual tasks, and we did different research in order to know if there were previous works related to ours; then we had some meetings with members of PNNP[34], who listened to our proposal and gave us their permission and support to work in it. After this, we visited some places of the PNNP to collect information about the Park and its inhabitants.

We presented our proposal to some members of the community of Puracé who were involved in tourism, we listened to their suggestions and we considered them before we presented the final document to the relevant sections in the University, then the advisor of our work reviewed the document in order to do some significant corrections and prepare it to the revision by the Program Coordination.

The Program coordination assigned two readers who had two weeks to review our work and consider the viability of our proposal; they suggested that we do some changes regarding structure and the development of some ideas in our work.

In the last week of July, we made the corresponding improvements to our work and finally we handed in the final document to the "Consejo de Facultad", for its approval.

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[34] Puracé National Natural Park

In the second stage of our work - from September 2009 to January 2010 - we received the approval of our proposal in the first week of September, then we started our field work in the third week of this month. We worked until the last week of October, giving classes every fifteen days, however, we had some problems with the *Cabildo* because we had not shared our proposal with them, therefore we stopped our activities. Then, we set a meeting with the *Cabildo* to get its approval and continue with our labor. This meeting was satisfactory because the guides were engaged again in our work and we decided to give the last class on the second week of December. Despite nobody attending the class, we met the tourist guides in the *Cabildo* office and there we agreed on the dates for the next meetings and the place.

We started working again on January 12[th,] but in this occasion, we worked every week to catch up the classes we could not give before due to the problem with the *Cabildo*.

When we started our project we assumed different commitments: first with PNNP, and then with The *Cabildo*. One of these commitments was to hand in reports of the activities we carried out during the stipulated dates: The last week of September, October and December.

In regard to the project development and the analysis of experiences, we worked in these two aspects all throughout the second and the third stages of the project.

During the last stage, which extended from February to June of 2010, the group dedicated their time to organizing the information obtained during the previous

stages and to complete the information that needed to be more detailed. Besides, during the first three months of this phase, the work with the community tourist guides continued in order to accomplish the hours we had planned at the beginning of the project.

The production of the final document was done from February until the third week of April. For this period all members of the group worked on very specific tasks and writing about the several points that had to be developed in the document. In addition to this, the group also worked on the handbook which had to have the approval of the *Cabildo* and of the PNN Puracé. In this specific task, five of the members were in charge of selecting and writing the information that would be included in it, and one of them was in charge of drawing the cartoons integrated at the end of it. For this particular task, the group worked with a graphic designer who, thanks to his knowledge, advised on the production of it. Just after having finished, the project was delivered to the three readings/judges to evaluate it and to make the suggestions about it. They spent four weeks on this task.

Meanwhile, the group of researchers did the final reports to the PNN Puracé and to the *Cabildo* Indigena of Puracé, and presented the contents of the handbook as well in order to get their approval. In addition to this, the group delivered the certificates to each one of the participants who accomplished the total hours and whose performance was acceptable during the whole process. Such certificate had the approval of the Modern Languages Department.

When we received back the final document with the suggestions of the readers, we did the corresponding corrections and presented the final products to the entities involved in the whole process, that is to say, the final document and the handbook.

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Finally, as a requirement of the University, we did the oral presentation and delivered the last corrected document.

It is necessary to clarify that the costs of all those activities were assumed by the six members of the group who supported themselves with some extra activities: raffles, outings. One event in particular was an ecological outing to the Puracé National Natural Park done on March 21st and 22nd with the support of the community tourist guides, the employees of the park and the authorities of it who gave us the permission to do it. The main purpose of this outing was to collect some money to sponsor the production of the handbook.

10. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Three important elements of our research project were tourism, culture and pedagogy; we found a way to link those elements in order to achieve one goal which was teach English to community tourist guides. We succeeded in doing so, by working on and creating material based on their cultural context that allows them to identify with it.

Teaching English to a group of community tourist guides from Puracé was not as difficult as we thought it would be at the beginning of the process, and, it was so, maybe, because the main elements of the pedagogical proposal were taken from the reality of the participants who, in each of the meetings, showed that, even though we spoke in a foreign language, they were able to understand and to identify the vocabulary, the expressions and the topics we were talking about, which motivated them to continue learning, guaranteeing their active participation and the achievement of the goals. It was so, In the final stage of our degree work, we could realize that it was really significant for this group of guides, because we provided them some basic elements of English that, although not enough for them to have a sustained fluency in their oral performance, does allow them to share the necessary information with foreigners who visit Puracé natural national park.

Regarding pedagogy, the realization of this project gave us a pedagogical opportunity different from the traditional one, because, contrary to what conventionally is implemented in a language course our work was not based on a text, which allowed us to create our own material, define the content and the rhythm of work. In conclusion, we were independent, autonomous and free to experiment. In addition to this, it was evident that the pedagogical action really

fosters a feedback among all participants of the process, since, we as teachers learned from the cultural and natural context of the participants, and the guides learned basic elements of English.

Moreover, to implement the action research in the undertaking of this project contributed to have a real perspective about the context in which it was carried out. Thanks to this, we can assert that the results of it were significant for the participants, since these provided to their performance as guides a key element that improve the quality of their service, and enlarge their target public.

Along with this, the project had intercultural implications that were in the initial part of the work, a difficulty to their development, due to the lack of knowledge about the rules that govern a Cabildo. However, this event was a valuable and interesting aspect of analysis from which we can conclude that the indigenous fight for their authority within their territories has been a constant and ancestral fight, and that our actions attempted against that authority.

Finally, to leave a written register in our case the handbook, is vital for any pedagogical process since, it can be used as reference on which a new project can be developed or as an educational tool for the participants and for the specific context in which it was developed.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking into account that, with our proposal we got the results we wanted to achieve, we suggest that the OPE, which is carried out in public schools could be carried out in communities such as Puracé, thus in this way the process (OPE) could have a different option from those we already have, allowing students to explore a new experience.

The undertaking of this degree project opened a door, since we were able to do a first approach to make some agreements between the University, Natural National Parks and the *Cabildo* indigena de Purace which could be the beginning for the possibility of organizing total immersion camps that allow students of the Modern Language Program, students of Unilingua, and the community tourist guides to have a different environment for learning and practicing English in real and daily situations that are not available in a typical classroom.

We propose a terminological analysis concerning the tourist activity in English; this can be part of a future degree work.

Considering that a student of foreign language has the chance to share with foreigner tourists, we recommend that the program include within its curriculum some subjects related to the tourist component which give the students another option for their occupational performance.

The learning process of a foreign language is, in most cases, one that requires a constant and continuous effort in order to get outstanding results, which is why we would like some students of lower semesters to get interested in carrying out another proposal that guarantees the improvement of the work we have already done with the community tourist guides.

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APPENDIX

Appendix N 01: Lesson reports *Cabildo* Indígena de Puracé.

LESSON REPORTS - *CABILDO* INDÍGENA DE PURACÉ

These lesson reports show some of the pedagogical actions done during each meeting with the community tourist guides. It is important to say that this structure was follow for each one of the sessions in order to be sure about what the purposes and activities were and the time available for performing them.

1.   LESSON PLAN

Participants:

 Community Tourist Guides

Topics:

Greetings, Farewells, Personal Information

Time: 9:15 am – 02:00 pm

Date: January 12, 2010

Purposes:

1.   To introduce greetings and farewells.

2.   To enable students to introduce themselves, and to give personal information.

Activities:

Presentation of the topic

Personal I.D. card

Broken phone

Listening

Methodology:

The class started introducing ourselves to our students. Then we presented the topic greetings and farewells. We asked our students to greet or say good bye to a partner, in order to put in practice these topics. Besides we played broken phone. In this game a teacher says a sentence to a student, and then the student has to tell to a classmate the same sentence and so on. When the last student hears the sentence, he has to say it aloud, and we compare if the sentence coincides with the first sentence the teacher said.

After that, we showed them some ways to introduce themselves, and some important questions to take into account, for instance: What's your name? Where are you from? What's your phone number? What's your address? Finally with all these information they have to make their own personal ID card by themselves.

Finally, we worked on a listening exercise, in which they had to identify sentences as much as they could. With this activity we reinforced greetings, farewells, and personal information, and also we checked their pronunciation since they had to play these dialogues.

Evaluation:

Some of the activities carried out helped us to evaluate the understanding of the students, with the personal ID card, Broken Phone, listening and the dialogues, the students could put into practice the topics, and we could analyze their performance.

Reflection:

It was the first class with this group, and in general this was a good class. However, we could identify some difficulties with their pronunciation, and remembering vocabulary. This group is very joyful and participative, but sometimes it has difficulty in concentration.

2. LESSON PLAN

Participants: Community Tourist Guides

Topics:
1. Review of previous topic.
2. Prices and Set of Cutlery

Time: 2: 15 to 5:10 p.m

Date: Match 8th 2010

Purposes:
1. Review the previous topic.
2. Reinforce the numbers.
3. Introduce the vocabulary referring to the set of cutlery.

Activities:

Remembering vocabulary: Evaluating the pronunciation and the recognition of the vocabulary referred to food.

Memory Game: Practice numbers and the pronunciation of the food vocabulary.

Role Play: Practicing some expressions usually used in a restaurant, along with the prices of the food.

Methodology:

Remembering Vocabulary: For this activity we used flashcards with the food that is served in the restaurant of Pilimbalá. The students should say the word corresponding to the picture that was shown.

Memory Game: The flash cards with the pictures and with the written names in English of food were put on the board in a way the students could not see what was in them. Each flash card had a number from 1 to 31. The students were divided into two groups which should choose two flash cards by saying the corresponding numbers in order to discover them. If the two match then they got a point

Role Play: The students worked in pairs. They had to create a short dialogue pretending they were in the Pilimbalá restaurant; one of them was the client and the other the waiter. For this activity we provided them with some didactic materials such as plastic dishes, spoons, glasses, and bills with which they could practice the prices of the food. Finally they presented the dialogue in front of the others without any notes.

Evaluation:

The evaluation process was carried out through the observation of each participant during the classes taking into account their performance and by identifying their strengths and weaknesses.

Reflection:

In this class we noticed the advancement most students had had. Many of them had excellent pronunciation and a very good memory. However, we found out that two people needed more dedicated work.

Regarding the activities, we could conclude that those in which they had to "compete" were very appealing for them and encourage them to participate.

We also realized that if we spoke in English using some gestures the students were able to follow the directions which strengthen the listening skill of the participants.

3. LESSON PLAN

Participants: Community Tourist Guides
Topics:
1.   Review of previous topic.
2.   Recommendations and clothes

Time: 2: 15 to 5:10 p.m

Date: March 29th 2010

Purposes:

1.   Review the previous topic.

2.   Put into practice the vocabulary referring to clothes needed to visit the park and the recommendations for the tourist.

3.   Make the students share information about the legends and myths of the interesting places of the park.

Activities:

What are you wearing? Evaluating the pronunciation and the recognition of the vocabulary referring to clothes.

Forming sentences: Practice the recommendations given for each place to visit.

Telling Stories: Give the students the chance to share their cultural background.

Methodology:

What are you wearing? In this activity the students were placed in a circle way. Then, the fist one said: "I am wearing a jacket"; the next one had to say the same phrase and add another cloth, and so on, until all vocabulary learnt in the previous class was mentioned.

Forming Sentences: The three students attending this class were given a package of card words which formed a sentence. Then, the teacher said aloud a phrase and they had to organize the words in order to organize the

phrase which the teacher had said. Then each one had to say the phrase in English and their corresponding meaning in Spanish.

Telling Stories: The students were in charge of taking a story, myth or legend of one of the interesting places of the Park. However, no student did the assignment; so, we asked them to write the first story that came into their minds in a piece of paper. After having written the story they handed it in, in order for the teachers to translate them and work with them during the next class.

Evaluation:

All the time the class lasted each student was evaluated taking advantage of the fact that there were only three of them. So each teacher observed and identified their strengths and weaknesses regarding their pronunciation and their listening comprehension. In general they had a really good performance.

Reflection:

The scarce attendance to the class was surprising for each one of the teachers in charge of it since the three of the most interested students were missing. When the ones who showed up were asked about the reason for their absence, their answer was that, on vacations, it was more important for parents that young people worked in the farm or in the household chores than in anything else. This was one of the cultural aspects we had to deal with.

In general the three students had a performance better that the one showed in previous opportunities. However, the performance that Wilson Aguilar had during this class was really remarkable, his pronunciation was excellent, he was very

attentive and led the other two students, which made us think that maybe in previous occasions the presence of the other participants had some effect on their attitude and consequently on their learning process.

4. LESSON PLAN

Participants: Community Tourist Guides

Topics:
1. Interesting places in Puracé
2. Puracé Volcano

Time: 2:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m.

Date: April 21, 2010 – Wednesday

Purposes:
1. To review all the topics through personal presentations and games
2. To reinforce all the topics.

Activities:
Presentation of the guides
Questions
Concentration
"Blind Chicken"
Sorting a reading
Reading

Methodology:

The main purpose of this class was to review all the topics worked on during this process. For this reason we organized different activities where we involved all the topics, and at the same time, our students could reinforce what they have been learning. We started by asking different questions about all the topics, so that in this way we could realize how much they have learnt, and how much they could remember. Then we gave them 15 minutes to check their notes and remember the things they could not remember at the beginning. After this, each one had to introduce themselves taking into account these aspects:

Their full name
Their occupation
Their nationality
Their age
Their address
Their cell phone number

Following their presentation, each one had to answer different questions, and we mixed up the topics, so that the questions were unexpected, and they had to answer more than one question.

After having reviewed these topics, we carried out activities where the students had fun and remembered some of the topics. Our first game was "Concentration", which has as a purpose the reinforcement of numbers and cutlery; we had small cardboard pieces with numbers from two to four figures on one face, and on the another images of cutlery or their name in words, with their challenge being to match the images with the words, using the numbers on the back.

The second game was "Blind chicken", the purpose of which is to reinforce the Pilimbalá Services. First, we divided them into two teams, one of the students having to cover their eyes and the another team having to choose a place from

Pilimbalá, then the student with eyes covered had to find this place in a map with the help of indications from teammates. We show them some indications such as:

Cold: when they were far off
Warm: when they were close
Hot: when they were very, very close.
Up and down.

After the games we carried out an activity related to the volcano, dividing the students into three small groups, then giving them a text about the Puracé Volcano cut into small pieces and written on cardboard. The activity consisted of organizing this text and understanding what it meant. After each group organized this text, we checked understanding and each one read it aloud.

Finally, in our last activity we gave the students pieces of paper with information about the interesting places in Puracé. Two students had the same information about a place, and they had to read it checking pronunciation and comprehension in order for them to learn and present it during the final evaluation on Sunday, 25th April.

Evaluation:

This class had as a purpose to review all the topics learnt during the project and to evaluate understanding, so activities such as: personal presentations, questions, "Blind Chicken", and concentration were opportunities for them to be evaluated.

Reflection:

This class helped us a lot to realize how much our students have advanced during this process, since they had the chance to speak about the things they really know about and are not going to forget.

Appendix 2: images about the

ecological outing

Appendix Nº 03: Images pedagogical process (material and activities)

Appendix Nº 04: Cartilla: ENCUENTROS. Una alternativa educativa para la enseñanza del inglés en una comunidad indígena