

**IATEFL Edinburgh 2025**

# **Impact of training English women teachers from the Venezuelan Amazon**

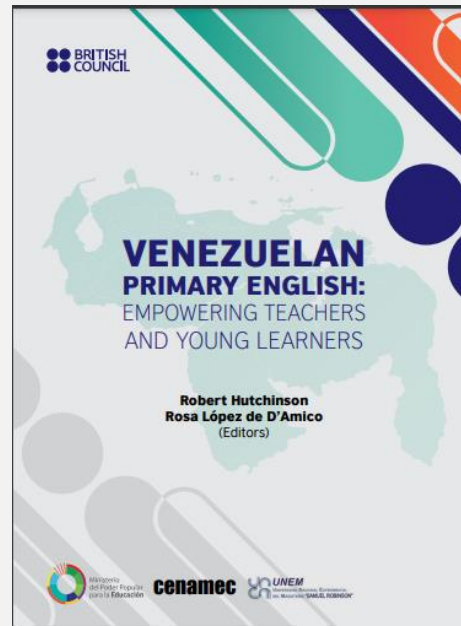
**Auramarina Lazarde**

Head of Cultural Engagement, British Council - Venezuela

# ELT in Education Venezuela

Since 2014, the British Council has collaborated with the Ministry of Education to enhance English language teaching in the public sector. In the initial phase, the direct beneficiaries of the project were primary school teachers.

**Objective:** To equip generalist teachers, with limited or no prior English language proficiency or ELT methodology, with effective tools and strategies to teach English to children and young people in public schools.



This was done with UK consultants' guidance

# Background

2016 - 2018



**“National Advanced Training Programme PNFA”**  
pilot project to train primary teachers to teach English in public schools

**500 generalist teachers**

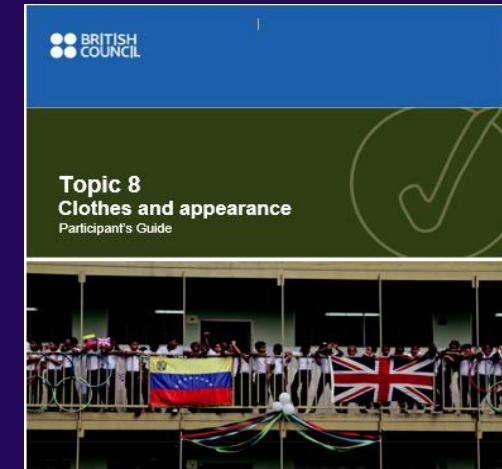
2018 - 2021



**“Primary English Project”**  
training to teach English to children fourth degree onwards

**8,000 trained teachers**

2020 -2021



**Educational support** was provided to teachers and students during the pandemic

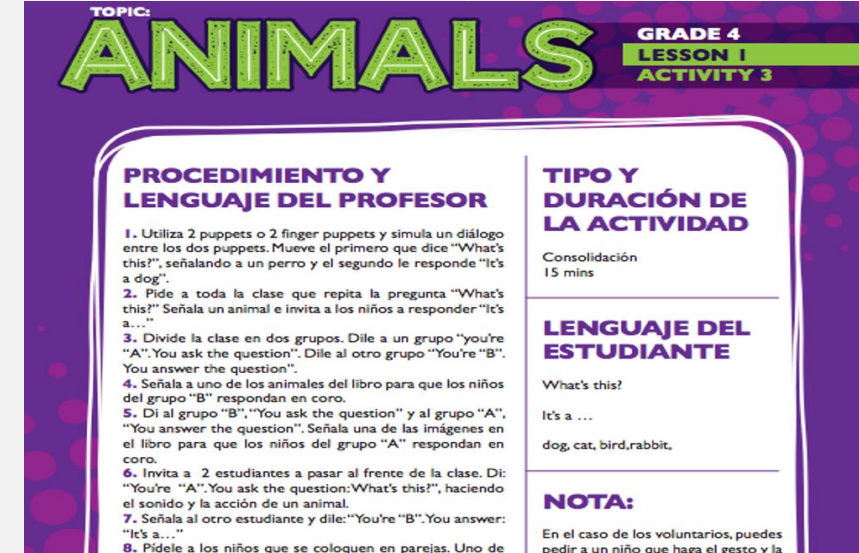
**1,500 trained teachers**



# PNFA – English in Primary School / Publications



- All material for teachers was digitised and presented in an interactive and engaging way for both students and teachers.
- The material was used during the pandemic so that teachers could continue their classes.



# Radio programmes



4TH GRADE

5TH GRADE

6TH GRADE



10 min each

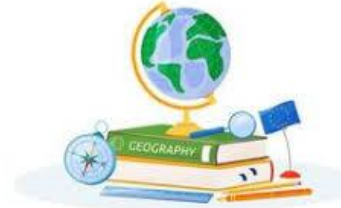


25 radial micros  
for each grade

75 Radio programmes in total

The radio programmes developed the content of the books and were an enjoyable way to reach children who had not benefited from the programme before.

## Topics



Geography



Family



Animals



Health

The weather



# PNF – English in Secondary School

## Teaching through Telegram

Project aimed at improving English teaching methodology in public secondary schools in Venezuela; and to give continuity to the primary school work.

## Local Context

- Covid-19 impact
- No computers and/or stable internet connection
- Electricity problems
- No Wi-Fi

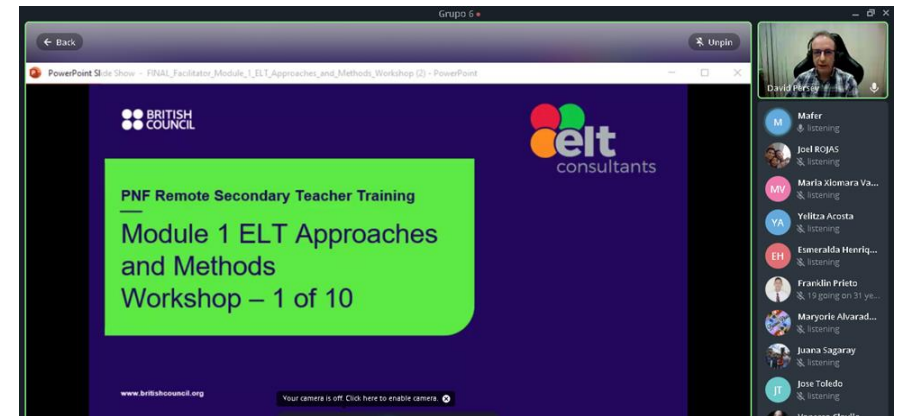


## Audience

Training  
pre- and in-  
Service  
English  
teachers



➤ Access to smartphones



TELEGRAM

Remote  
teaching



# Scop of the ELT programme

The programme has been implemented across every state in the country, resulting in the training of over **10,277 generalist teachers** in public primary schools, **4,461 English teachers in secondary schools**, and benefiting more than **402,490 students** in public schools.

More than 75% of the participants are women



Some of them come from rural areas and minority groups such as **indigenous communities**



52.1% live in the Amazon State



388 are women teachers from the Amazon State

# Training women English Teachers in the Venezuelan Amazon

## Objetives:

- Evaluate the impact of the ELT project in rural/disadvantaged areas of the Atures Municipality in the Amazonas State, with a focus on assessing the impact on equal access to English language learning opportunities for female teachers.
- Evaluate the participants' perceptions of the benefits of the programme in relation to their competencies for teaching the English language and professional development.



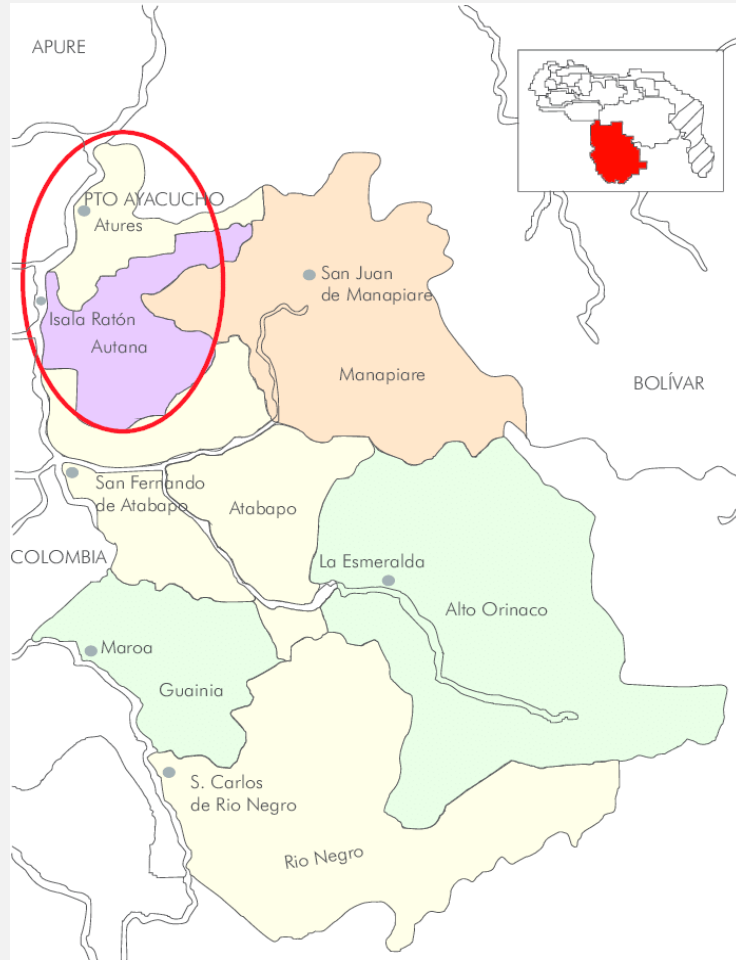
# Local context - Geographical Location

The Venezuelan Amazon covers around 400,000 square kilometres in the southern part of the country, primarily in the states of Amazonas and Bolívar



- The Orinoco River flows through the municipality.
- It features tropical rainforest landscapes, rivers, waterfalls, and mountains.
- It is home to diverse indigenous communities.
- Mestizo culture predominates in the capital, Puerto Ayacucho.
- It has a growing ecotourism sector.

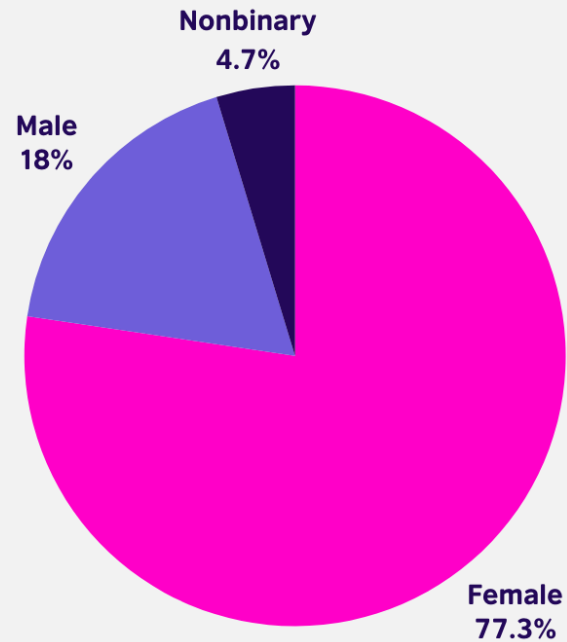
# Atures Municipality – Venezuelan Amazon



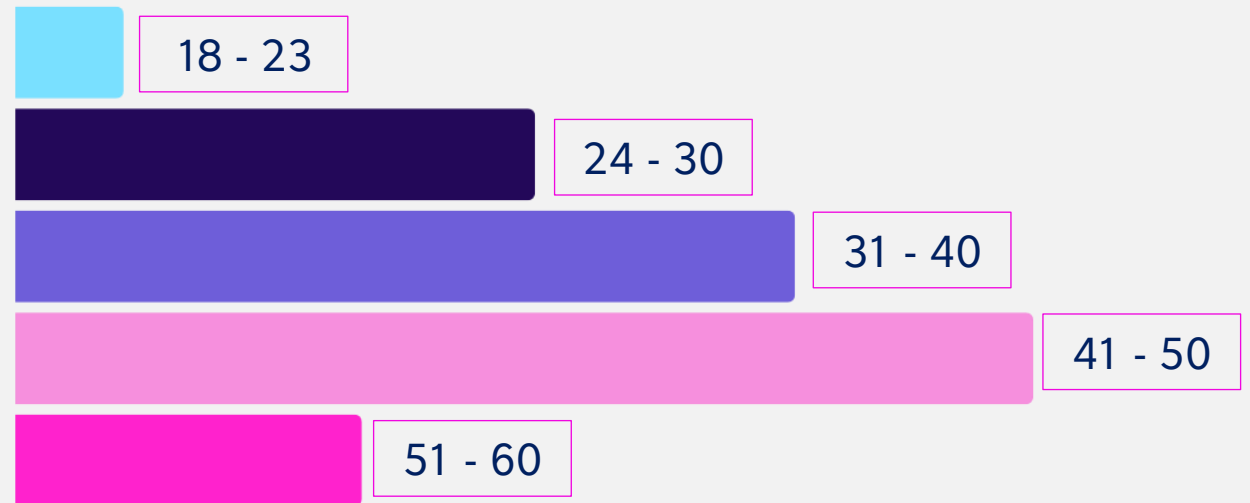
# Key Findings

# Demographic gender analyse

## Gender



## Age ranges



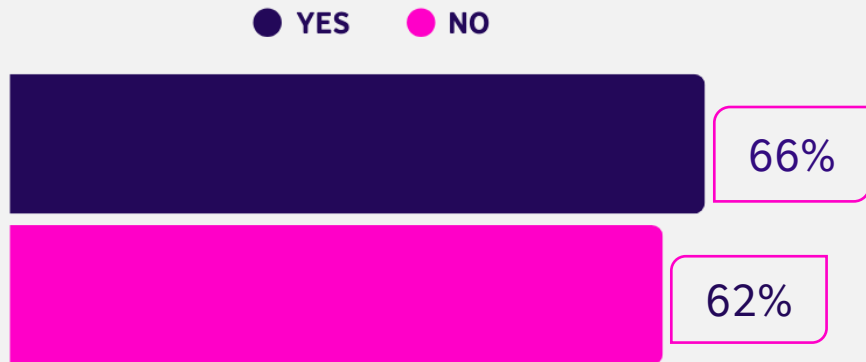
128 teachers interviewed



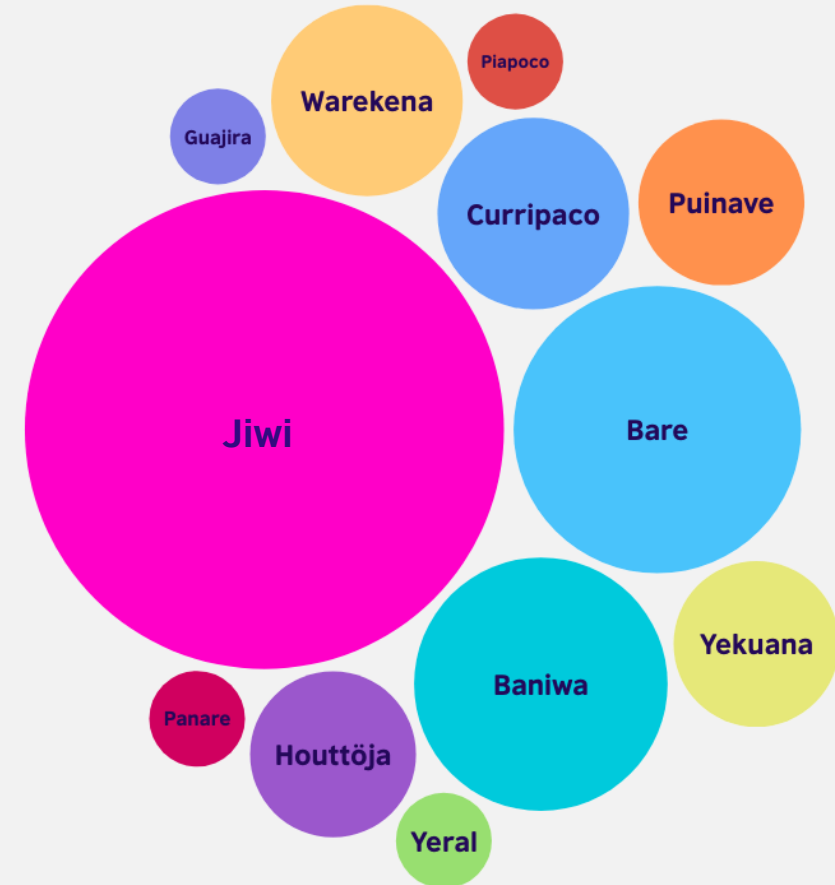
# Impact on indigenous communities

Name of the ethnic groups to which they belong

Do you belong to an indigenous community?



- 12 Ethnic groups reached through the ELT programme



# The role of women in indigenous cultures



- Provides education and childcare
- Teaches culture, values and traditions
- Carries out household tasks
- Plants and harvests food
- Makes handicrafts
- Safeguards and promotes the community's cultural heritage
- Holds a leadership role

“The indigenous woman is the pillar of ancestral knowledge, responsible of teaching her children who they are and where they come from. She is a fundamental pillar and guide in our culture”.

Kirome Marú

# Challenges



**No computers and/or  
stable internet connection**



**No Wi-Fi**



**Work commitments  
and household duties**



**Electricity problems**



**Deficient public  
transport service**



**Gender and cultural  
stereotypes**

# Empowerment through English

## Benefits of the ELT programme

- Strengthening English **vocabulary**
- Enhancing **oral expression** skills
- Improving **work with students**
- Developing **teaching materials** and resources
- Fostering **creative dynamics**
- Acquiring **new knowledge**
- Facilitating **access to technology**

**EMPOWERMENT**

**PERSONAL GROWTH**

**CONFIDENCE BOOST**

**SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

**CULTURAL APPRECIATION**

**SENSE OF BELONGING**

**BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE**



# Impact on Culture and Other Subjects

Nathalie Covo  
Generalist Teacher

High School Liceo Bolivariano Marahuaca



PNF Bachelors



“The training in English has allowed me to develop other activities, such as the **“Scientific Seedbed”**, offering students the development of cognitive and linguistic skills in science and technology”.

Our programme has helped teachers promote **inclusive practices** that respect **cultural values** and support **gender equity**.





# Promoting equality and inclusion in the classroom

## Maritza Reina Generalist Teacher

Primary School Complejo Educativo Mesones



She works with children from various indigenous communities and helps neighboring children and those in her community.

“Knowing English has helped me explore other cultures, grow my skills, and support others. Learning about different cultures has broadened my view and deepened my appreciation of diversity.”

**It is essential to foster an inclusive environment where indigenous students feel welcomed and valued.**

# Preserving Indigenous Identity

## Indigenous Children's Day

## Honouring Culture, Traditions, and Language







The cup and bingo games as tools for learning numbers and colours in both English and Cumanagoto



"Thanks to the programme, I have come up with new ways to teach English. I have learned how to create fun games and playful activities to help my students pick up vocabulary more easily."

## Fun games to learn English in Cumanagoto

A playful handcrafted strategy for learning English and Cumanagoto vocabulary



# Impact on Education and sustainability

## Lilia Zurita Generalist Teacher

Complejo Educativo Lutecia Hernandez

“Knowing English has helped me grow in my career and also share info about climate change with nearby indigenous communities who wouldn’t have had access to it otherwise.”



This experience highlights the transformative potential of English as a tool for empowerment, community engagement, and access to global issues like climate change.



# Making the teaching and learning experience meaningful

**Yaritza Solano**  
**Generalist Teacher**

Primary School Unidad Educativa Cerro Autana



Outside the classroom, Yaritza leads workshops for children and young people at her church's community Centre, making use of various tools provided during her ELT training, including booklets and engaging activities.

**“This has been a wonderful and valuable opportunity for my personal and professional growth, allowing me to develop self-confidence”.**

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# Thank you for coming

**We would love your feedback**

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