

ELTEACH IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

NICARAGUA

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Front Cover:

Granada, Nicaragua

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Challenge and Program Selection

Nicaragua has a vibrant and active community of English language teachers who are eager for professional development training to develop the language and skills necessary to improve outcomes in English language education.

Focusing on English language learning can also assist Nicaragua with its efforts to boost tourism, trade, and capacity in meeting the challenges of globalization and the international economy.

To date, opportunities to participate in professional development programs have been limited in Nicaragua, particularly for teachers who are located in rural areas and departments of the country outside of the capital, Managua. To meet the challenge of implementing sustainable training for language educators in these areas, the US Embassy in Managua selected National Geographic Learning (NGL) and Centro Cultural Nicaragüense Norteamericano (CCNN) to develop a English language training program for teachers in the country.

ELTeach was selected for its scalability and measurable outcomes, combined with its capacity to train teachers in both urban and rural areas. The online, self-access program includes two courses and associated assessments, *English-for-Teaching* and *Professional Knowledge for ELT*.

An initial teacher training program took place in 2014-2015, in which 202 teachers were trained in Classroom English and Practical Methodology, using the two programs. Both courses have been previously implemented throughout Latin America, including countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic. Teachers spent 27.0 hours in the *English-for-Teaching* program, and 29.9 hours in the *Professional Knowledge for ELT* program. The completion rate for all teachers, representing those who took the online coursework and then sat for the final exams, was 77%.

“I especially like that the course is self-paced so you can complete the required course work when it’s convenient.”

-Teacher, Nicaragua

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Implementation

In partnership with CCNN, 202 teachers participated in National Geographic Learning's *ELTeach English-for-Teaching (EFT)* and *Professional Knowledge for ELT (PK)* courses.

Throughout the implementation, which began in November 2014 and went through June 2015, CCNN was responsible for teacher orientations. They monitored teacher's progress throughout the courses, and prepared them for the assessment. Teachers were selected to participate from thirteen of Nicaragua's fifteen departments.

In March and June of 2015, teachers sat for the *TEFT™* Assessment (*Test of English-for-Teaching*) or the *TPK™* Assessment (*Test of Professional Knowledge for ELT*).



Figure 1: Regions of implementation in Nicaragua.

“This course enriched my background knowledge on the vocabulary used in the classroom. It also improved my pronunciation, and of course currently, I feel more confident when teaching English. I undoubtedly will encourage my friends take this course.”

–Teacher, Nicaragua

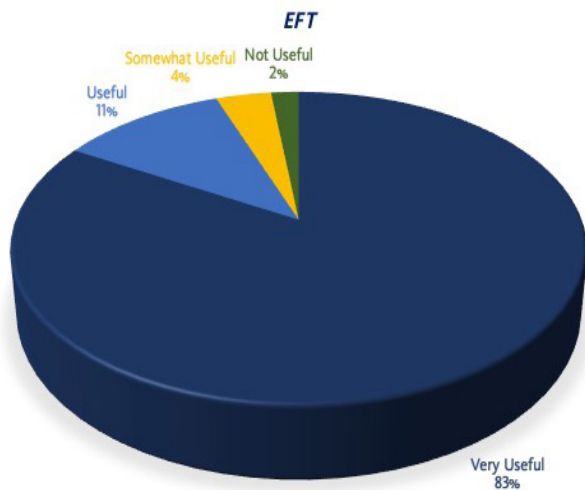


Figure 2: *English-for-Teaching* program applicability for classroom teaching rates in Nicaragua.

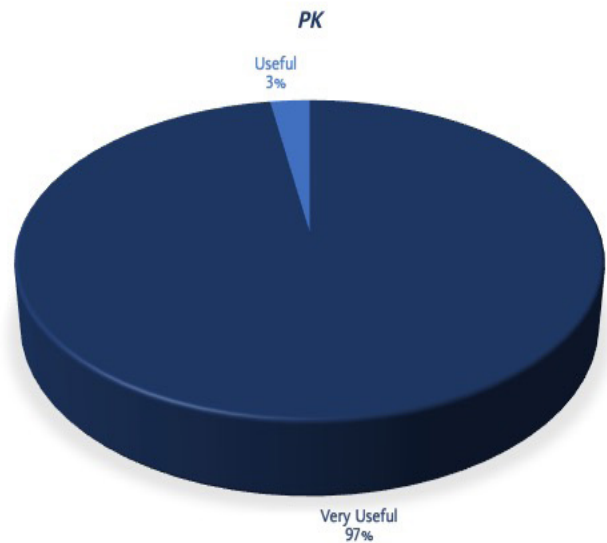


Figure 3: *Professional Knowledge for ELT* program applicability rates for classroom teaching in Nicaragua.

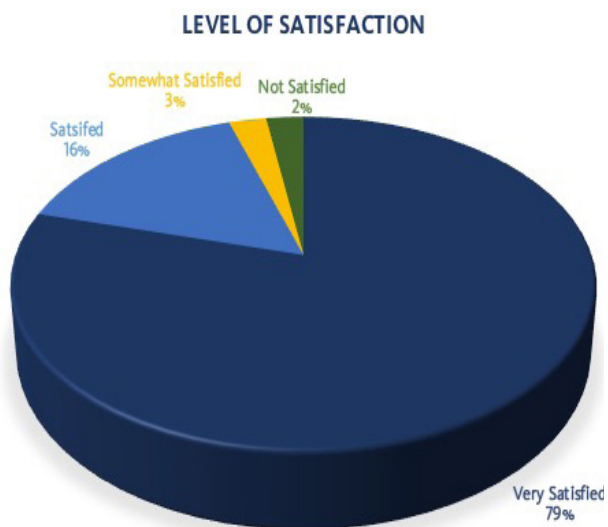


Figure 4: *ELTeach* satisfaction rates in Nicaragua.

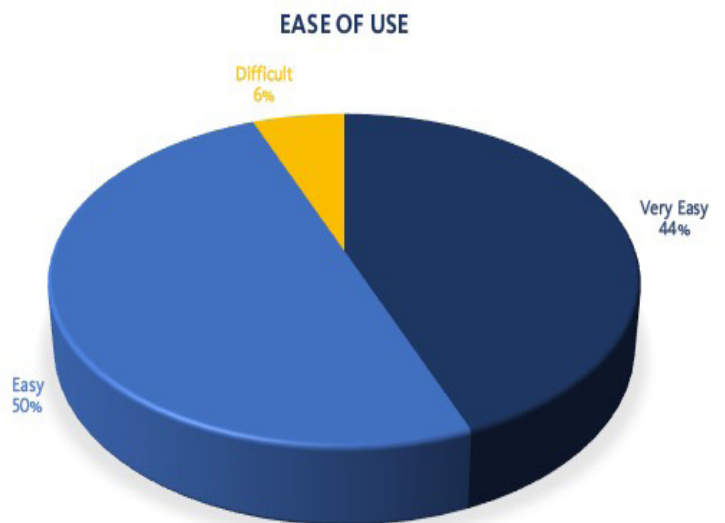


Figure 5: *ELTeach* online platform's ease of use rates in Nicaragua.

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Results

Engagement in the online program was high, which reflects the relevance of the program content to the teachers' classroom work.

Teachers spent 27.0 hours in the *English-for-Teaching* program, and 29.9 hours in the *Professional Knowledge for ELT* program. The completion rate for all teachers, representing those who took the online coursework and then sat for the final exams, was 77%.

After completing the assessment, each participant receives a detailed score report. The report has a specific set of band descriptors that detail what the test taker knows and can do. Of the 54 *TPK™* Assessment takers, 43% scored in the highest band, Band 3, 41% in Band 2, and 16% in Band 1 (Figure 6). Of the 102 *TEFT™* Assessment takers, 76% placed in Band 3, 13% in Band 2, and 11% in Band 1 (Figure 6).

For the *TEFT™* Assessment, in addition to their band score, participants received a description of their coverage of the program within that band, and their relative strengths in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, as well as in the functional areas of Classroom Management, Understanding and Communicating Lesson Content, and Giving Feedback to Students.

In the *TPK™* Assessment, the teachers received a description of their coverage of the program within that band, and their

Band	<i>TEFT™</i> Assessment Score	<i>TPK™</i> Assessment Score
1	11%	16%
2	13%	41%
3	76%	43%

Figure 6: Band scores for *TEFT™* Assessment and *TPK™* Assessment in Nicaragua.

relative strengths in Foundational Knowledge and Core Teaching Practice, in addition to their band score.

The teachers' response to the *EFT* and *PK* courses was overwhelmingly positive. Many teachers reported an increase in their ability to use English in the classroom, as well as improved confidence in English language teaching methodology. In a survey conducted at the end of the program, 95% said they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the *ELTeach* program (Figure 4).

When asked about the program's applicability to their classroom situation, 94% of *English-for-Teaching* participants said that the program was "very useful" or "useful" to their teaching, and 100% of participants on the Professional Knowledge program described it as "very useful" or "useful" (Figure 2, Figure 3).

Teachers were also asked about the online platform's ease of use. 94% of participants stated that the online learning platform was "easy" or "very easy" to use (Figure 5).

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Next Steps

Consultations with the Ministry of Education (MINED) have highlighted the need to continue this type of training for teachers in Nicaragua. Given the capacity of the ELTeach program to produce results in delivering instruction using the target language and building knowledge of consistent, practical language teaching methodology among public school teachers, it is our recommendation that the program be delivered to public sector teachers throughout Nicaragua on an annual basis in the coming years.

“I learned so much in this course. It gave me so many useful ideas and techniques to help my students improve their L2 learning process and their language skills. I would like to congratulate you for this initiative, which is changing the learning experience of all our students through the knowledge we acquired.”

–Teacher, Nicaragua



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