



**BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA
FACULTAD DE LENGUAS**

**Parental Workshop:
a Strategy to Involve Parents of EFL Students
of Sixth Grade of Elementary School**

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**Parental Workshop: a Strategy to Involve Parents of EFL Students of
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ABSTRACT

This thesis reports on the effects of working with parents in parental workshops as a strategy to help EFL students in primary classrooms to improve their children's English learning process. The study was carried out at a suburban primary school in Puebla and for a period about a school-year. Research data were collected by using one instrument, which it was a questionnaire applied to participants (children's parents).

The research findings reveal that before taking the parental workshops, the majority of the participants do not support their children actively or as a minority express they were doing few actions.

Research data also indicate that after taking the parental workshops, there were an increase in participation, in order to work collaboratively with the teacher and support their children outside the classroom. Different kind of actions were perform by participants.

This study is also an example of evidence in parental involvement in students of sixth grade of elementary school and also demonstrates that it will be useful for further research.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale for Topic Selection

The domain of a foreign language is a challenge that it is currently presented in society; everyday there is an amount of influence of several languages that are adopted by our culture, but the importance of learning a language, specifically English, has been integrated to educational programs. According to (NEPB) National English Program in Basic Schools (2011), UNESCO establishes that educational systems are to prepare students in order to face the new challenges of a globalized world, in which the contact among multiple languages and cultures becomes more and more common every day.

Since several years ago, there is a remarkable presentation of the language in basic education (Secondary school); however, the necessities of society evolve and require people to speak English to develop their professional skills. Educational programs now include learning English as a foreign language from the beginning of the basic education (kindergarten) to high school; for this reason, it is important to consider that students of sixth grade master the language at a basic level.

(SEP) Secretaria de Educación Pública (2011) states that the articulation of the teaching of English in all three levels of Basic education has the aim to guarantee that, by the time students complete their secondary education, they will have developed the necessary multilingual and multicultural competencies to face the communicative challenges of a globalized world successfully, to build a broader vision of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world, and thus, to respect their own and other cultures.

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Despite this, secondary school students demand an enormous effort to learn the language because they have a lack of confidence in their English learning process, which is directly reflected in their individual assessment. According to NEPBE (2011), assessment becomes the main focus of attention for the teacher, the students and their parents, and it affects the interaction among students and between them and the teacher in the classroom. Since the early educational levels, parents and teachers share the responsibility of students' academic achievement and it is essential to have a good relationship to reach the English language learning goals.

Studies on parental involvement in their children's education from the very early grades of schooling have shown that parental involvement is significant in children's academic and behavioral development (George, Kwaku, & Mensah, 2010, cited in Mbuva, 2012). Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1995), cited in Ridnour (2011), declare that "When parents are involved in their children's education, children may acquire skills and knowledge beyond those they would achieve through school experiences alone" (p. 2), which represents the importance of supporting children since the beginning of their basic education.

The role of parents is essential to motivate students, which is very positive and the parents are completely interested in helping their children in the second language acquisition; however, they are just intended to provide material, enrolling their child in English courses and even hire a private teacher to improve their learning. Nevertheless, parents are afraid to having direct participation in the learning process of their child because of their lack of confidence to work with them, because they assume that if they cannot speak English, they could not help their children to improve their learning.

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Parents expect to be involved just in those subjects that are not necessarily difficult to work with, but the truth is that with a different perspective of the language and making an enormous effort they could have an essential role in the learning process. Studies on parents' involvement in their children's education show that parents can "support and facilitate their children's education at home through several means: engaging them in learning-stimulating activities, discussing school and family issues, and conveying educational expectations" (Suizzo & Stapleton, 2007, cited in Mbuva, 2012, p. 40).

This paper emerges from the concern that students and parents are able to learn and support each other in the language learning process. When teachers, parents and students work collaboratively, it is likely that students improve in their learning process.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of working with parents in parental workshops as a strategy to help EFL students in primary classrooms to improve their children's English learning process.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This research will contribute to future research studies about the effects of working with parents to help their children in the EFL classroom, giving evidence of whether this will be productive to children's learning. The study will give details of the process and it will compare and determine the evidence of participation of parents. This may be useful for those

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teachers and trainees who are teaching English in basic education in order to promote different teaching strategies and obtain better results in their students' learning process.

1.4 Theoretical Context of the Research

This research will focus on the parental involvement in EFL learning process in students of sixth grade. According to Rosenthal & Sawyers (1996) cited in Radzi, Razak and Zukor (2010), various studies have evidently proven that parental involvement contributes to several positive effects including a higher test result, and consistent long-term academic achievement. Other related topics will be analyzed such as strategies to work with parents, techniques and language learning.

1.5 Location of the Research

The school under study is located in the suburbs of Puebla, with a student population of 400 students. This institution gives an extraordinary evidence of working with parents in different contents of the curriculum program; in this case the group of sixth grade, which has 44 students, was selected because the interaction with parents is remarkable. Parents are involved in the majority of the activities, many of them outside the classroom and even they participate in different events in the institution, such as festivals and expositions. Also it is important to consider that parents are used to getting involved in parental workshops; they attend on Sundays in order to receive the appropriate strategies from the teacher and be guides in the learning process of their children. These are important roles in supporting students to achieve goals and they are used to helping teachers from their homes.

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1.6 Research Questions

The key questions investigated in this study include:

- According to the participants, what are the actions to support their children to learn English?
- After the parental workshops, what kind of actions did the participants carry out to support their children to learn English?

1.7 Key Terms

Parental involvement, teaching EFL, elementary school, strategies, workshop, partnership, communication, collaborative work, engagement.

This chapter provided important information regarding the purpose and the significance of the study. The research questions that will guide this project were also formulated. In the following chapter, the literature review will describe the most relevant topics of this investigation.

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CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the perspectives of different authors that are considered vital to support this paper; the first section presents relevant information about teaching English in Primary school, explaining the implication of working in that level. Secondly, parental involvement and the strategies to work with them are presented, considering parental workshops a useful strategy that involves parents and the strategies implemented. Thirdly, this chapter explains the suggestions to communicate with parents, in order to integrate them in the workshops. Finally, the last section of the chapter explains the advantages or disadvantages of parental involvement.

2.1 Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Primary School

The acquisition of a foreign language has been considered as an important issue, nowadays, society requires a higher mastery of English, in order to be successful professionally. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has been integrated to educational curriculums; in Mexico, SEP (2011) established in their school-leaver profile that students will be able to communicate in English in a basic level. The vast majority of primary schools expects that their school-leavers have the essentials of language, which means, learning to read, understand what they heard, learning to write and talk fluently.

According to Wray (1995), English language work should account a very large proportion of teaching time in primary schools, which it will play as an important subject to be considered in the curriculum. Also Wray (1995), established that English language work

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needs to receive the level of attention it deserves depending on the curriculum used. This may contribute to enhance the learning process because students need to get involved in the language.

One of the main goals of EFL in primary school, according to Goodwyn (2005), is to teach language as an entitlement to all pupils whether or not it is their first or second language, because each student needs to develop language skills in order to communicate successfully. Primary school students need to be prepared for adult life. Goodwyn (2005) quotes an 'Adult Needs' view of English of Cox models, which focuses on communication outside the school, emphasizing the responsibility of English teachers to prepare children for the language of adult life, including the workplace in a fast-changing world. This means that children will be able to solve common problems of the language (oral or written), they need to be able to write and speak clearly, appropriately and effectively with the teacher guidance.

The role of primary school teacher is helping students in order to know how to understand and use the language effectively, but this is challenging and teachers need to do their best effort to achieve linguistic and academic proficiency in their students. Mckeon (1994) suggests some aspects that English teachers need to consider:

- *Examine and recognize your own perception and behaviors toward children from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.*
- *Teachers can make their classrooms authentic.*
- *Integrate language teaching with content learning.*
- *Realize that not all second language learners are alike.*

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- *Find someone to help you acquire the skills and knowledge that will allow you to facilitate learning.*

The first aspect suggests that teachers must transmit culture, which means that they have to be sensitive to the kinds of mother language of their students, respecting and avoiding losing their mother language use.

The second is related to promote authentic communication through the use of activities that allow interaction between students, including reading, speaking, listening and writing.

The third one suggests using an approach that provides students with objectives and language skills that are taught in the classroom, which allows an opportunity to academic growth while they are continuously studying.

The fourth one establishes that teachers have to recognize individual differences among their students; every student has a particular background and expectations of learning EFL. Teachers must eliminate cultural barriers by using approaches that promote cooperative learning improving cultural and linguistic issues.

The last one indicates that teachers must use resources such as workshops, colleagues' opinions, observations, etc. that allow them to reflect on their teaching and improve their weaknesses.

EFL in primary school faces some challenges for teachers and students but also contributes to academic success and achievement of students. It is also important to promote authentic language to enhance children's acquisition of language.

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2.1.1 Teaching EFL to Children of Eleven-Twelve Years Old

Depending on the range of age, each student has different background, necessities, experiences, etc. It is important that teachers take into consideration the age of students to teach the language successfully.

Teachers must overcome potential barriers to learning processes, responding to pupils' diverse learning needs and guide to successful learning. In many countries there is a debate about when to start teaching a foreign language, but it is well known that starting with young learners is an advantage to integrate the language in their social context. Educational curriculums adapt their syllabuses, material and methods according to the age of every group of students and it has been successfully adapted.

According to Papalia & Olds (1995), children between six and twelve years are in an “intermediate childhood”; they develop cognitive abilities that allow them to think logically. They also assume an important role in their family, more significantly, they take many aspects of their culture in order to prepare for adult life.

Students within this range of age are competent users of their mother language, they are aware of the functions of their language and also compare similarities and differences about a foreign language. Scott & Ytreberg (1990) declare that students of that age make more significant the foreign language; they explained that children of eleven-twelve years old can make connections with their daily situations.

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Scott & Ytreberg (1990) also suggest some considerations to teachers in order to work successfully with students of that age:

- Playing with the language through songs, rhymes, stories, etc. It has a relevant importance since first stages of foreign language learning.
- Take time and patience to involve students with reading and writing in order to be aware of their growth in the language, which means that they give a real meaning in their lives.
- Use cooperative pairwork and groupwork in order to encourage them to work efficiently.
- Teach the minimum of grammar content, introducing basic aspects and explaining their questions, specifically in their written work.
- Encourage self-assessment in order to engage students to assess their own learning process.

Students of eleven-twelve years old have some consideration, when EFL has been taught, teachers have to understand about their characteristics, in order to achieve language objectives.

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2.1.2 Characteristics of Children of Eleven-Twelve Years Old

Children of the range of eleven-twelve years old are in an “intermediate childhood”, (Papalia & Olds, 1995). They do not belong either to the adolescence period or childhood, but it is an important stage that indicates physical and emotional changes, which has to be analyzed for those curriculum designers of educational programs.

Berk (2001) in her book “*Awakening children’s minds*” cited Piaget in order to explain that children of eleven-twelve years old are in the middle of two stages: concrete operational and formal operational. The first one, establishes limited cognitive skills in solving problematic situations and the second one declares that there are not boundaries about variables to solve a problem, avoiding the most logical.

Papalia & Olds (1995) explain that self confidence in this range of age is essential to develop because children can have a positive or negative image of themselves, reflecting upon their personal opinions and their capabilities, which allow children to be happy and be successful in the rest of their life but also they could be affected by social punishment, such as approval and disapproval of parents, teachers and classmates. Furthermore, Papalia & Olds (1995) cited Erikson’s theory: Industry vs inferiority, in order to explain that this theory has a connection with their productive work, which means that children attend school with the objective of learning skills that their environment requires.

Teachers have to deal with those characteristics but also they need to be aware that children are relatively mature children, they are part of adolescence but with certain aspects

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of their childish side. Those characteristics are related to the language. Scott & Ytreberg (1990) list some of them:

- They have their own concept of the world, with well established concepts.
- They can differentiate between fiction and fact.
- They analyze and ask more precise questions.
- They make their own decisions about their learning process, such as using certain strategies to study.
- They have a developed sense of fairness, which is related to question teacher's decisions.
- They are able to work cooperatively (pair or group).

Teachers need to take into consideration these characteristics and relate with the general language development, but also include emotional factors in child's background. The important issue is that teachers need to enhance the student's awareness of learning a foreign language because it will make sense to their perception of the world.

2.2 Parental Involvement

Parents, teachers, students and institutions must create a partnership in order to succeed when they work together. Forming a partnership with students and their parents is challenging, it is not always easy, but it is essential to education, taking the time to see each child and each parent will give teachers elements to include them in the learning process.

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In order to integrate families, schools and communities, programs that promote partnership have to be implemented. As Epstein (2001), cited in Benn (2011), establishes that “with good planning, thoughtful implementation, well-designed activities, and pointed improvements, more and more families and teachers can learn to work with one another on behalf of the children whose interests they share” (p. 9).

In order to support the partnership concept, Epstein (2009), cited in Benn (2011), states his theory of overlapping spheres of influence, which declares that a constant influence from each facet of the spheres of influence has a positive influence on student’s success.

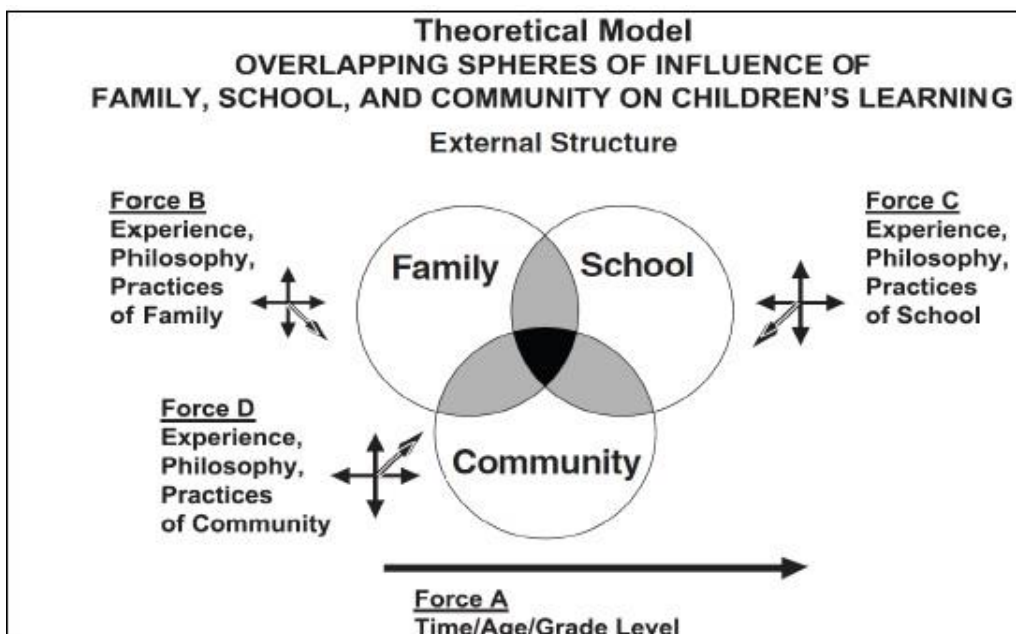


Figure 2.1 School, Family and Community Partnerships, Third Edition By J. L. Epstein et al. (2009) cited by Benn (2011)

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In this model, the role of student is centered, which is the result of a partnership among schools, families and communities working collaboratively in order to increase motivation in students to achieve their goals. The role of parents is fostering success in their home setting through communicative activities such as school activities, homework, parent-teacher meetings and other school activities. This model supports a well-planned parental involvement program that integrates school and communities but according to Epstein (2009), cited in Benn (2011), a balanced communication is only fostered when positive partnerships are implemented in those schools.

In addition, teachers must know how to encourage parents to get involved or get engaged in their learning process, which are two different concepts. According to Ferlazzo (2009), cited in Ridnour (2011), these two concepts are defined as:

“When schools involve parents they are leading with their institutional self-interest and desires—school staff are leading with their mouths. When schools engage parents they are leading with the parents’ self-interests (their wants and dreams) in an effort to develop a genuine partnership” (p. 10).

Parental involvement was defined by Mbuva (2012) as education offered by schools and teachers to parents on the significance of good teacher-parent partnership in educating children. This means that it will make a relation between students, parents and teachers in order to encourage participation in the community.

According to Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1995), cited in Ridnour (2011), when parents are involved in their children’s education, children may acquire skills and knowledge beyond those they would achieve through school experiences alone. Integrating

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parents in school will contribute to establish partnership associations, which improves student achievements.

Ridnouer (2011) explained that parental involvement have many benefits in students, such as :

- A positive attitude toward school.
- Improved academic achievement.
- Better behavior in the classroom.
- Higher rates of work completion.
- Increased participation in classroom activities.
- Better attendance.

Parental involvement includes helping children with their homework, encouraging them to practice the language and also attending parent-teacher meetings, conferences and other relevant activities.

2.2.1 Types of Parental Involvement

The parental involvement requires to contextualize daily activities, in which students have to use and make a connection with their academic and personal life. Epstein (1987), cited in Benn (2011) categorized parental involvement into six types: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaboration with community. He describes parenting as knowledge of parenting and the practices engaged in

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at home. Secondly, communication was described as contact between school and home. Type three, volunteering, refers to a parent's level of participation in fundraisers or school activities. The fourth type of involvement, learning at home, describes the home learning activities such as homework help or leisure reading. Type five, decision making, the governance and advocacy roles of parents and the involvement in parent organizations. Lastly, type six, collaboration with the community, in which community activities are incorporated in schools to strengthen them and parents are encouraged to become active participants in school and community activities.

In order to provide examples of activities that promote each type of parental involvement, Ridnour (2011), suggests these activities:

1. Parenting: Defined as the essential way that a parent can be involved in their child's education, the objective is to support and promote your child as a student. Workshops and presentations on parenting topics will be available throughout the year.

2. Communicating. Providing parents with meaningful information about their child's progress and about events going on in school, such as testing programs, field trips, after-school activities, and opportunities for extra help and enrichment.

3. Volunteering. Parents help to provide a safe, nurturing learning environment inside and outside the classroom.

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4. Learning at home. Parents focus on helping their child to see himself or herself as a student, working consistently in homeworks as a high priority.

5. Decision making. Parents are completely involved in school decisions, ranging from managing behavior on the school bus to implementing a plan for remediating poorly performing students.

6. Collaborating with community. Parents help schools to create a bridge from the community to our school by contributing with services, volunteers, supplies, or a monetary donation.

It is well known that according to Mexico's context the most common parental involvements are related to those in which parents make decisions and contribute to the community, but the key types to engage parents is parenting and learning at home, because through workshops and seminars they can be part of their child's learning process.

2.2.2 Parental Workshops as a Resource for Learning English

The concept "parenting" is defined as the way that schools can help families can provide a supportive environment, which means that both must be aware of relevant and clear information about students such as background, children's needs and talents in order to promote student's success in their school life (Epstein, 2002, cited in Benn, 2011).

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In addition, Epstein (2008) cited in Benn (2011) states the goal in Parenting, in order to design or adapt parenting activities that help families understand student's development, strengthen parenting skills, and set home conditions for learning.

On the other hand, teachers must be aware of their active role in this process of helping parents to support their children at home. Epstein (2009), cited in Benn (2011) defines this dimension as schools giving parents recommendations on where they can get help for students with homework and other curriculum-based activities. Epstein (2002) cited in Benn (2011) states that "a clear activity known as homework should have parents assist via encouraging, listening, reacting, praising, monitoring, guiding and discussing" (p. 15). Also, institutions can help teachers and parents to work together by creating workshops, where parents can learn about classroom activities. Despite this suggestion, the reality shows that even when parents want to participate, there are many factors that affect this such as lack of time, lack of understanding and unclear expectations about activities implemented in the workshops.

Creating a series of workshops is worthwhile; they do not require a lot of money but they require other aspects, such as time, motivation, vision, etc. but workshops offer a perfect opportunity to promote guidance in the learning process. Besides, it is important to invite parent leaders and directors in order to give everyone's common base of knowledge, sharing the tools or strategies that are necessary to work and this will increase awareness of the importance of participating in workshops.

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According to Padak and Rasinski (2006), cited in Mbuva (2012), there are some considerations that teachers must know when they use parental workshops:

- Identifying key goals and using proven and effective strategies because many parents have limited time to devote to working with their children.
- Providing ongoing training, communicating, and supporting parents, because most parents need good and understandable training that includes demonstrations and opportunities for discussions and questions.
- Providing authentic reading texts. One of the best things parents can do for children of any age is to read to them.
- Making activities easy, enjoyable, and consistent. Parents have said that home activities do not work if they are too complex, take inordinate amounts of time, or change often. At home, activities for young children should be relatively brief (10-15 minutes several times each week).
- Providing ways to document home activities. Documents permit teachers to monitor parent-child involvement and evaluate the program's success.

In addition, teachers must take into consideration designing workshops for parents based on their concerns, organize them and ask to work after school.

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2.2.3 Parental Workshop Strategies

In order to clarify useful activities for parental workshops, this section will describe examples of activities appropriate for the language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

2.2.3.1 Reading Strategies

Ridnouer (2011) suggests some ways for students and parents to read together, no matter if it is in their mother or foreign language:

- Role reading. One partner reads the character's words with a focus on "sounding" like the character. The other partner reads the narrator's words in a voice that focuses on clearly articulating each syllable.
- Expressive reading. One partner reads a paragraph and focuses on using appropriate facial expressions for the character. The other partner reads the paragraph with a focus on changing intonation to suit the characters and their situation.
- Taking turns. One partner reads a predetermined amount of text, such as a sentence, paragraph, or page. The other reads the next predetermined amount of text.

2.2.3.2 Speaking Strategies

Non-native English speakers need to develop their phonological and phonemic awareness in order to speak properly and accurately. Byrant and Bradley (1985), cited in Lewis and

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Ellis (2006), in their book *Phonics: Practice, research and policy*, establish that it is important to teach children to hear, identify and manipulate language, which contributes to develop their phonological and phonemic awareness.

The reality is that not all the parents master the language and some may not be familiar with phonetics and phonology, which demands more preparation for the teacher in order to guide them to practice basic concepts with their children.

Lewis and Ellis (2006) suggest the following activities to promote phonetic and phonology outside the classroom:

- Helping parents to make tapes of rhymes and stories in the children's first language.
- Giving parents digital or disposable cameras and asking them to take photographs of everyday objects at home. These can then be used to make dual-language alphabet books to share with their children.
- Make a scrapbook of favorite nursery rhymes, using pictures from magazines and catalogues to portray the characters/events.

2.2.3.3 Listening Strategies

According to Scott & Ytreberg (1990), when the pupils start to learn a foreign language, they do this mainly through their ears and what the pupils hear is their main source of the language. When children develop this skill, teachers must take into account that the activities used in the class are easy to understand and follow. Those activities must be adapted for

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parents in order to create an atmosphere that goes beyond using tapes or songs, integrating movements, sounds or mimics.

As a suggestion for parents, they should create a routine using simple vocabulary used by teachers in classes. Samway and Taylor (2008) establish an effective strategy practicing using Total Physical Response (TPR), which let children do actions in order to understand basic commands (stand up, sit down, jump, walk, etc.).

Scott & Ytreberg (1990) suggest physical movement activities such as mime stories, which let teachers tell a story and perform the actions, but also listen-and-repeat activities, which promote learning through playing, and according to them, children have the chance to get a feel for the language: the sounds, the stress, rhythm and intonation.

Adapting rhymes from coursebooks or creating them with basic vocabulary is essential to children's learning process and parents can use them at home, playing a DVD, CD or searching on the web for traditional rhymes.

2.2.3.4 Writing Strategies

A challenge for teachers is to correct children when they start writing in English because it is important to assure that they are using grammar structures properly, punctuation and spelling. For this reason, parents need to know basic strategies to supervise children's writing tasks.

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Cammeron (2001) suggests that children can be encouraged to choose and copy texts that they find interesting: items from the internet on their favourite pop star or footballer, or the rhymes learnt in class, or sections of their reading books that they enjoyed, which ensure that copying is meaningful and motivating. This kind of writing should not be corrected, which is a good activity for parents because only teachers must write some thoughts in response to the child's writing.

Activities such as letters, cards, invitations or those that require a short writing can be guided by parents because they are popular assignments to complete as homework. Scott & Ytreberg (1990) suggest working with fill in exercises because they do not require much active production of language but are useful for vocabulary work. Most of the coursebooks use this kind of exercises that require to practice vocabulary used in the classroom.

Moon (2006) suggests providing languages prompts or models to help pupils carry out activities, e.g. fill in the gap, activity with words or phrases to choose from, flash cards, wall charts containing the words needed.

In addition, Slaterly and Willis (2001) suggest that when parents supervise children's writing, they must pay attention to some aspects such as: keeping the picture of the letters in their minds and becoming familiar with the relationship between sound in spelling in English, which let them study together and enhance their writing as well as their speaking.

The previous activities are only a few examples of strategies suitable to work with parents in workshops. These must adapted to teacher's teaching styles and syllabuses

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courses but they require an active participation of both. These activities must be explained by the teacher in workshops but also to follow a self-evaluation and analyze the feedback of teacher, which will enhance the role of parents. The activities must be adapted to parent's contexts and as Lewis and Ellis (2006) suggest, workshops for parents should provide plenty of opportunities for parents to try out activities and to rehearse the strategies that are introduced to them. This can develop parents' confidence and enhance their self-esteem.

2.3 Communication among EFL Primary School Parents and Teachers

An important issue to develop is going beyond establishing often contact among parents and teachers; it is well known that sometimes there are no opportunities to discuss extensively about children's learning process and regular general meetings do not allow to establish real communication.

In studies about parent's perspective of involvement in school, Zarate (2007) establishes that parents reported that communication activities with schools were impersonal, infrequent, and without adequate notice. As a result, parents felt they did not receive substantive information during their interactions with the school. In addition, Lewis and Ellis (2006) say that it is important to remember that teachers cannot and should not undertake the task of educating children along, which demands establishing a good relationship among parents, teachers and institutions.

Considering that parents do not have enough time to attend school meetings and events, there must be flexibility when institutions and teachers schedule events to engage

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parents. Zarate (2007) recommends that schools meetings be scheduled during hours and days most convenient for parents. Schools can offer incentives, rewards, and amenities for parents and families to participate in school activities that are accessible to everyone.

When teachers start the school year with a meeting it is important to set how they are going to keep in touch outside the classroom, personal information as telephone numbers or email addresses are required. In addition, Breiseth (2011) suggests to form small groups of parents to ask:

- How they define their role in their child's education
- What their concerns, priorities, and hopes are regarding their child
- What kinds of events they would be interested in attending
- The obstacles that discourage them from participating and changes that would help

Also, teachers need to prepare themselves and spend more time to contact parents but they need to speak in a formal way, avoiding detailed discussions on negative issues and invite them to attend the meetings. Bender (2005) recommends that teachers and parents must have effective communication with parents, which means initiating conversation with them early in the school year, informing them about significant classroom happenings, updating them regularly on their child's progress, and encouraging them to participate in school functions.

Communicating with parents could be challenging for teachers because not all of them build an effective relationship during the school year. In order to be effective communicators Ridnouer (2011) suggests creating a toolkit of communication methods to provide information, support, and invitations to parents in an effort to send a consistent

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message that with their help, every child will learn. Both traditional and newer communication methods should be part of teacher's toolkit.

Despite using technology, there are some parents that still avoid involving in their children's English learning process because they respond with different emotions, especially when there is a learning difficulty. Bender (2005) suggests following these strategies to talk with parents:

1. Adjust your communication to fit the situation.
2. Know and follow your school's communication chain of command.
3. Open lines of communication before problems start and work to keep them open.
4. Begin positively.
5. Practice active listening.
6. Emphasize areas of agreement.
7. Be willing to compromise.
8. Respect confidentiality.
9. Avoid gossip.
10. End on a positive note.

Besides being a teacher, there is a person behind and must be empathetic, honest and positive. Parents and teacher must share the responsibility of children's English learning process and the relationship must let both discuss and look for different ways to work cooperatively.

According to Bender (2005), successful teachers are effective communicators. They tailor their communication to fit the situation and use different styles and methods to fit

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their goals. Encouraging and motivating parents and teachers to be partners allows students to gain confidence and practice effectively the language learning as much as they can; this is not possible without communication among parents and teachers.

2.3.1 The Role of Parental Involvement in the English Learning Process of Children

English subject is commonly avoided by parents in order to get involved. Working with their children could be difficult but the truth is that parents are not limited to being victims (because of their lack of mastery in the language). Actually, parents could make suggestions and find a way to contribute to establish a positive learning environment.

Zarate (2007) reports that for many parents, language was an insurmountable barrier to participation in their children's academic tasks, especially as their children progressed through school and the material became increasingly difficult.

Weiner (1994), cited in Ridnour (2011), lists some of the typical reasons that parents think about getting involved in a foreign language:

- They weren't smart or capable enough.
- They knew how difficult a task was and failed to do the work necessary to complete it.
- They thought the work was just too hard.
- They blamed external factors beyond their control, such as luck or home circumstances.

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Despite being negative to their participation, some of them reflect on their role especially looking for the way to help their children with their English learning process. In his study, Zarate (2007) reports that many parents compromised on a division-of-labor approach to academic involvement. One of his participants said, “The parent is obligated to check if the homework was done completely; the teacher is obligated to correct the homework”. Other parents engaged with homework tasks by listening to the child read or asking questions about the homework subject.

The truth is that every person can control their progress, they have to change their perspective and teachers must convince parents about being perseverant in order to get familiar with the work.

2.3.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Working with Parents

There is an assumption of successful participation of parents, working with them in several projects of the classroom, conferences or workshops, but teachers have to be aware of certain limitations that are presented in their work.

According to David (1998), societies do not recognize the vital role that mothers and fathers play in supporting children’s identities, self-confidence and learning. This is a barrier that teachers have to deal with, the cultural background, which depends on every country and it will be functional just if there is an implementation of parental participation in schools.

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Also, teachers who claim that parents at their school are not interested in their children's education because they do not come into the school or attend parents' evenings might ponder this and ask themselves if there are invisible barriers preventing some parents entering the school and how they might remove them. They have to accept that there are some parents that refuse to the idea of investing their "free time" and some of them discover how difficult it could be to have a pre-adolescent at home, the natural reaction of many parents is to simply stop attending the school, forcing children to acquire a mature behavior.

David (1998) also mentions that teachers need to be aware of parents' previous experiences and understandings of the proper relationship between parents and teachers. This means that if they have some difficulties with other teachers, their reaction could be negative without understanding the instructions given by the teacher and just avoiding meetings.

The advantages of working with parents may be different (according to parents and teachers' experiences) but Breiseth (2011) lists some of them:

- High expectations for children
- Making education a priority
- Good attendance and behavior
- Well-developed cooperation skills

At the end of the school year, the success or failure depends on every action that parents and teachers apply inside and outside the classroom. The future of children must be a sharing responsibility for parents and teachers.

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As this chapter mentioned, parental involvement is defined as an active participation, in which parents make a commitment to do actions to achieve goals in their academic life. Different types of parental involvement were presented in this chapter, focusing on the learning at home and parenting types, which are linked to the parental workshop strategy. Also subskills of the language were presented as an example of those that can be useful for working with parents and finally there were suggestions to create a partnership with parents, specifically enhancing the communication with them. All of the aspects covered in this chapter are useful for teachers in order to engage parents to participate actively in their children's English learning process.

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CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of parental workshops as a strategy to help sixth grade students of elementary school to learn English. This chapter describes and justifies the data gathering method used. The six purposes of this chapter are to (1) describe the research methodology of this study, (2) give details about participants, (3) describe the context, (4) describe the procedure used in designing the instrument, (5) provide an explanation of the data collection process and (6) the data analysis procedure.

3.1 Research Design

In every research there are different approaches to collecting and analyzing data but the main two types are qualitative and quantitative. There are different definitions of these concepts. According to Rasinger (2010), there are some modifications to these terms in the context of a methodological framework, “qualitative research is concerned with structures and patterns, and how something is; quantitative research, however, focuses on how much or how many there is/are of a particular characteristic or item” (p. 52). According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005), qualitative research integrates some associations with foundationalism, positivism, postfoundationalism, postpositivism, poststructuralism and many qualitative research perspectives.

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The research design of this paper will be defined as qualitative because it involves some techniques of the approach. The focus of this study is to determine if the use of parental workshop is an effective strategy to help students of sixth grade of elementary school to learn English. Collecting data through questionnaires, applied to 42 parents, in different stages will help to obtain clear and valuable information. The decision for this method depends on the study of individual and general perspectives of the effects of parental workshops as significant learning for students. The resulting data was analyzed and explained; different graphs will be presented.

3.2 Participants

All of the participants were students' parents of an elementary school, forty-two students' parents of sixth year were recruited for this study, 11 men and 31 women, From these participants there was 1 single mother and there were 2 divorced parents. The majority of them were on the range of 30 and 40 years and they were selected for their previous work with their main teacher, who was working with them in fifth grade and she implemented the parental involvement of previous years. For this reason they were selected for this project.

3.3 Context

The elementary school has approximately 400 students and 10 teachers working together with parents. The school area is large: there are nine classrooms, a principal office, kitchen, library, yards and gardens. The school presents a remarkable collaborative work: principal, teachers, students and parents work together every year with tasks that have an effect in the community. The principal and the teachers with most experience in the school

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have been integrating parents in activities, not just financial (making committees) but also social (raising money, reforestation, etc.) and cultural activities (festivals, declamations, educational travels, etc.) and thanks to the follow-up work, this school was part of the “Programa de Escuelas de Calidad” for seven years and this was reflected in their infrastructure (equipped with two multimedia classrooms) and their financial resources.

It is common to observe parents studying with their children, helping them to improve their progress and dealing with teachers in parental workshops (basically taught on Sundays, in order to raise the attendance of parents), which are useful for them because they learn techniques and strategies work successfully. The profile of their graduated students is remarkable, the majority of them are accepted in junior high schools and the institution is recognized by their planning work applying successfully their strategies in almost all the areas (social and exact sciences) but with some problems in the study of a foreign language, evidently because there are no English classes. Recently, there were just some classes by teachers who were doing their social service but just with some groups.

3.4 Instruments

This study was conducted by using questionnaires as the main data collection source in order to obtain clear and valuable data. This data would provide evidence of parental involvement in EFL in sixth grade of elementary school. McDonough & McDonough (1997) explain that one of the advantages of using questionnaires in research is that data can be

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gathered in different time slots, even in different locations, because the results can be comparable than just applying at the same time.

Three questionnaires were designed, in order to collect experiences about the process of parental involvement, specifically about the English parental workshop. Every questionnaire was applied at the end of the parental workshops, which were established at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of the school year.

In questionnaire A, questions one and two (see appendix A) refer to parents' thoughts of learning English and learning English since primary school. The third question asks about their role in their children's English learning process and the fourth asks about the specific actions when parents support children to learn the language.

In questionnaire B (see appendix B), question one asks about parent's opinion of children's English classes, which was applied to determine if there was communication among parent and children. The second question reflects on learning at home (type of parental involvement) experiences; the third question asks parents about the importance of their role supporting their children to learn English and the fourth question asks for the different actions that they were doing during that period to help their children to learn English.

In questionnaire C, (see appendix C) question one reflects on parents' conclusion of working with their children at the end of the school-year. Question two asks a yes/no question about advantages or disadvantages of working with their children; question three asks about specific actions that parents carried out during the school year; and finally, question 4 asks

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about their general opinion of the parental involvement actions in the course. In order to compare the answers, instruments were applied and collected at the end of every workshop.

3.5 Data Collection Process

The questionnaires were applied at different times. At the beginning, specifically on September 8th 2012, the first questionnaire was applied to collect the general perspective of parents in the learning process, in this case of a foreign language. At the middle, scheduled on March 29th 2013, it was conducted the second questionnaire, the format contains four open questions to obtain the information about their experience in the process, including their feelings and attitudes of parental involvement. At the end of the process, scheduled on June 9th 2013, the questionnaire was applied in order to obtain conclusions about their experience in the learning process.

As soon as the questionnaires were applied, the data was transcribed and the questionnaires were compared in order to obtain the results, which were acceptable to analyze and determine if they contribute to the objective of this research: give details about the experience of parental involvement in students of sixth grade of EFL.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedure

The instruments used in this research were questionnaires, applied to participants (children's parents). The first step to organize data was reading all the questionnaires and

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then the information was organized in tables that classified the data in the different moments of the school year. As soon as the tables were complete, a different table was used in order to organize the answers of questionnaires that were repeated for each question, in order to be specific, which allowed representing the data with graphs.

In addition, there were selected extracts of the parents' opinions that contributed to the qualitative approach used in this research, specifically those that respond to the research questions addressed in the project. There was an extensive analysis of these tools but after this, two themes emerged: experiences of parents in workshops and effects of Parental workshop in children.

This chapter provided relevant information regarding the participants, the instruments used to collect the data and the analysis of the information in order to answer the research questions that guided this investigation. The results of the analysis will be graphically presented in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The following section will present detailed information about the effects of parental workshop in relation to the learning of children of sixth grade of elementary school. The research questions formulated in the beginning of this research will be answered. The results were analyzed and presented in figures in order to explain and discuss the evidence obtained to contribute to future similar research.

4.1 Research Questions

This research focused on the following research questions:

- According to the participants, what are the actions to support their children to learn English?
- After the parental workshops, what kind of actions did the parents carry out to support their children to learn English?

The first one discusses the previous parental involvement evidence in students of sixth grade EFL, explaining about the actions. The second one shows the evidence obtained in parental workshops, if there are actions that enhance student's English learning process.

4.2 Parental Involvement in Sixth Grade Students of EFL

Before the parental workshop started, there were many parents that considered challenging to work with the English subject and some of them even declared that they were unable to support their children to learn the language because of their lack of mastery in the

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language. Some testimonies were collected in the application of the first instrument in order to know parent's evidence of their participation in the student's English learning process.

Parent 1:

"I do not help my child because I do not know how to translate English to Spanish and viceversa"

According to this perspective, parents expect to translate the language in order to understand it and use it properly. The second participant expressed the following:

Parent 2:

"Sometimes, when he ask [sic] me for helping with his homework, I feel incapable because I do not speak the language"

Despite of trying to help his child, this participant reflects the insecurity to support his children, arguing that they have to master the language to help him with the English homework. When participants were asked about their frequency of helping their children with the English homework, it was clear that there is not an active parental participation in the student's learning process, which means that the majority of the time students work individually.

Figure 4.1 shows the frequency of parents supporting their children with the English homework.

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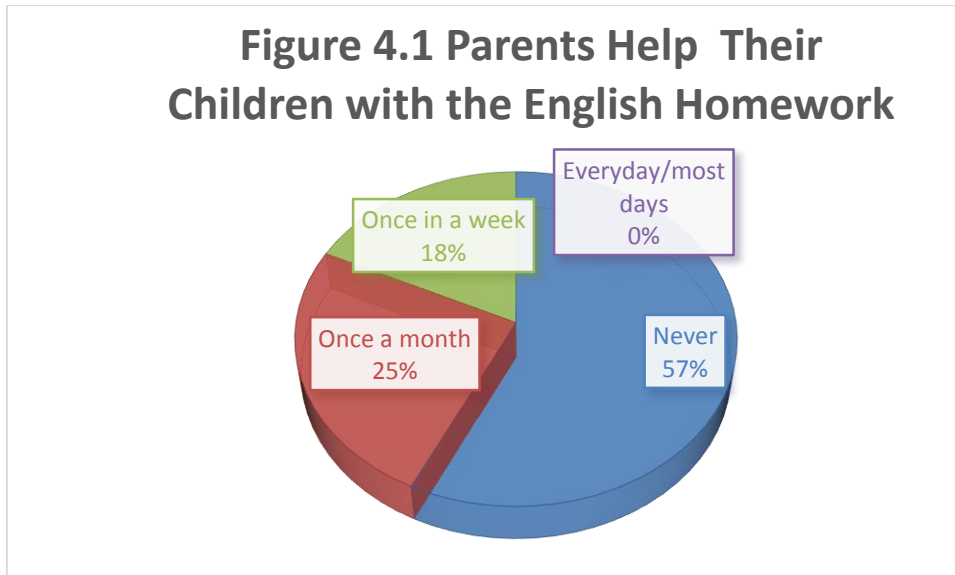


Figure 4.1 Parental support in student's English homework.

On the other hand, participants were asked about specific actions to help their children's English learning process, which demonstrates that the majority of parents do not have a clear idea of how to help their children. Figure 4.2 provides details about parental actions to support their children.

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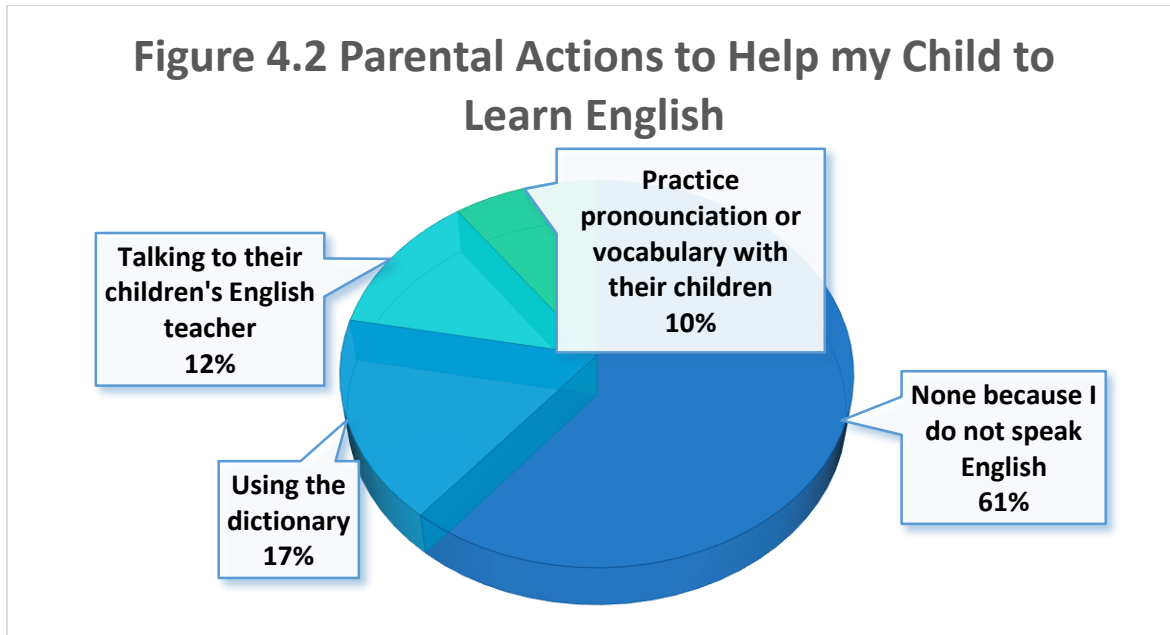


Figure 4.2 Parental actions to support children's English process.

As the figure illustrates, there was a remarkable percentage of participants who consider that they cannot support their children because they do not feel comfortable with their mastery of the language. Some of them help their children using the dictionary in order to translate from English to Spanish and vice versa. There is a minority that prefers to discuss how to support their children directly with the teacher and at least some parents show interest about the vocabulary or pronunciation of the language. With the information presented so far, the first research question is already answered. The following section will focus on answering the second research question.

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4.3 Parental Workshop and their Actions to Support Children's Learning Process

After some months of applying parental workshops in sixth grade, there were results that reflect the opinion of parents about this process. The figure 4.3 illustrates different actions that parents were doing during the process of parental involvement.

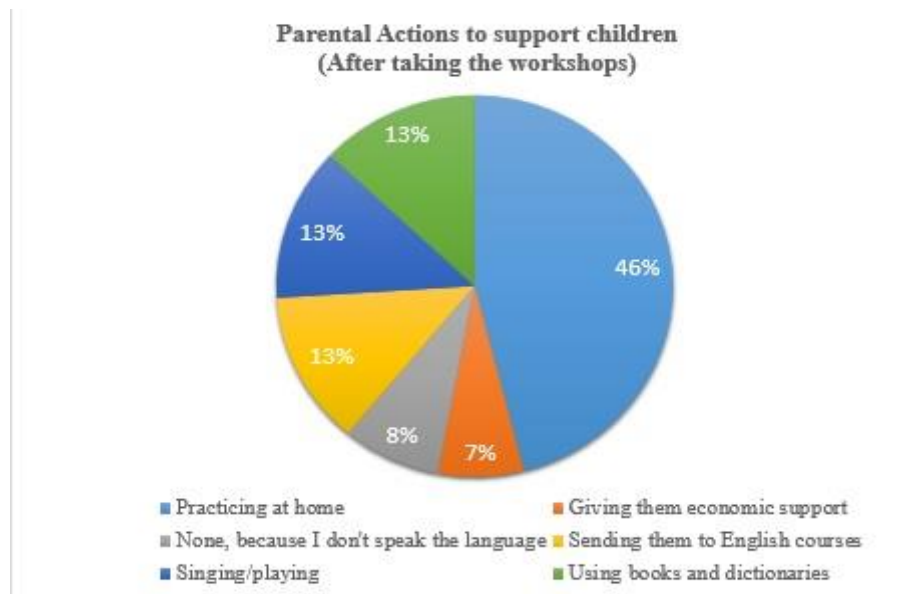


Figure 4.3 Different actions to support children's learning process after taking the parental workshops.

This figure shows evidence that parental workshop turned out to be an effective strategy to involve parents in the learning process of children. The majority of parents are aware of doing actions such as practicing at home (with the material provided by the teacher in workshops), also playing games, singing and consulting books and dictionaries, even there are others that prefer investing in material (visual, printed, software, etc.) to practice outside the classroom, but also there are some parents that despite their complicated schedule they prefer paying private lessons. However, there is still a minimum percentage of them arguing that the lack of understanding of the language is the main reason that stops them from

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supporting their children. In order to explain the different parental actions, these were classified in: affective actions, social pressure and pedagogical actions.

4.3.1 Affective Parental Actions to Support Children's Learning Process

Children's English learning process seems to be a difficult challenge to parents; however, they overcame it and were convinced of working together as a support action to enhance their children's learning process.

According to Ridnauer (2011), the key is to emphasize both (parents and children) how they will benefit from undertaking a task or mastering a goal and the behaviors that will help them do so. This instruction was considered in every workshop and parents were taking notes about how to perform their role outside the classroom.

The majority of parents were convinced about motivation as an important point in their role, even if they do not speak the language. Some testimonies were collected and motivation is one of their principal responses. For example, parent 3 said:

Parent 3:

“Helping him motivates to do his best effort to learn English, with my support he feels confident and increase their interest about the language”

In this point of view, parent 3 is expressing that with their support children are encouraged to learn the language because he/she does not feel working lonely and recognizes the importance of learning the language. Furthermore, participant 4 expressed:

Parent 4:

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“We work together, he asks me a question and I try to answer it, if I do not the answer he helps me”

Parent 4 is expressing that his/her child is not the only one that is learning the language, also parent is practicing and questioning about the children’s learning, which is a clear evidence of team work.

Parent 5:

“As we work with other subjects, our actions are important to motivate students to improve their learning”

Parent 5 is convinced about his/her role in the study of the language because he/she is aware of the effectiveness of the results in other subjects and also motivates to apply their language.

Parent 6:

“I support him and she feels confident, which is important because she can participate in classes and improve her learning”

Parent 6 declares that supporting children gives confidence and it increases participation in the classroom, which definitely helps their learning process.

Parent 7:

“Sometimes she talks me or ask me using the language, even if I do not understand her, she explains me and I motivate her to use the language”

In this case, Parent 7 is practicing the language despite of their understanding of the language but he/she is completely involved as a motivator.

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After presenting these testimonies, results prove that motivation is the key of parental involvement and essential in team work engagement, because it allows children to gain courage and confidence to enhance their learning and that is remarkable evidence in the classroom.

4.3.2 Social Pressure to Support Children's Learning Process

As well as results present actions that help students and parents to work together, there are some difficulties with parental involvement, which are related to an external factor: social pressure.

According to Ridnour (2011), traditional parent involvement such as Chaperoning a field trip, volunteering in the school library, and making cookies for a bake sale must be transformed into parent engagement, which is perfectly legitimate and it has an effective meaning of parental involvement in the school. The truth is that traditional parental involvement is a consequence of social pressure, which is related to an economical action to overcome barriers with the language but on the other hand there were traditional missjudgements about learning a foreign language.

The economical issue was a consequence of parents' beliefs because they were aware of their first experience dealing with English as a Foreign Language (EFL), which represented an encounter with an unusual work and as a solution, some of them decided to invest in private lessons. The following testimonies confirm that parents were looking for an option to reinforce their children's learning because they are not English speakers.

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Parent 8:

“I must be an economical support to motivate him to continue learning the language”

Parent 8 considers a habitual concern of parents to provide economical support as a replacement of spending time working together, which supposedly motivates children to follow an ideal model of perseverance and hard-work represented by parents.

Parent 9:

“If I have to help him to learn English, I can only pay him his private lessons because I do not speak the language”

Parent 10:

“She only studies and practices the language because she really likes it, we only send her to an English school because I can speak the language”

Parents 9 and 10 declare that they cannot support directly their children because they do not speak the language but their concern is about investing in economic issues as a solution to practice the language outside the classroom.

On the other hand, there were parents who were not completely convinced of the process or they lacked interest to be involved in team work providing multiple excuses. Some testimonies give us an idea of these misjudgments of the process:

Parent 11:

“We support him but we are aware that we do not domain [sic] the language”

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As the participant 11 explained, they do not master the language, so they only give a minimum support in the language because he is not convinced of learning together.

Parent 12:

“I do not help him because I do not understand what he is saying”

Participant 12’s opinion is the clear evidence of lack of interest in the learning process because despite of the instructions provided by the teacher, he/she does not have a positive attitude to engage with their children, which is evident in the learning process.

Parents that show these kinds of reactions cannot be excused for their professions or multiple activities, the majority of them are professional and even though they are aware of the importance of learning EFL, they do not get used to supporting their children or they have a misconception of parental involvement process.

4.3.3 Pedagogical Actions to Support Children’s Learning Process

Ridnauer (2011) found that involvement practices had a significant and positive effect on student achievement. In schools where teachers reported having high levels of outreach to parents (e.g., meeting face to face with parents, sending parents materials on how to help their child at home, and telephoning routinely), test scores grew at a 40 percent higher rate than in schools where teachers reported low levels of outreach.

Parental workshops provide instructions to apply as a reinforcement in the practice of the language but there were parents that go beyond and use some pedagogical actions (even ignoring that concept) that help them when they work together. Parents are aware of their lack of knowledge of the language but they follow the model of instructions or suggestion

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about how to enhance their children's learning and evidently they observe the progress learning together. In some of the testimonies the actions that parents were doing during the process are represented, going beyond instructions.

Parent 13:

“We practice a lot but also we look for further information in other sources”

In this particular opinion, participant 12 expressed that he is practicing the language with their children but if there is something that it is not clear, he/she is looking for clarifying their doubts in other resources, which involves parent in the progress of their children beyond the expectations.

Parent 14:

“Using a dictionary and the book, practicing writing and pronunciation with her brothers”

Parent 15:

“We often practice the dialogues at home, also we read books and sometimes we ask for help with other member of the family that also know English”

Participants 14 and 15 provide information about the actions that they realized during the process, they are not just following instructions of workshops but also they are consulting other resources such as: dictionaries, books and even asking their doubts with other family members, which have better English level. Besides, they are aware of other aspects to practice, such as pronunciation, writing and speaking, which represent the engagement with the parental involvement process.

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Parent 16:

“Every afternoon we listen to English music”

Parent 17:

“Every day we practice the greetings, also we sing and practice the conversation examples”

Both participants are part of those parents that were looking for other actions to reinforce the language; they follow the suggestions of parental workshops but also adopt this to their daily activities making relevant supporting actions. Other aspects such as listening and speaking were developed due to these actions. Practicing outside the classroom was not an easy task for parents but the truth is that due to their positive attitude, they were going beyond suggestions and even they organize their own strategies to learn the language, convincing about not only getting involved in the learning process but also being engaged to enhance their learning. This information provided the answer to the second research question.

This research provided the results of using Parental workshops in students of sixth grade of EFL. In general, working with parents is a challenge for teachers but as the research demonstrates, it is an effective strategy to involve them with their children's learning process. The following chapter will discuss about the limitations of this project and also suggestions for further research.

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CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents the interpretation and discussion of the analysis and results found in the previous chapter according to the research questions that were conducted for this study. This final chapter describes the main findings and their significance, it provides a comparison among the participants' initial and final perspectives about their role in their children's English process. In addition, this chapter presents the answers to the research questions related to this investigation. The last part of the chapter presents the limitations of the research, followed by the suggestions for further research, and finally my final comments.

5.1 Findings and their Significance

As chapter four established, the parental involvement actions presented in students of sixth grade of elementary school must be defined in order to determine if it could be considered an effective strategy for teachers. However, there is a gap when parents try to work with their children because of their lack of understanding of the language and only a small number of participants have the purpose of helping their children with different activities. Therefore, the parental workshop guided parents to have a significant role in the majority of the participants because due to the actions followed and applied by the participants during the school-year they had an active participation in their children's English process.

This study emphasized that parents can be part of the acquisition of a foreign language and also be considered as partners of English teachers, in order for children to practice the

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language outside the classroom. It was possible to demonstrate that it is a relevant strategy for English teachers, especially to enhance communication with parents, since they were integrated into their children's learning process.

5.2 Answers to the Research Questions

Two research questions (RQ) were formulated at the beginning of this study and this section provides information related to the findings and their significance. The answers show the comparison of the parental involvement at the beginning and at the end of the workshops.

RQ1. According to the participants, what are the actions to support their children to learn English?

The findings analyzed in chapter 4 show that 57% of the participants never help their children with their English homework, which is a relevant percentage that demonstrates that the majority do not understand the actions to support their children or that they even feel incapable of being part of their children's English process. 25% of the participants declared that they try to help their children at least once a month, which shows that there is a regular participation of the parents with their children and that at least they try to use the dictionary, in order to translate the foreign language to their mother language and vice versa. Also they try to help them to practice the pronunciation in order to enhance children's speaking skill. A minority represented by 18% of the participants declared that they help their children with their English homework, at least once a week they visit the English classroom and have a

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word with the teacher, in order to follow certain ways to help their children to enhance their English learning process.

RQ2. After the parental workshops, what kind of actions did the participants carry out to support their children to learn English?

Three parental workshops were applied during this process, which allowed the participants to learn different strategies and actions to integrate into their children's English learning process. Despite the activities suggested and implemented by the teacher in each workshop, parents demonstrated that they had an active participation during the process and also some of them were using other activities that they considered useful to practice the language outside the classroom. There is a relevant percentage (92%) of the participants that were convinced about their role in their children English learning process and the actions were related to the following issues: affective actions, social pressure and pedagogical actions, in order to explain the relevance of them. 46% of the participants concluded that following the activities implemented in the parental workshops allowed them to increase their confidence and motivate their child to study English together, which demonstrates that motivation (affective actions) was the key to work collaboratively. This aspect allowed parents and children to build a strong relationship, in which parents had the opportunity to learn together, know how to help their children with homework and enhance their communication with the teacher.

Another relevant percentage (26%) declared that they were applying further actions beyond those suggested by the teacher in the parental workshops such as singing and playing

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in their free time (13%), even some of them integrated other family members that knew the language. Also, 13% of the participants demonstrated that they could look up further information in books and also using dictionaries in order to help them to practice outside the classroom.

However, 20% of the participants were affected by the social pressure of being involved in their children's English learning, but considering their lack of time and in some cases, lack of understanding of the language they preferred to send their child to study in English schools and even hire a private teacher (13%). In addition, 7% of the participants declared that they just provide the economic support to buy material or dictionaries. Finally, there was a minority (7%) that still refused to be part of their children's English learning process arguing that they could not help their children because they do not speak the language, without giving themselves the opportunity to apply the strategies used in the parental workshops.

With these answers to the research questions, it was possible to achieve the purpose of the study, which was to discover the effects of working with parents, as a strategy to help EFL students in primary school and to integrate parents into their children's learning process.

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5.3 Limitations of the Research

This study has shown that the parental workshop is an effective strategy to integrate parents in their children's English learning process but it must be considered that there were some limitations that affected the study.

The participants were committed to participate actively in other subjects such as math, geography, history, etc. but because the English subject was not integrated to their program, the class was taught by social service students, which did not allow to have a continuous learning of the language. That is the reason why some participants gave less importance to participate in activities related to the English subject.

The second aspect reveals that even when there was some flexibility to organize and schedule the parental workshops, participants that were affected by their work could not attend frequently to the parental workshops and evidently there was not an intention to talk with the teacher, in order to know the activities used during the process. This reason reflects on those parents that could not be actively involved in their children's English process.

Finally, the last limitation was related to insufficient information that the participants provided in the instruments. If they had provided more valuable information related to the workshops, the results of this project would have enriched much more the area under investigation.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

In light of the limitations mentioned above, further research would need to address the following suggestions for teachers in order to know how to apply parental workshops.

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5.4.1 For Institutions

There must be an interest reflected by all the teachers that work in the institution, in order to establish a project that emerges from the concern of integrating parents into their children's learning process within the subjects of the curriculum. Also to adapt the programs to aspects that are important for parents, such as time, vision, understanding and clear objectives that contribute to the participation of authorities, teachers, parents and students.

5.4.2 For English Teachers

Teachers need to be interested in applying this strategy. There is not any limitation to adapt to their English style and objectives, even teachers could add or delete strategies that are not useful for their context. In addition, teachers need to be supported and frequently supervised by their authorities in order to establish a strong communication with them and helping to solve problems within the parental process. Finally, teachers need to consider doing their best effort and show an appropriate attitude to parents, in order to build a partnership and learn to work cooperatively.

5.5 Final Comments

The parental involvement evidence gathered in this study is expected to help teachers to consider work collaboratively with parents in order to enhance their relationship with them. Also, it can be said that the parental workshop strategy is considered an effective strategy to integrate parents into their children's English learning process. It can be concluded that

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different strategies must be taken into account by EFL elementary school teachers in order to build a strong partnership with parents, guiding them with actions to help them when children learn a foreign language. In this case, the parental workshop was a useful strategy that obtained good results in the students' language learning process.

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APPENDIX A

BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

ENCUESTA INICIAL

La presente encuesta tiene como objetivo identificar proporcionar información sobre el trabajo en conjunto (tutor-alumno) en el aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera: inglés. Se le pide contestar de manera clara y honesta las siguientes preguntas, su información será confidencial y para usos de investigación.

1.- ¿Qué piensa del idioma inglés?

2. ¿Cree conveniente que su hijo aprenda inglés desde la escuela primaria? ¿Por qué?

3. ¿Cuál sería su papel como padre de familia en el aprendizaje de su hijo/a en el idioma inglés?

4. Escriba 5 acciones que esté dispuesto a hacer para apoyar a su hijo para aprender Inglés:

Gracias por su participación.

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APPENDIX B

BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

ENCUESTA INTERMEDIA

La presente encuesta tiene como objetivo identificar proporcionar información sobre el trabajo en conjunto (tutor-alumno) en el aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera: inglés. Se le pide contestar de manera clara y honesta las siguientes preguntas, su información será confidencial y para usos de investigación.

- 1.- ¿Qué piensa de las clases del idioma inglés que ha recibido su hijo?**

- 2. ¿Cree conveniente que su hijo este practicando el idioma inglés en casa? ¿Por qué?**

- 3. ¿Considera importante su papel como padre de familia en el aprendizaje de su hijo/a en el idioma inglés? ¿Por qué?**

- 4. Escriba las diferentes acciones que esté realizando para apoyar a su hijo a aprender Inglés:**

Gracias por su participación.

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APPENDIX C

BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

ENCUESTA FINAL

La presente encuesta tiene como objetivo identificar proporcionar información sobre el trabajo en conjunto (tutor-alumno) en el aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera: inglés. Se le pide contestar de manera clara y honesta las siguientes preguntas, su información será confidencial y para usos de investigación.

1.- ¿Cuál es su conclusión del trabajo que realizo con su hijo en las clases de inglés del ciclo escolar?

2. ¿Considera que hubo alguna ventaja o desventaja de apoyar a su hijo en el aprendizaje del Inglés este ciclo escolar? SI/NO ¿Por qué?

3. ¿Cómo apoyó a su hijo (a) durante su curso de inglés?

4. Escriba su opinión general del trabajo en conjunto con su hijo en el curso de inglés:

Gracias por su participación.