Advocating for In-service Teacher Training in Mexico: English4Mexico

Carrie Byrne
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ADVOCATING FOR IN-SERVICE ESL TEACHER TRAINING IN MEXICO:

ENGLISH4MEXICO

Carrie Byrne

PIM 74

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of International Education at SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, VT, USA.

Capstone Seminar August 15, 2016

Adviser: Linda Drake-Gobbo, Professor
ADVOCATING FOR ENGLISH4MEXICO
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Student name: Carrie Byrne

Date: July 15, 2016
Dedication

This Capstone is dedicated to John Rassias, whose love for humanity, languages, and culture inspired my lifelong commitment to education.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge Mom, Peter, Moe, and Ivan, without whom undertaking a Master’s degree would have been impossible. Thank you for all of your love and support.

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<td>ACE</td>
<td>American Council on Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIEA</td>
<td>Association of International Education Administrators</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIDAC</td>
<td>Centro de Investigación para el Desarrollo A.C. (Mexican think tank)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIGE</td>
<td>Center for International &amp; Global Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONAHEC</td>
<td>Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration</td>
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<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<td>FOBESII</td>
<td>US-Mexico Bi-lateral Forum on Higher Education, Research, and Innovation</td>
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<td>Inter-American Partnership for Education</td>
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<td>IE</td>
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ADVOCATING FOR ENGLISH4MEXICO

MIG Member Interest Group of NAFSA
NAFSA Association of International Educators (formerly National Association for Foreign Student Affairs)
NEPBE National English Program for Basic Education
NGO Non-Governmental Organization
SEP Secretaría de Educación Pública (Ministry of Public Education – Mexico)
TOEFL Test of English as a Foreign Language
UNICEF United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
ADVOCATING FOR ENGLISH4MEXICO

ABSTRACT

The lack of English language proficiency among Mexican public school students, due to a deficit of skilled English language teachers, can have a profound effect on a students’ university prospects, study abroad opportunities, and earning potential. With the current emphasis on student mobility between the US and Mexico being promoted by the complementary initiatives of the Department of State’s 100,000 Strong in the Americas, of which NAFSA: Association of International Educators (NAFSA) is a partner, and Mexico’s Proyecta 100,000, now is the perfect time to bring together the international education community to help address this injustice.

The English4Mexico advocacy strategy was created using social media platforms, including a website, Facebook page, and Twitter account, to educate and organize the international education community. It encourages action from this community to push important stakeholders to fund and support the inclusion of in-service ESL teacher training in Mexico in these initiatives, with an eye toward the Inter-American Partnership for Education (IAPE) Intensive English Teacher Training program model as a best practice. English4Mexico calls for transformational change for Mexican teachers, their students, and the country that goes beyond gifting scholarships to a few thousand students to study abroad, and instead begins to create a stronger partner in student mobility, research, and workforce development for decades to come.
Introduction

Amid Mexico’s new National English Program for Basic Education (NEPBE) and a rise in student mobility between Mexico and the US due to multiple bi-national initiatives, English language learning is more important than ever for Mexico’s students. An unfortunate truth is that the majority of students who study and learn English proficiently do so because they come from families that can afford to pay for private schools or lessons (Calderón, 2015). This leaves behind millions of public school students who often leave secondary school without the working knowledge of English that could allow them to attend an esteemed university, study abroad, or increase their earning potential.

There is a recognition among those working for bilateral international education initiatives that a lack of English proficiency is a major deterrent to Mexican student mobility (Bello and Dutrénit, 2013). These programs have taken steps to provide costly grants for university students and ESL teachers to study English at U.S. universities. However, there is one proven yet often ignored approach to increasing student proficiency in English, and that is on-the-ground in-service ESL teacher training in Mexico.

It is important for the international education community to take notice and to call for the stakeholders of these student mobility initiatives to recognize and help fund in-service ESL teacher training that will help lead to a greater diversity among international students at U.S. universities.
Understanding the Background of the Policy

Why should the international education community care about English language learning in Mexico? One of the main reasons is the direction in which internationalization is heading. NAFSA: The Association of International Educators’, working definition of internationalization is the “conscious effort to integrate and infuse international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the ethos and outcomes of postsecondary education...it must involve active and responsible engagement of the academic community in global networks and partnerships” (Hudzik, 2011). For some institutions of higher education, internationalization is a buzzword used to attract students and funding. Other institutions have a deeper commitment to assuring that internationalization permeates almost all aspects of university life. One key aspect of internationalization on U.S. campuses is student mobility, or sending students to study or intern abroad and hosting international students on campus. In 2005, Joanne Forster and Daniel Obst produced their IIE Country Report: USA entitled Perceptions of European Higher Education in Third Countries. They emphasize that international students “contribute to the diversity and internationalization of their classrooms, their campuses and their communities” (p. 3). Currently, the countries that dominate in sending their students to the United States are China...
and India (IIE Open Doors Report, 2015). The U.S. Department of State, NAFSA, and some American universities that have long been dedicated to internationalization are interested in diversification among international students in the United States, and they have been investing in programs to bring students from underrepresented countries and regions to study here (U.S. Department of State, 2015). Many in the field of International Education agree that diversification of international students is not only a question of a university’s ethos, but an economic question as well. According to a World Education Services article in May of 2015, “institutions should develop more sustainable international student enrollment strategies by pursuing a diverse portfolio of source countries – especially from emerging markets” (West, 2015, p.2).

The 100,000 Initiatives

One example of the call for such diversification movements is the 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative, a public-private partnership of NAFSA and Partners of the Americas, which is being led by the U.S. State Department (IIE Open Doors, 2015). It aims to increase the number of U.S. students studying abroad in the western hemisphere to 100,000, namely in Latin America. The initiative’s other goal is to receive 100,000 students from other countries in the western hemisphere, all by the year 2020 (U.S. Department of State, 2015). Mexico has developed a complementary initiative called Proyecta 100,000 (Project...
It also aims to send that number of Mexican students to study in the US and to receive 50,000 U.S. students in Mexico by 2018 (U.S. Department of State, 2015). As a result of initiatives like these, there has been a positive trend among Latin American students studying in the United States. According to IIE’s Open Door report from 2015, “Latin America & the Caribbean was the fastest growing region of origin for international students in the U.S., increasing by 19 percent over the prior year, and benefiting from the support of 100,000 Strong in the Americas.” Forster and Obst explain that many U.S. colleges have begun to offer special foreign student discounts, so as not to allow high tuition to deter these students from attending their universities, and U.S. State Department grant and scholarship programs are doing the same. Still, according to David Vassar and Beverly Barrett, co-authors of the report US-Mexico Academic Mobility, “the levels of academic mobility between the United States and Mexico are low when compared to those between other important trading partners of either country” (2014, p. 5). A 2013 document created by the US-Mexico Bi-lateral Forum on Higher Education, Research, and Innovation (FOBESII) echoes these findings, adding that, “Student Mobility, when compared to the population and trade levels between each country and the USA, shows an unsatisfactory performance by Mexico” (Bello, P. and Dutrénit, G., 2013, p. 19).

English Language Learning in Mexico
“If you know English, you are connected to the world. If you do not, the universe in which you live, interact with others, learn and inform yourself is considerably reduced” (Calderón, 2015, p. 27). The low percentage of Mexican students studying in the US, in comparison to other important U.S. trade partners, is due to the many challenges facing them that cannot be solved solely by government and university scholarships to study abroad. The main reason that international students study in the US is the positive reputation that a US degree carries, but the second most important factor is a student’s proficiency in English (Forster and Obst, 2005). This issue of language capability poses a profound challenge to Mexican students wishing to study in the US and to even becoming interested in studying abroad in the first place. Interviews conducted by the British Council revealed that that Mexican students “often can’t reach the required TOEFL level and therefore do not pursue their study abroad goals” (British Council, 2015, p. 51).

When Vassar and Barrett asked Mexican students what the biggest barrier to bilateral collaboration in academic mobility was, “lack of foreign language skills” was cited as a key issue (2015, p. 14). Why is this such a problem for Mexico? The answer, proven over and over again, is the sad state of English language learning in Mexican public schools.

The Statistics
In 2009, the Mexican government established the National English Program in Basic Education (NEPBE) to prepare its students for a contemporary society that requires its citizens to engage in a globalized world. As a result, “English language teaching and learning is now prominently on the Mexican government agenda” (British Council, 2015). However, according to a survey conducted by the British Council, stakeholders from the Mexican Ministry of Education (SEP) believe that current and future Mexican teachers of English are the greatest challenge to Mexican education and the success of the NEPBE (2015).

A 2015 survey conducted by the Mexican education Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Mexicanos Primero (Mexicans First) learned that four-fifths of secondary-school graduates had no knowledge of English, despite having spent at least 360 hours in public school English classes. When it came to English teachers, one in seven had no English language proficiency (The Economist, 2015). Many teachers who do know some English still lack the proficiency of the level they have been hired to teach. (Calderón, 2015). On top of these grim realizations is the fact that throughout Mexico there is a complete deficiency of English teachers; one out of two secondary schools is missing English teachers and nine out of ten primary schools are lacking English teachers (Calderón, 2015).

In Latin America “there is a huge gap between what the system provides and what the students actually need,” says Rosangela Bando of the Inter-American Development Bank (The Economist, 2015). In Mexico, as is typical in
much of Latin America, the disparity between those who have English and those who do not widens the farther one goes from the cities. “Better-off city-dwelling children are more likely to have private language lessons, Internet access or the chance to travel abroad” (The Economist, 2015). The Mexicanos Primero report cited a 2008 survey by the non-profit Mexican think-tank Centro de Investigación para el Desarollo A.C. (CIDAC) saying that, “It was found that those who have more income… are more willing to pay to improve their English, both in the proportion of people willing to do so and in the amount of money they are willing to pay” (Calderón, 2015, p. 29). And in a British Council survey, Mexicans cited cost and access to learning English as the main barriers to English language learning. This inequity may be the most glaring issue of all. Because there is a deficit of public school English teachers, those who desire a quality ESL learning experience seek that through private schools or lessons (Calderon, 2015).

The lack of minimally acceptable quality of public education has limited access to learning English to a very narrow minority (who can pay for it), and with that, it has not only contributed toward reproducing social inequality, but has exacerbated it (Calderón, 2015, p. 27).

Therefore, this issue is not just a threat to Mexican student mobility and the public policy supporting it, it is also a question of social justice, of access to quality ESL education for all Mexican students. The diversity that American universities are seeking among its international students should go beyond a diversification of country of origin and extend to diversity among the socio-economic classes of these countries.
FOBESII

In order to promote the goals of and mitigate challenges to the 100,000 initiatives, a governmental collaboration between the United States and Mexico, which includes stakeholders such as universities and private businesses, developed the U.S.-Mexico Bilateral Forum on Higher Education, Innovation, and Research, hereafter referred to as FOBESII (the Spanish acronym). According to a January 6, 2015 article from the Department of State, President Obama and Mexican President Peña-Nieto have agreed to expand opportunities for educational exchange. The article states that, “FOBESII builds on longstanding cooperation among our governments, the private sector and academic institutions, including in such areas as the Fulbright-Garcia Robles program, EducationUSA educational advising services and language instruction” (US Department of State, 2015). This forum complements the previously mentioned mobility initiatives of President Obama’s 100,000 Strong in the Americas and Mexico’s Proyecta 100,000.

In an Inside Higher Ed article, Elizabeth Redden quotes Stephanie Syptak-Ramnath, the then-public affairs officer for the U.S. Embassy in Mexico as saying, “The idea [for FOBESII] was that we were going to start working as governments together to put educational exchange at the top of our priorities for the first time” (2015). Syptak-Ramnath goes on to say that beyond governmental work, “This is the work of academia, the private sector, civil society and university associations
on both sides.” (Redden, E., 2015). As FOBESII and many institutions and organizations have recognized, a lack of English knowledge by Mexican students and recent graduates poses a very real challenge to this type of academic mobility, workplace training, and research.

Languages Group

To counter such challenges, FOBESII originally created working groups, one of which was the Languages Group. This group had several good practice project proposals that they recommended and oversaw. The projects, aimed at Mexican university students already interested in improving their English, included scholarships for students to study the language in the US before attending university there, various six-to-eight-week courses for undergraduate and graduate students in the US, and online English courses for university students (FOBESII, 2014). These projects, however, did not address the fundamental issue of poor language acquisition in public schools.

There were some FOBESII projects that attempted to tackle the root of the cause of poor quality public school English language learning: the teachers. These actions included embedding U.S. Fulbright Garcia-Robles scholars in Mexican classrooms, online e-Teacher scholarships, and 4-6 week summer stays at U.S. universities for Mexican ESL teachers (FOBESII, 2014). The Working Groups and proposals of FOBESII have recently been streamlined, and the main focus now is on providing students and teachers with grants to study in the US.
(Syptak-Ramnath, 2016). This is a step in the right direction and the opportunity to study English in the US is met enthusiastically by many Mexican teachers. However, there remains a huge gap in addressing the question of access to education, for both students and teachers, which can and should be filled by in-service ESL teacher trainings in Mexico, conducted by a majority Mexican staff.

**Personal Experience with Teacher Training in Mexico / IAPE**

I was first introduced to and trained in the Rassias® Method of teaching languages as a junior in college when I worked as a teacher’s assistant for Spanish language sessions. Combining his love for theater and languages, John Rassias developed this dynamic, humanistic approach to language acquisition in order to train Peace Corps volunteers in the 1960s. Since then, this method has been used to teach languages at universities throughout the US and in various programs around the world run by the Rassias® Center for World Languages and Cultures at Dartmouth College, where John Rassias was a professor for almost 50 years.

One of these programs is the Inter-American Partnership for Education (IAPE) Intensive English Teacher Training (soon to be renamed Inspiring English Teachers). It was created in 2007 in order to offer a ten-day, intensive English language immersion and pedagogical training program to Mexican public school teachers of English (Worldfund, 2016). The program is the result of a partnership
between the non-profit Worldfund and Dartmouth’s Rassias® Center, who in turn collaborate with state education authorities in Mexico.

I became involved with the IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training during one of its pilot programs in 2009, and subsequently taught at approximately ten more intensive programs over the next couple of years. The program provides 100 hours of immersion in the English language (participants pledge to speak only English throughout the ten days) and exposure to U.S. culture without these busy teachers having to travel thousands of miles and be away from family responsibilities for too long. This is a key element, since students in immersion programs have been shown to make more progress in a shorter time than those in a traditional classroom (Cleaver, S., 2016).

The typical profile of a teacher who enters the IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training program has an intermediate level of English with a TOEFL score ranging from 375 to 499 (below the basic requirement set by the Secretariat for Public Education (SEP) for Mexican teachers of English. Some of these teachers have been in the classroom for many years, while others are just beginning their careers. These teachers, usually coming from a different state each program, travel together to the immersion site in central Mexico.

The program staff is a mix of Mexican teachers who have been through a more advanced training provided by the IAPE Teacher’s Collaborative, and US-based personnel. This is a winning combination. US-based staff members provide reference for the cultural immersion and nuances of the English
language. Meanwhile the Mexican staff, in addition to providing the program with a sustainable supply of personnel, prove to be powerful role models as they show the participants that the techniques they are learning are already in use by their compatriots. And then, of course, there is the pedagogical philosophy behind the training, which comes from the Rassias® Method of teaching. This method is rooted in a desire for teacher and student to connect on a human level and allows the learning to happen through a desire to communicate. Throughout the training, not only do the participants learn to break down barriers between themselves and their students in fun, meaningful, and dynamic ways, but they also connect with one another and create a network of teachers who will continue to share resources, success stories, best practices, and support for years to come. This combination of U.S. and Mexican staff is a wonderful, working example of a healthy US-Mexico public-private partnership.

I personally found this program to be transformative for all involved. Early on in my time with IAPE I heard the story of a frustrated teacher who had been floundering in the classroom for years and receiving devil horns in the hallway from discouraged students. After completing her IAPE training, the now confident teacher was getting the thumbs up as students passed by. Young student teachers would stay after class to tell me they never knew that teaching could come from a place of compassion instead of authority. IAPE provides teachers with not only a solid improvement to their English capabilities, it also
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delivers a new approach to pedagogy and reaching their students, and it creates a network of teachers with whom they can share their experiences.

While institutions such as the British Council and International House offer courses for in-service teacher training in language and/or pedagogy in Mexico, they sometimes present issues of access and effectiveness to Mexican ESL teachers. These trainings are online, which can discourage teachers who have limited access to high speed Internet. The trainings are also paid for by the teachers themselves, not by their state’s ministry of education, thus posing another barrier to the teacher. Sustaining language immersion in online courses is certainly a challenge as well. Currently, the other option for ESL teacher training that is being offered is scholarships through FOBESII to study in intensive language programs in the US for up to six weeks at a time. While these immersion programs in the US are effective, these costly, time-intensive programs have a limited reach. Not all in-service teacher trainings are created equal, and IAPE is truly special and effective as the only significant in-person training happening in Mexico.

Data Supporting IAPE as a Good Practice

Rosangela Bando and Xia Li of The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) conducted a Randomized Control Trial experiment to compare the outcomes of teachers who were trained in the IAPE program and their students with those who did not go through these trainings. The IBD stated that they
conducted this study “because the ability to communicate in English determines the extent to which an individual can participate in the global market” (Bando & Li, 2014, p. 4). Prior to this study, there had been limited research on the effectiveness of in-service teacher training in Mexico. Their 2014 report states that their research “explored two mechanisms through which training can affect student learning: changes in teacher subject matter knowledge and changes in classroom practices” (Bando & Li, p. 1). Results showed positive outcomes for both IAPE trained teachers and their students, including those students being 10 weeks ahead of the students of non-trained teachers in their English programs after seven and a half months of study. Additionally, and perhaps most transformational, students of trained teachers developed a higher belief in themselves and higher expectations for themselves when considering their future and careers. It is this intriguing result, which also hints that such a program could be influential in students seeking new opportunities such as studying abroad. Lastly, the report concluded that teacher training may lead to improvements in student learning, but that continuous training is needed to sustain the results. Since these reports were released, the IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training program has added even more to its structure, including 75 hours of follow-up training over three years for each teacher through mentoring, workshops, surveys, an online forum, and classroom observations.

The citizen-based organization *Mexicanos Primero* (Mexicans First) released a thorough report last year on the sad state of English language learning in
Mexico called *Sorry: Learning English in Mexico* (which is quoted several times throughout this paper), and proposed seven Good Practices to improve English language learning in public schools, one of which was teacher training and development, naming the IAPE program as a model. The other Good Practices were having a clear national policy, having a comprehensive implementation strategy, having access to information, incorporating technology, using effective teaching strategies, and citizen participation (Calderón, 2015). This report highlights that beyond the improvement of English language knowledge and pedagogical techniques that the participants learn with IAPE, there is the added value of “professional collegiality that teachers develop as participants in a network that continues to work together after the classroom courses” (Calderón, 2015). This is what allows teachers to discover new teaching resources and best practices being used by their fellow English teachers around the country.

Although the IAPE program continues to make improvements and gain recognition for its impressive accomplishments, a lack of adequate funding is the main obstacle to allowing Worldfund to realize as many programs as originally planned and to continue to expand its reach to new areas of Mexico. This is not shocking, since new sources of revenue are often an issue for non-profit organizations. The IAPE program has benefited from its recognition as a Clinton Global Initiative in the past, but it could profit from greater exposure to those who are passionate about education in Mexico and hold the strings to heavy
purses. This is where the international education community can play an important role.

**Research Data**

In addition to the literature reviewed on this subject, in order to collect more useful data for this paper and advocacy strategy, 40 surveys were sent to Mexican teachers of English who have passed through the IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training program in an attempt to understand how this in-service teacher training affected their teaching, and to understand if other training programs like those proposed in the FOBESII Languages Group proposal were reasonably achievable for teachers like them (See Appendix D). These were sent to teachers who showed above average usage of the IAPE online forum, which indicated that they may be more likely to respond to an online survey. 21 completed surveys were returned from the 40 sent. Teachers who responded represented at least ten different states in Mexico, teaching experience ranging from one year to 25 years, grade levels from first to university, and yearly student reach ranging from 20 to 600. The results of this quantitative and qualitative survey have been used to enhance the educational information being included in the social media feature of this strategy. Here are some examples of IAPE teachers’ answers to survey questions that are included as personal anecdotes on the social media site:
How has your ability to teach English to your students changed since your IAPE training?

- I am more dynamic and human.
- I have been more confident in giving my classes.
- I feel more confident speaking English. The time I speak English during the class has increased and also I encourage my students to do it.
- I now have more tools to work with. The IAPE course made me understand how important it is to speak in English to my students no matter how difficult it could be at the beginning.

What changes, if any, have you noticed in your students since your training?

- They are motivated to learn English and they enjoy the class.
- They are happy.
- They really connect to me.
- They show more interest in learning English.
- [They are] a little more confident and enthusiastic working in the classroom.

What, in your opinion, is the best aspect of the IAPE training?

- We must teach with our hearts and work with other teachers, spreading the knowledge.
- The community
- Personal relationships
- The emphasis on speaking English the very first day of classes
- Share experiences
Would you recommend IAPE to other ESL teachers? Why/ why not?

- [yes] It’s 100% successful when teaching with love and passion.
- [yes] It is effective.
- [yes] It is a good opportunity to meet other English teachers and know other techniques to improve our teaching.
- [yes] It could help their students to be more motivated in the language.

Additionally, two Worldfund personnel were asked about the profiles of the Mexican teachers entering their program and the challenges of finding financial resources for this organization in order to better understand if and how greater exposure by an initiative like FOBESII could drive investment into this non-profit. These talks confirmed that with increased funding and support, IAPE would ideally host eight Inspiring English Teachers programs per year in Tlaxcala and then expand to another location in Mexico to offer an additional eight programs there per year. This could potentially reach 640 Mexican English teachers per year, not including IAPE’s other two Teachers Collaborative programs (soon to be renamed English Teachers Corps). Since the IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training began, it has trained 2,021 teachers who in turn taught 1.5 million Mexican public school students. If IAPE were able to double their efforts through greater funding, these numbers could significantly increase as well (See appendix E).
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Data collection continued, including conversations and email exchanges with the US Embassy in Mexico and community building with NAFSA Member Interest Group (MIG) leaders. The findings based on this research and data collection were used to create an advocacy strategy to encourage NAFSA and the International Education community to learn about and eventually advocate for this sort of deeply needed in-service ESL training for public school teachers in Mexico.

Review of Related Literature: Public Diplomacy and Advocacy in International Education

International Education has been used as a tool for fostering peace and security at home and around the world for over a century. At first these goals of international understanding were shepherded by the citizen diplomacy of organizations such as the Institute of International Education and then furthered along through the public diplomacy aims of several U.S. Government funded policies and programs. Advocacy work has been an effective tool for creating or changing such policies. Water Aid’s The Advocacy Sourcebook defines advocacy as, “the planning and carrying out of actions that seek to change policy, attitudes and practice…” (O’Connell, 2007, p. 8).

The most effective advocacy is that which is supported by a strategic plan. Ellen Badger’s advocacy strategy paper, Influencing Decision Makers: The Campus Perspective, provides a strong basis from which to begin advocacy work (2000). It
states that first one must identify the advocacy goal, and then suggests making one’s advocacy plan mesh with the plans of those in power. Subsequently, within private advocacy, Badger proposes that one must communicate, educate, listen, and read; in other words, understand one’s institution or organization’s hierarchy and their motives. Next, it is important to collect as much data as possible and to synthesize it into digestible pieces for the decision makers. Additionally, NAFSA’s Advocacy Handbook suggests including personal anecdotes when discussing the issue with these decision makers (NAFSA, 2011, p.7). Creating a committee and getting others involved is another step in this process, as the Advocacy Sourcebook states, “the key foundation of all advocacy work is grassroots community involvement” (O’Connell, 2007, p. 8).

UNICEF created a document as a companion to its Advocacy Toolkit called “Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy.” In it, the importance of planning for evaluation during the development of the strategy is stressed. Advocacy strategy planners are urged to remember that when developing an evaluation plan, time frames can be unpredictable, strategies often shift, and progress (not just impact) should be assessed (Coffman, J., 2010).

Clearly there are some outcomes of advocacy strategies that are quantifiable, while others are less so. UNICEF’s advocacy evaluation document addresses this by recommending that the strategy planners ask themselves these five questions while designing the evaluation plan (2010):

1. Who are the evaluation users?
2. How will evaluation be used?

3. What evaluation design should be used?

4. What should be measured?

5. What data collection tools should be used?

Throughout the implementation of an advocacy strategy, “The Monitoring and Evaluating Advocacy” document suggests regularly reflecting on the following questions as a part of the evaluation process (Coffman, p. 47):

What worked well? What did not work? What could be improved? What lessons are drawn for next time? What action turned out better than hoped for? What disappointed participants? What messages resonated?

The Advocacy Strategy

Context of the Policy Issue

The U.S. Department of State united with NAFSA in supporting the public policy of student mobility in the western hemisphere by creating the 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative, while Mexico created its own complementary initiative Proyecta 100,000. This resulted in the formation of the US-Mexico Bilateral Forum on Higher Education, Innovation, and Research, or FOBESII, in order to foment collaboration between these two countries in their efforts.

FOBESII created the Mexican Consultation Group that developed an action plan to identify FOBESII’s goals and address some of the challenges facing
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despite these initiatives. The first main challenge identified is language proficiency, with
the group stating that, “The low penetration of English courses in education in
Mexico… is one of the main challenges that must be overcome in order to
achieve student mobility. Programs must be developed to increase the number of
bilingual students” (Bello, P. and Dutrénit, G., 2013, p. 23). The Languages Group
of FOBESII proposed actions to increase English language proficiency among
Mexican students, namely using government grants to study in the US and the
use of online tools. The group also proposed projects “to strengthen the
capabilities and professionalization of English language teaching in Mexico”
(FOBESII, 2014, p. 46). After a recent FOBESII update meeting, the group decided
to streamline its working groups and limit its project proposals (Syptak-
Ramnath, 2016). Currently the only proposed training for ESL teachers is sending
them to US universities for intensive English courses. The cost for these
programs, covered by Mexican authorities, is up to $3,500 USD per participant.

Clearly missing among these project proposals is in-service ESL teacher
training in Mexico, which is convenient for teachers who cannot or wish not to
leave Mexico for training, and is cost efficient at less than $500 USD per
participant being paid for by being paid by Mexican authorities (the rest of the
cost of the program, approximately $2,000 USD per participant, is paid by IAPE).

**Desired Outcomes of the Advocacy Strategy**
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The short-term (now to late-September) goals of this advocacy strategy are threefold:

1. Education: This strategy aims to inform the international education community about the challenge that the deficit of English language proficiency among Mexican public school students poses to student mobility, especially in the face of the 100K Strong in the Americas and Proyecta 100,000 initiatives, and to apprise them of possible transformative solutions to help alleviate the problem. The goal is to have at least 500 people (hopefully international educators) visit the English4Mexico website or Facebook site that were built in order to inform the public about this issue, to have at least 300 take action by sending emails, tweets, or Facebook messages that acknowledge the community’s interest in this policy. This will be accomplished by adding the website link to the Intensive English Programs and Peace, Justice, and Citizen Diplomacy MIG discussion boards and by linking the English4Mexico blog to these MIG blogs. Established allies will be invited to the website and encouraged to share it with others and tweet about English4Mexico.

2. Organization: A coalition of international education community members will be built to share their thoughts on this issue in particular and on the question of access to education and transformational change within the field. Specifically, outreach will be conducted to the Network Leaders of
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the following NAFSA Member Interest Groups (MIGs) for their participation: Latin American & Caribbean, Intensive English Programs, and Peace, Justice & Citizen Diplomacy. The goal is to have the support for this strategy from at least one of the previously mentioned NAFSA MIGs.

The interim (late-September 2016 to January 2017) goals for this strategy are:

1. For members of the English4Mexico community to contact important actors and stakeholders such as the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC), Institute of International Education (IIE), American Council on Education (ACE), and Rice University who are linked to FOBESII, the Department of State, the Mexican Ministry of Education (SEP), etc., and can help connect the dots for those entities to gather support and funding for the IAPE program and possibly other in-service teacher trainings.

2. For NAFSA to recognize the need to promote transformational change among its policy work, and for the English4Mexico strategy to get permission to place an article in the publication(s) of an international education organization such as NAFSA, IIE, ACE, or Partners for the Americas.

The desired long-term (January 2017 and beyond) goals and outcomes are:
1. For this movement to be recognized at a regional or national conference of international educators through the acceptance of a presentation proposal.

2. To see an increase in funding to IAPE that can be attributed to this strategy to be used to increase the quantity of programs for the year.

Steps of Approach and Timeline

Modern times call for modern measures in advocacy work. Therefore, this advocacy strategy will be primarily based on social media platforms, with the mid- to long-term goal of reaching IE publications and a presentation at an IE conference. Community building is a fundamental key to beginning this work, and the hope is to continue creating a community that is large enough to influence funders to become interested in access to quality ESL education for all Mexican students.

**Early spring:** Research and information gathering began on the 100,000 initiatives, FOBESII, and the state of Mexican English language Learning, and information was synthesized into digestible pieces for the general public.

**June:** Data collection continued, including receiving surveys from IAPE trained teachers, interviewing Worldfund staff, conversing with the US Embassy in Mexico, educating and building a core community of concerned stakeholders via the Department of State and NAFSA MIGS. The English4Mexico website,
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Facebook page, and Twitter accounts were created, containing information for visitors to learn more about 100,000 initiatives and the challenge posed to Mexican student mobility by the deficit of English learning in public schools (see Appendices). The use of such social media platforms will be the main tool used for education in order to reach as many international educators as possible in the US and abroad.

The social media sites created for this strategy can be found at:

http://english4mexico.wordpress.com
http://twitter.com/ESL4Mexico
https://www.facebook.com/english4mexico

**July/August:** The social media platforms will go live and the English4Mexico coalition will start directing international educators to these platforms to inform themselves about this issue.

**September:** This will be a time to evaluate the progress of the strategy thus far through quantitative media tracking and determine if there need to be changes or if English4Mexico is ready to move to the second phase of the advocacy strategy of the international education community aiming its calls for in-service ESL teacher training, particularly IAPE, to reach the eyes of entities related to FOBESII and who can help fund such programs.
October to January: English4Mexico hopes to receive a commitment to publish an article with an international education organization related to the importance of access to ESL education among public school students in Mexico and be approved to present at a regional or national convention. This would be another time to evaluate whether the previously stated goals of the strategy to date have been met. English4Mexico will ask the involved community for feedback about improvements to social media sites and recommendations for expanding the audience.

Level and Target for Advocacy

This advocacy strategy aims to begin by educating and mobilizing international educators within the institution of NAFSA and beyond, while targeting the request toward the FOBESII partners who can influence the promotion of in-service teacher training. On their website, NAFSA describes itself as “the world's largest nonprofit association dedicated to international education and exchange, working to advance policies and practices that ensure a more interconnected, peaceful world today and for generations to come” (NAFSA, 2016). NAFSA has over 10,000 members in over 150 countries. The organization’s goals for the years 2015-2017 are:

1. Advocate for public policies that lead to a more globally engaged and welcoming United States.
2. Support the integration of global perspectives throughout higher education by furthering comprehensive internationalization.

3. Encourage and support intercultural learning to develop global competencies of students, scholars, and educators.

4. Identify critical trends and issues, and champion responses that advance international education.

5. Create and disseminate knowledge and resources and provide professional development opportunities responsive to the ever-changing needs of the field.

6. Deepen and broaden NAFSA’s engagement with individuals and groups whose work contributes to the success of international education.

7. Continue to strengthen and diversify the association’s revenue streams and organizational infrastructure to successfully meet the challenges of the future.

Outgoing CEO Marlene Johnson was recently honored by NAFSA with a $250,000 donation to the 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative. Increasing student mobility among the countries of the western hemisphere is clearly a priority for this organization. Additionally, under the Education Policy section of their Policy & Advocacy website page, NAFSA advocates for expanding access to study abroad for all U.S. students (NAFSA, 2016). Obviously access to international study is important to this organization. The hope is that NAFSA can be swayed to begin advocating for building the steppingstones to expand
international study to *all students*, regardless of their country of origin or socio-economic background. NAFSA also promotes the use of the hashtag #IAdvocateFor, encouraging international educators to get involved in their own advocacy work.

The target of this advocacy strategy will be toward influential players in the field of international education (IE) such as the Institute for International Education (IIE), the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC), and Rice University. These academic partners are working to prepare measurement tools of FOBESII success (Syptak-Ramnath, 2016). These organizations have access to the private companies that are partnering with 100,000 Strong in the Americas, Proyecta 100,000, and FOBESII to help fund the projects under these collaborations.

**Review of All Related Stakeholders**

Although Mexican public school students are probably the group that has the most at stake regarding this issue, they are also the most powerless. Decisions are made in their interest, but without their input, knowledge, or consent.

Mexican public school English teachers have much to gain by having their access to quality ESL in-service teacher training increased. So many Mexican ESL public school teachers are craving greater exposure to the English language,
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English-speaking cultures, and effective pedagogical methods. These are true allies in this advocacy and their personal anecdotes can be an effective aspect of this strategy.

The Mexican Ministry of Education, or SEP, has a lot at stake here. Clearly it has failed its students when it comes to English language learning. Now there is even more pressure on the SEP to provide quality English courses for its millions of students since the new Secretary of the Department of Education, Aurelio Nuño Mayer, is forecasting a bilingual Mexico in the next 10 to 20 years (Mexican Daily News, 2015). Meanwhile, between the world economic crisis and lower oil prices, the Mexican federal government has had to cut the SEP’s budget, including reductions to the expansion of middle and high schools, national scholarships, administrative activities, and education reform (Profelandia, 2016). With a lot to accomplish and little money to achieve it, the SEP and its state authorities could benefit from the public-private partnership with IAPE that requires Mexican authorities to pay less than $500 USD per participant for its Intensive English Teacher Trainings/ Inspiring English Teachers.

NAFSA: The Association of International Educators has partnered with the U.S. State Department and Partnership for America for the 100K Strong in the Americas initiative. NAFSA’s outgoing CEO Marlene Johnson set upon NAFSA and its members a challenge to raise money for this initiative, clearly making
student mobility among western hemisphere countries a priority. There is hope that NAFSA will be a strong ally and powerful influencer in this strategy.

International Educators, including the three NAFSA Member Interest Groups (MIGs), and U.S. universities serving Mexican students have an important role to play as agents of change in the field of International Education. Some of these educators are directly affected by the challenging lack of English proficiency among Mexican students when attempting to increase the diversity amongst their international students on U.S. campuses. Many international educators have a lot on their plates, but if internationalization is a priority for them, they should support this effort.

Worldfund’s IAPE program has much to gain by greater recognition of its work with Mexican teachers among the international education community and among those who have ties to funders interested in supporting student mobility, especially between Latin America and the United States.

The Institute for International Education (IIE), the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC), The American Council on Education (ACE), and Rice University are powerful stakeholders who have been assigned the responsibility of measuring the success of FOBESII and organizing a collaboration between a U.S. think tank and a Mexican partner to prepare the next administrations of each country to continue working on this issue. Encouraging these entities to see the importance of in-service ESL teacher training in Mexico and bringing this to the attention of U.S. and Mexican
government officials and potential funders is going to be the major challenge and goal of this strategy.

**Evaluation Methods for Advocacy Strategy**

The strategy designer will also be the primary evaluator. In the short term, the evaluation will be used to make slight adjustments to the strategy for efficacy. In the long term, the strategy evaluation will be used to understand what aspects of the strategy contributed to the goals and which did not. This understanding can help in the creation of future strategies and may allow the designer to make recommendations to the organizations involved.

Developmental Evaluations bring data and logic to the table, and facilitate data-based assessments and decision-making in the unfolding process of advocacy. This is the evaluation design that will be used to evaluate the short-term goals of this strategy. The Success Case Method combines case study methodology with storytelling (Coffman, p.12). As international educators begin to learn more about this issue and become involved in this movement, their interactions and feedback can be used in the Success Case Method of evaluation design.

The four aspects of advocacy that can be measured are activities, interim outcomes, goals, and impacts. For purposes of this strategy evaluation, building a community of understanding around this issue is the most important, so the activities (and peoples’ interaction during them) will be prioritized. There are
three collection tools that make the most sense when evaluating this advocacy strategy. The first is media tracking in order to monitor the ongoing advocacy activities. In this case it will be possible to see how many people visit, post, tweet, etc. on the designated platforms. Intercept interviews, one-on-one informal interviews after an event, will allow for instant feedback about the advocacy activities. The third tool that will be useful later in the evaluation is policy tracking which indicates changes in the targeted policy or system.

Conclusions

Limitations to the Study

Receiving completed surveys from IAPE trained ESL teachers in Mexico was a challenge despite having access to their email addresses and the IAPE Forum. It would have been an interesting comparison to survey teachers who had not gone through the IAPE program, as they certainly could have had a different perspective on English teacher training options. The IAPE program evokes excitement about teaching, and this is evident in all of the surveys received. It would be fascinating to see if non-IAPE teachers would be so enthusiastic about teacher training. However gaining access to these teachers was too great of a challenge to accomplish for this paper. Conducting online surveys was a challenge, due to the limited Internet access of many of the Mexican teachers. The surveys were not quite as useful as was originally
anticipated, as FOBESII changed its project proposals after the surveys had been sent, and there had been several questions pertaining to these proposals.

Another limitation is having access to FOBESII, which created these project proposals to confront some of the challenges to its goals like English language proficiency. Stephanie Syptak-Ramnath, minister counselor at the US embassy in Mexico, felt that targeting FOBESII as a whole would be difficult due to its lack of hierarchical organization. Had this not been the case, the strategy target would have been different.

**Practical Application for Future Advocates**

It is important for advocates to contact people who hold useful information and positions of power, no matter how out of reach they may seem, as sometimes these people are the key to unlocking information or tools that an advocate will need. Many people are willing to help if their interests are at stake, so finding these commonalities between one’s own needs and those of the stakeholders is fundamental.

**Recommendations for Future Action**

In order to start simply, this strategy targets the international education community and stakeholders based in the United States. If there is a positive reaction to this strategy and the early evaluations show success, the advocacy strategy designer would consider translating the website, Facebook, and twitter
account information into Spanish in order to reach an important demographic of international educators in Latin America and important stakeholders in Mexico.

Closing Statement

In 2012, Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-Moon stated that, “No education system is better than its teachers.” Mexico’s education system is radically failing the majority of its students in English language learning, due in large part to a deficiency of qualified English teachers. This situation adds to the growing inequality in Mexico among social classes, where those families with higher incomes can pay for private English classes and give their children a leg up when applying to universities, study abroad programs, and jobs. Meanwhile, the poorer public school children who are receiving inadequate English classes are being left behind. This is not only a social justice issue for the students of Mexico, but a real challenge to the international education community that is working to create opportunities for students from all across Latin America to study in the United States. The popular solution seems to be to grant scholarships to students and teachers to come study English in the US. This costly solution certainly supports the internationalization aims of IE organizations and universities, but it falls quite short of the deep transformation that is made possible by giving teachers the capability of being agents for change
through a greater acquisition of subject knowledge and pedagogical skills right in Mexico, not just for their students and their schools, but for their country.

NAFSA touts having an education policy that calls for access to international study for all American students. As an organization with members from over 150 countries, that policy should include access to international study for ALL students. Most countries are not ready for this, but it is important to begin now so as to ensure the future of international study for diverse populations of students. What better place to begin than with our neighbor to the south, precisely at a time when our international education policies are focused on Latin America, and Mexico is reciprocating that policy? Cost-effective in-service English teacher training, specifically the IAPE program being delivered by both Mexican and U.S. teachers, can be the transformative kick start that Mexico needs in order to become equal partners with the US in research, innovation, development, and trade. And that begins with the education of its young people.

At a time when the rhetoric of building walls echoes loudly in this country, it is more important than ever to build bridges. If the IE community comes together now to advocate for prioritizing in-service ESL teacher training in Mexico, it will be investing in a future where access to international education opportunities further supports the peace and security of our world.
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Photos. All photos depicted on social media sites taken by Carrie Byrne.
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Appendix A

English4Mexico Website
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Welcome to English4Mexico!

You can be a voice in promoting quality ESL education in Mexican public schools to support student mobility in the 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative.

Learn about how you can encourage NAFSA and the International Education community to advocate for deeply needed in-service ESL training for public school teachers in Mexico. A lack of English proficiency among Mexican students, stemming from a shortage of skilled ESL teachers, is a main deterrent to Mexican student mobility to the US, thus posing a challenge to the 100,000 Strong in the Americas and Proyecta 100,000 initiatives. Although these initiatives provide grants and resources for students to study English and other subjects in the US, English4Mexico is pushing for transformative policy that improves access to quality ESL education for all Mexican students through in-service teacher training.

About

At a time when the rhetoric of building walls echoes loudly in this country, it is more important than ever to build bridges through educational cooperation. If the international education community comes together now to advocate for prioritizing in-service ESL teacher training in Mexico, it will be investing in a future where access to international education opportunities can further support the peace and security of our nation, our hemisphere, and our world.

English4Mexico was created to provide information and resources to the international education community about the challenges that Mexican public school students face when trying to learn English. In Mexico, English is an
essential tool that can lead to further educational opportunities to study at the university level, to study abroad, to collaborate on research in other countries, and to increase earning potential. As international educators, we should support efforts to increase English language proficiency among Mexican public school teachers and their students, not just because it will help us to reach our goals of increasing the diversity of socio-economic groups from underrepresented countries among our international students on U.S. campuses, but because as agents of change we need to advocate for this social justice issue of access to quality education for all. Who better to start with than our own neighbors?

Secretary Nuño of the Department of Education forecast a bi-lingual Mexico in the next 10 to 20 years. Mexico has a lot of catching up to do if it is to realize Secretary Nuño’s prediction. Here’s why:

The Stats

- 4 out of 5 secondary-school graduates in Mexico had ‘absolutely no knowledge’ of English, despite having spent at least 360 hours learning it in secondary school (The Economist, 2015).
- 1 out of 7 Mexican teachers of English have no knowledge of English (The Economist, 2015).
- Many Mexican teachers of English lack the proficiency of the level they have been hired to teach (Calderón, 2015).
- 1 out of 2 secondary schools in Mexico does not have an English teacher, meanwhile 9 out of 10 primary schools do not have an English teacher (Calderón, 2015).
- One of the biggest barriers to bilateral collaboration in academic mobility is a lack of foreign language skills (Vassar & Barrett, 2014).
What is 100K Strong in the Americas?

The 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative is a public-private partnership of NAFSA and Partners of the Americas and led by the U.S. State Department. It aims to increase the number of U.S. students studying abroad in the western hemisphere to 100,000, namely in Latin America. Additionally, the initiative’s other goal is to receive 100,000 students from other countries in the western hemisphere to study in the US, all by the year 2020. Mexico has developed a complementary initiative called Proyecta 100,000. It also aims to send that number of Mexican students to study in the US and to receive 50,000 U.S. students in Mexico by 2018. As a result of initiatives such as these, there has been a positive trend among Latin American students studying in the United States. To learn more visit: 100K Strong in the Americas

English Learning in Mexico

According to a 2015 report by Mexicanos Primero, 4 out of 5 secondary school graduates in Mexico have no knowledge of English despite having taken 360 hours of classes. The students cannot be blamed when 1 out of every 7 English teachers in Mexico has no English skills and half of all secondary schools is lacking English teachers. This means that it is predominantly those students who come from households with higher incomes and can afford private schooling or tutoring that are excelling at English and gaining access to opportunities like studying or working abroad. This disparity has only caused social inequality in Mexico to grow. To learn more, you can read the Mexicanos Primero report here: Sorry: Learning English in Mexico

In-Service ESL Teacher Training

The US-Mexico Bi-lateral Forum on Higher Education, Innovation, and Research (FOBESII), which complements the 100K initiatives for student mobility by promoting the goals of and mitigating the challenges of these programs, is aware that the lack of English proficiency among Mexican students poses an obstacle to these goals. Currently, the only ESL teacher training that FOBESII promotes is to send teachers to intensive English courses at universities in the States, paid for by the Mexican Ministry of Education. FOBESII seems to have overlooked an already established good practice of in-service teacher training right in Mexico, in the form of the Inter-American Partnership for Education (IAPE) Intensive English Teacher Training (soon to be renamed Inspiring English Teachers). To learn more about IAPE’s in-service ESL teacher training programs, visit: IAPE Inspiring English Teachers
1. Access to ESL learning as Social Justice

Posted on June 13, 2016 by english4mexico

As international educators who support a policy of internationalization, I believe that it is our duty to move the discussion of international student mobility beyond the diversification that American universities are seeking among the countries of origin from which they are recruiting, and to begin extending this diversity plan to one of increased access for students of varied socio-economic classes from all countries. In my mind, the logical place to begin this work is with our neighbor to the south, Mexico. With the complementary efforts of the 100K Strong in the Americas, Proyecta 100,000, and the FOBESI initiatives all happening now, there is a clear push to bring more Mexican students to study in the US. A lack of English proficiency among Mexican students is a major
deterrent to this mobility. We must realize that the majority of those seizing the opportunity to study in the US are those who can afford to learn English through private means or those who are lucky enough to receive a grant to study English abroad. The general population of public school students in Mexico is being left behind when it comes to quality ESL education and is therefore being left out of the world of student mobility.

Despite efforts by the Mexican Ministry of Education to improve English language learning, there are just not enough skilled Mexican teachers of English in the public school system. Many of the ESL teachers that are working in the public schools have a lower level of English proficiency than they have been hired to teach. This does not just result in frustrated teachers and disadvantaged students; limiting quality English language learning to those who can afford it contributes to and exacerbates social inequality in Mexico. This issue is a threat to Mexican student mobility and the public policy supporting it, but more importantly it is also a question of social justice, of access to quality ESL education for all Mexican students.

One way to improve access to quality ESL education in Mexican public schools is through in-service teacher training in Mexico. Thousands of teachers in Mexico need to improve their English language knowledge and learn new pedagogical techniques that can be implemented in the classroom. It is unreasonable to think that sending a few hundred teachers to the US, which is FOBESII’s teacher training proposal, is an effective strategy to create the necessary changes. One program that is already on the ground in Mexico and has been named as a best practice for ESL teacher training is WorldTund’s IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training. To find out more about what this program is doing and why it is so effective, read my next blog entry entitled “IAPE for Mexico.”

I am calling on international educators to learn more about this issue and to ask for transformational change for Mexican teachers, their students, and the country that goes beyond gifting scholarships to a few thousand students over the next few years to study abroad, and instead begins to create a stronger partner in student mobility, research, and workforce development for decades to come.
2. IAPE in Mexico
Posted on July 14, 2016 by english4mexico

In my previous blog entry, I wrote about the terrible state of English language learning in Mexican public schools and the need for in-service ESL teacher training in Mexico. There is one transformational program in particular that I have worked with and would like to share with readers. You can learn more about the origin of the Inter-American Partnership for Education (IAPE) on this website or on the Worldfund website. What I want to write about here is the deep change that IAPE programs create for the Mexican teacher participants and their students.

There are two types of IAPE programs. One is the Teachers’ Collaborative (TC, but soon to be renamed the English Trainers Corps) for Mexican teachers who are proficient in English and receive training on how to use and teach pedagogical techniques to other Mexican teachers of English, both during workshops around Mexico and as assistant and master teachers in the IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training (soon to be renamed Inspiring English Teachers). This second program focuses on Mexican English teachers who need to improve their English language abilities while being given more pedagogical tools to employ in the classroom.

The amazing aspect of the IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training is that it is so much more than just a language immersion course. First of all, it currently takes place in Tlaxcala, in central Mexico. This means that the busy program participants, teachers who are trying to juggle their work, personal responsibilities, and family life, do not need to travel abroad to have an immersive experience. Next, they are taught by a combination of US-based staff and Mexican teachers who have been through the TC training. This is a winning combination, as US-based staff members provide reference for the cultural immersion and nuances of the English language, and the Mexican staff, in addition to providing the program with a sustainable supply of personnel, are powerful role models as they show the participants that the techniques they are learning are already in use by their compatriots. And then, of course, there is the pedagogical philosophy behind the training, which comes from the Rassias® Method of teaching. This method is rooted in a desire for teacher and student to connect on a human level and allows the learning to happen through a desire to communicate. Throughout the training, not only do the participants...
learn to break down barriers between themselves and their students in fun, meaningful, and dynamic ways, but they also connect with one another and create a network of teachers who will continue to share resources, success stories, best practices, and support for years to come. This networking is aided through the use of the IAPE Forum and on-going workshops once the intensive ten-day training part of the program is over.

For research purposes, I sent out surveys to Mexican ESL teachers who have passed through the IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training program to get a sense of how their training affected their teaching and their students, and whether they would recommend the program to other teachers. Here’s what some of them had to say...

“How has your ability to teach English to your students changed since your IAPE training?” Some of the responses included:

- I am more dynamic and human
- I have been more confident in giving my classes
- Now it’s more dynamic and fun
- I feel more confident speaking English. The time I speak English during the class has increased and also I encourage my students to do it.
- I now have more tools to work with my students. The IAPE course made me understand how important it is to speak in English to my students, no matter how difficult it could be at the beginning.

“What changes, if any, have you noticed in your student since your training?”

- They are motivated to learn English and they enjoy the class.
- They are more self-confident and motivated to learn English.
- They feel really connected to me.
- They are happy [2].
- My students are more willing to participate in class.
- [They are] a little more confident and enthusiastic working in the classroom.
- They show more interest in learning English.
- They must be more attentive...they like to speak English.
“What, in your opinion, is the best aspect of the IAPE training?”

- We must teach with our hearts and work with other teachers, spreading the knowledge.
- The community
- Personal relationships
- The emphasis on speaking English the very first day of classes
- Shared experiences

“Would you recommend IAPE to other ESL teachers? Why/why not?”

- [yes] It is effective
- [yes] It can change their teaching experience
- [yes] It is amazing! (3)
- [yes] It could help their students to be more motivated in the language
- [yes] It is a good opportunity to meet other English teachers and know other techniques to improve our teaching.
- [yes] It’s 100% successful when teaching with love and passion

The IAPE program has reached thousands of ESL teachers and touched over a million Mexican public school students who have shown an increase in language ability, motivation, and self-confidence. The IAPE program hopes to be able to double its efforts, but expansion is not an option now due to funding. Check out my next blog to see whose attention we need to attract in order to encourage more substantial funding for Worldfund’s IAPE programs.

How Does IAPE Work?
3. Action Plan
Posted on July 15, 2016 by english4mexico

The advocacy strategy aimed at increasing in-service ESL teacher training in Mexico has three steps, and just by reading this post, you are contributing to the first phase: Education! English4Mexico is trying to inform as many international educators as possible about English language learning in Mexico and how it affects current policies.

The next phase is Organization. Please share what you have learned with your colleagues and help them link to the social media platforms related to English4Mexico so that we can build a community of informed educators who are ready to take action.

Once our community has grown to strong enough numbers, English4Mexico will be ready for the third phase: Action. English4Mexico will make it easy for interested parties to contact influential stakeholders who can help increase the visibility of the IAPE programs to important potential funders.

If you are passionate about access to education, internationalization, English language learning, student mobility, education policy, strengthening ties between the US and Mexico, or social justice, then this community is right for you. Drop a comment, an email, a Facebook message, or a tweet to let English4Mexico know if you want to be even more involved in this strategy.
Thank you!

Appendix B

English4Mexico Facebook Page
Appendix C

English 4 Mexico Twitter Page

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English4Mexico

Advocating for in-service ESL teacher training in Mexico

United States

english4mexico.wordpress.com

Joined June 2016

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English4Mexico wants to build a community of international educators to help increase in-service ESL teacher training in Mexico. Join us!
Appendix D

Online survey questions and answers as given by 21 former IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training program participants.

**Question 1: What city or town do you teach in?**

a. Tuxtla Gutierrez
b. Nicolas Romero, Mexico State
c. Atlapexco, Hidalgo
d. Valle de Chalco
e. Cuautitlan Izcalli, Mexico State
f. Texcoco, Mexico State
g. San Pedro Coahuila
h. Actopan, Hidalgo
i. Calpulalpan Tlaxcala
j. Puebla
k. Durango
l. Medellin de Braco, Veracruz
m. Teocelo, Veracruz
n. Tlaxcala, Mexico
o. Guadalajara
p. Pinos, Zacatecas
q. Mexico City
r. Perote, Vera Cruz
s. Durango
t. Cuapancingo
u. Chiapas

[Ten different states of Mexico were represented by these 21 teachers.]

Question 2: What grade levels do you teach?

a. Primary or Secondary (Summer courses)
b. I teach beginners, intermediate, and advanced
c. From first to fifth semester at high school
d. High school
e. 1 & 2 secondary school
f. Preschool
g. Secondary
h. I usually teach to 4th and 5th semesters. Levels IV and V respectively.
i. Primary School
j. High school
k. From A1 to B2 students from all ages
l. junior high school
m. 1st and 3rd grade
n. Elementary School 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th and 6th
o. University
p. High School

q. High School

r. 1st and 2nd grade in secondary school

s. A1 to B1 level from common European framework

t. Third in Secondary School

u. Junior High School

[Grade levels taught ranged from 1st grade to university level.]

**Question 3: How long have you been teaching English?**

a. 1 year

b. I have been teaching for almost 25 years

c. I've been a teacher for ten years

d. 9 years

e. 15 years

f. 2 years

g. 6 years

h. I've been teaching English for more than 15 years

i. 10 years

j. 10 years

k. over 6 years

l. five years [ago]

m. over 15 years
n. 4 years
o. 16 years
p. 25 years [ago]
q. 20 years
r. 7 years
s. 10 years
t. I have thirty three years as a professor
u. 7 years

[The average number of years these teachers have been teaching English is 12.]

Question 4: How many students do you teach per year?

a. 25 – 35
b. In this moment I have 170 students
c. Around 600 students.
d. 45
e. about 480
f. 400
g. Around 150
h. Approximately 500 students
i. 300
j. 200 students per year
k. Around 200
1. I have 9 groups with 35 students

m. 300

n. 150

o. 150

p. About 250

q. 300

r. 180

s. 150

t. 20, more or less

u. 250

[The average number of students these teachers reach each year was 245.]

Question 5: When did you participate in the 10-day IAPE training?

a. 8 months ago

b. Last year From October 5 to 15, 2015

c. On October 2014.

d. January 2015

e. two years ago

f. In October, 2015.

f. In 2013

h. I participated on Feb. 2014 (From Feb. 10th to 20th)

i. 2013
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j. in May 2012

k. in 2014

l. February 2016

m. February 2016

n. 2013

o. 2013

p. Last year

q. February 2016

r. February 2016

s. About 2 years ago

t. I took my course on January, 2014

u. 2010

Breakdown of how many surveyed participated in which years:

2016: 4

2015: 5

2014: 6

2013: 4

2012: 1

2010: 1

Question 6: How has your ability to teach English to your students changed since your IAPE training?
a. It has increased significantly

b. In my opinion I improve a lot my teaching. It was an amazing course.

c. It has changed a lot because now I have more tools to work with my students, and the IAPE course made me understand how important is to speak in English to my students, no matter how difficult it could be at the beginning.

d. A lot

e. I am more active in class, including more friendly activities and I try to include drills whenever it is possible.

f. I consider after my IAPE training I feel more confident speaking English. The time I speak English during the class has increased and also I encourage my students to do it.

g. Now it is more dynamic and fun

h. It's changed meaningfully. Especially because I really try to apply IAPE techniques despite adversities.

i. It has improved very much

j. Definitely I have been more confident giving my classes

k. I've been able to get students to produce the language in a shorter amount of time

l. I think it was a wonderful experience. I'm a new teacher with a lot of resources for teaching.
m. It has improved because my classes are more active and are more focused on practicing in the classroom

n. IAPE change all my class. The method is incredible.

o. I am more dynamic and human

p. I am better since those days

q. It has improved a lot!!!

r. I feel more comfortable and I have more abilities than I had before my IAPE training

s. It has improved

t. I'm sure because techniques are funny.

u. A lot

**Question 7: What changes, if any, have you noticed in your students since your training?**

a. More interest in classes due the activities and they feel more encouraged to participate.

b. Well, they are more confident in speaking.

c. They show more interest in the subject.

d. They have loved my classes

e. They are more aware of what is happening in my class, they don't want to miss a session, they are more willing to help classmates.
f. During the classes they must be more attentive because in any time I can start to drill. Even they are very young learners they like to speak in English.

g. They show more interest in learning English.

h. I've noticed they like to see the teacher act out. Drilling calls their attention a lot. I like to take this into account because it helps me to keep working with techniques.

i. They are more happy.

j. A little more confident and enthusiastic working in the classroom

k. Their attitude to the class

l. Rassias techniques increased the participation in class, and I see a better behavior.

m. It has decreased my teacher talking time, I am less stressed and my students are more willing to participate in class, to enticing some of them.

n. They are happy.

o. They feel really connected to me.

p. They are more motivated.

q. They are more self confident and motivated to learn English.

r. They are more motivated to learn English and they enjoy the class.

s. They are motivated.

t. I think, they have lost fear, and they are speaking.

u. We practiced more drills and speaking activities.
These answers reflect an increase in motivation, participation, confidence, and happiness among their students.

**Question 8: What, in your opinion, is the best aspect of the IAPE training?**

a. The motivation that the staff brings you

b. First of all, the humanity and the way they teach us, in order to improve ourselves

c. That we share experiences with other teachers from other states, and for teachers like me who hasn't had the opportunity to travel abroad, we could share with teachers from other countries.

d. Everything

e. IAPE training made me feel more secure of what I was and am doing.

   First, it is very important the collaborative work, the memorizing without noticing and having fun when teaching.

f. There are many aspects I liked. But one of them or the main for me was that Instructors were really patient and the program is progressive from easy to difficult.

g. The total immersion to the language and the techniques

h. I think teacher's sensitization through the Rassias Method and culture.

i. Perhaps the drillings

j. Everything, the methodology and techniques are very good and funny.

k. The personal relationships
l. Share experiences

m. The emphasis on speaking English since the very first day of classes

n. Drillings

o. The community

p. The didactic they gave us

q. Everything!

r. The best aspect that I consider that is the best in IAPE is that we must teach with our hearts and work with other teachers, spreading the knowledge. Also the activities that Rassias method has are very dynamic.

s. The tips we received to implement techniques to teach better

t. Its method- attractive, amazing.

u. The master teachers were excellent.

Question 9: Would you recommend IAPE to other ESL teachers? Why/ why not?

a. It is motivating and good for teachers who are getting tired of the same methods.

b. Yes, of course. It is an amazing experience.

c. Absolutely, because there we learn how important is the communicative focus.

d. Yes
e. Definitely, because it is a training that has changed my way of teaching and all strategies, activities and drills are effective when using them properly in my class. I have had just positive experiences so, it is 100 % successful when teaching with love and passion.

f. Yes, absolutely. Because is a good opportunity to meet another English teacher and know other techniques to improve our teaching.

g. Yes, because I think they could also help students to be more motivated in the language.

h. Yes, I would. Because the IAPE program provides important experiences to improve our teaching and student's learning.

i. Yes. It's an amazing experience.

j. Of course!! it is an amazing experience. It is always in my mind. IAPE helped me to improve my skills to teach English.

k. Totally, it's a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

l. Yes, of course! Because it can change their teaching experience!

m. Of course, because it’s effective.

n. I recommend, because it facilitates the process of learning.

o. Yes, it is a lifetime experience.

p. Obviously I would do it, and I am doing it, why? Because they gave you all to be a best person. The pedagogy, the didactic, and the psychology.

q. Yes, of course!
r. Yes I am recommending the IAPE to other teachers. Also I did with my mentor a workshop with the objective to share the Rassias method to other teachers in the zone that I work.

s. I would because you get useful methods and strategies that can help teach better.

t. Yes, I’d like to. They can change their styles of teaching.

u. Yes, of course. I improved my English.

Question 10: How convenient were the duration and location of the IAPE training program for you? Why?

a. It was quite convenient, the place was comfortable and very calm.

b. Well, the duration was ok but the place was a little bit mysterious for me.

c. The course was well structured and well run by the trainers and the ten days of only English were the most intensive English course I ever had. My IAPE course was in Tlaxcala, which is almost eight hours from my hometown but it worth it.

d. Good

e. It was a great location, big rooms, quiet and peaceful town and place, nice bedrooms (I did not need more space) and good facilities. I enjoy the 10 days program however I wanted to continue my training for at least 10 more days!!!!!
f. When the training finished, I thought it was a lot of information in a short period of time, but a few months later I have changed my mind. The duration of the program has an objective that does not finish after ten days, the training continues for all our lives if we want.

g. It was far from my home but I found it very interesting to know a place I hadn’t been before.

h. I didn't have problem with duration and location of the IAPE training program because it's part of my job.

i. It was ok. For me it was too intensive.

j. It was no enough. It was necessary more duration to acquire more experience, techniques.

k. Very convenient. Although it was a rather long trip from Durango to Tlaxcala, I didn't have to pay for my transportation there.

l. Both were excellent!

m. Very convenient, we could focus on the program, the retreat/immersion part was a key to improved everybody's communicative skills.

n. It was ok.

o. It was great, the only thing is there are too many hours, is tiring!

p. The best, although more days would have been better.

q. It was ok, even though it was extremely cold!
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r. It was very convenient, because the city is close to my state, therefore, the location was comfortable and very peaceful and help to immerse in the program. The duration was okay. It was 15 days and I really enjoyed it.

s. It was excellent.

t. A friend sent me the invitation, then I was lucky and took this wonderful Method.

u. It was nice but heavy because we stay there 21 days.

[As perhaps the only in-person, in-service teacher intensive ESL teacher training in Mexico, it is important to understand how convenience may factor into a teacher’s ability to participate.]

Question 11: How able, on a scale of 0-5 (0 being not at all able, 5 being completely able with passport, family responsibilities, etc.) would you be to attend a 4-6 week training in the U.S. during the summer if you were paid for it by SEP? Please explain your answer.

a. Yes, I would like to keep developing my skills as a teacher.

b. Yes. I would. It is one of my dreams.

c. Yes, of course.

d. 5

e. 5 = I have my passport, USA visa and I am sure I have no problems to get permission from my SEIEM-SEP authorities.
f. I would be able in a scale of 5 (completely able). I consider that as an English teacher my goal is to motivate my students to learn the English language, but to achieve this I need to improve my English level. In our country we can learn the English language, but in an English spoken country we do not learn the English language we live the "English Language"

g. Maybe a 3 because I don’t have passport.

h. I'm able to attend a 4-6 week training in the U.S. during the summer on a scale of 3 because I don't have passport. My family is aware of my commitment with work wherever it takes place. Of course I'll be more than glad to receive a training paid by SEP.

i. 5. It will be a very big opportunity.

j. I would give 5. Because It would be an extraordinary opportunity for me to learn English, and more techniques.

k. 4. I'd just need to get my passport.

l. Of course 5. After the training course I returned to home very incentivaded.

m. 5 very able. I am always eager to participate in English teaching trainings. My family fully supports my decisions of professional development.

n. 5. For me my students always gonna be the first because I love them. For me the education is the main way to change the world.

o. 5
p. 5. I would love to do it.

q. Super able. I would make all the arrangements to go and be trained in there.

r. My answer is 5. Because I need to know the complete program. In Tlaxcala the teachers taught me 30 techniques and they told me that there are more and in Hanover, other teachers will teach me the rest of them. So I would be willing to participate between 4-6 week training in U.S during the summer. [Here the participant assumed the question referred to the IAPE Teacher’s Collaborative program in Hanover, NH which is also just 10 days]

s. I would love it but I am not eligible for my double citizenship status.

t. 5. I’d love to train me six weeks in USA, of course if SEP pay me, because I don't have much money to cost my staying.

u. 3. I receive courses in the summer too.

[This question may have been more appropriate for teachers who had not already been through a positive training.]

Question 12: Have you ever had difficulty receiving payment from the SEP? If yes, please explain.

a. Sometimes the payment is delayed.

b. No, I haven’t.

c. No, I haven’t yet.

d. No.
e. No, never.
f. No, never.
g. No.
h. No, I haven’t.
i. Yes. I am in an external program PNIEB so it depends on the politics in every state of Mexico.
j. I don’t know. Honestly I have never been interested to acquire payments.
k. I haven’t.
l. No, I did not.
m. Never.

n. Yes, they paid me each half-year when I was in PNIEB- in English NEPBE (national English program in basic education).
o. No.
p. No, when I was in IAPE Tlaxcala they were very considerate.
q. No, never.

r. They don’t pay on time...And they put many difficulties with the tickets.
s. No.
t. No, I haven’t.

u. Yes, when I worked to the NEPBE.

[One out of four of those surveyed said that they had trouble receiving payment from the SEP. This question was asked because many teachers cannot afford trainings unless they]
are paid for by the SEP. Some 4-6 week trainings in the US have been cancelled because of a delay of payment by the SEP.]

Question 13: There are online courses for ESL teachers at the university level that require: a) a TOEFL score of 525 (iBT =70, Cambridge=FCE, IELTS=5.0) or higher b) reliable, high speed internet 4-5 times a week c) 8-10 hours a week of work for ten weeks? Would this interest you? Do you currently qualify for these three requirements? (please be specific)

a. Yes, but in a near future.

b. Yes I would like to improve my English.

c. Yes, I really like to teach English and I would like to be a better teacher for my students.

d. Yes.

e. Yes, I am interested. I qualify for b & c. I have the FCE, so maybe I am ready for “a”.

f. Yes, I would be interested in any available English course. I have taken two tests to check my English level (TOIC, TKT YL) but the TOEFL I have not taken, according with the scores of these tests perhaps are equivalent with 525 points, but, actually I`m not sure. In the other hand, to the others requirements I am qualified due to I have taken 3 online courses.

g. Yes, I’m interested but I may not qualify because of the time. I have very busy weeks.
h. Yes, I would. I’m interested.

i. Yes. I recently did my TOEFL ITP exam. I scored 563.

j. I don’t think so, because I don’t have a good level of English.

k. Totally, I do qualify for this by having a score of 600 points in TOEFL and all the other requirements.

l. option b and c; because is comfortable

m. I qualify for all of those requirements.

n. No.

o. Teacher’s training course.

p. I want ten weeks of English in order to get the CAE, I now have FCE B2.

q. Yes, I do. I’m interested in it.

r. It interests me, and I just need to do the TOEFL. But I already paid for the exam, So if have the punctuation I would like to take the online course.

s. I cover all aspects. Although my IELTS and TOEFL have experienced, I work on internet regularly and I work 35 hours a week.

t. B) This form is adapted my duties.

u. Yes, but I only have 507 TOEFL points.

[This question was not understood by all who answered. This question was in reference to one of the program proposals made by FOBESII which was later scratched in favor of intensive courses in the US. Also, none of these participants would have been eligible before their IAPE training as they all had TOEFL levels below 500 at the time.]
Question 14: If you had the option of having an American scholar in your classroom to help work with students of different language levels, do you think you would want that? Do you think it would aid or impede your own teaching?

a. Not now, because I am still finishing my degree and I am not working as a formal English teacher.

b. Yes I would like to have this experience because this could help my students to listen another tone of voice and I think my students could be more interested in the language.

c. Yes, It would be good for me and for the students.

d. Yes.

e. I already had two USA citizens in my class, both or them were really willing to help me when I asked for help and they were sharing with their classmates. I asked them when talking about USA culture, as well as other doubts about pronunciation or common phrases or expressions. I learned a lot from them.

f. Yes, I would want it. That would be great. I consider is a great opportunity for me as a teacher I would be the first in learn and take advantage of having a native speaker in my classes, beside for the students would be also the opportunity to be in touch with the idiom in a real situation.
g. I think it's a good idea but my students could feel stressed and confused on having someone else in class.

h. It would be a great experience to have an American scholar in my classroom. It would motivate student's learning and consciousness about Second Language Acquisition.

i. Yes, I will want it, and I think it helps me very much in my teaching.

j. I think that it would be an interesting experience not only for my students to learn English and develop the 4 skills of English and also for the teacher.

k. I have had Americans in my classes. At the beginning it is difficult for them to adapt, but once you help them to do so, they help making the class more fluent.

l. Yes, I would. It will be amazing!

m. I think it would help in my classes because students would feel compelled to communicate in English with this person.

n. If this happened I would be happy.

o. It would be great, it would help me a lot with students.

p. It would be great for me to have an American scholar in my classroom.

    That would help me so much and that would be for me a big aid to teach.

q. It would help a lot!
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r. I think that having an American scholar would be helpful because the students will feel closer to the culture. And I think they will be more motivate it.

s. I think it would because we become used to routines also we don’t know if we are doing it right.

t. I think my knowledge are enough for aiding other person, especially in Spanish, my mother language, and English, too.

u. It could be great for me and my students.

[Almost all of the participants were enthusiastic about the idea of a U.S. scholar helping in their classroom. This is a program that can work in addition to training, as U.S. Garcia-Robles scholars are not trained to or permitted to train teachers.]

Question 15: Do you give permission for me to present your answers to an organization that has the potential to support IAPE, using a pseudonym and the state where you teach?

All participants answered “yes”.

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Appendix E

Interview questions for IAPE Director Jim Citron and IAPE Follow-up Coordinator Leslie Alvarado.

1. What effect has funding had on the ability of IAPE to operate as planned?

2. What is the importance of recognition among partners such as NAFSA, EducationUSA, COMEX, CONTACYT, etc. for promoting/funding IAPE?

3. Why has some of the Teacher’s Collaborative training moved to Mexico (when previously it was all in Hanover, NH)?

4. If funding were not an issue, how many IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training Programs would there be per year? Is expansion a goal?

1. What is the typical profile of a IAPE Intensive English Teacher Training Participant?

2. How is access to the Internet a factor in working with the participants?