

## PRELIM 2

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# Ecuador: UNAE-PINE (National University of Education) with Peartree Languages

August 2022

# Project background

Partnership overview		
<b>Course overview</b>	<b>ETA partner</b>	National University of Education, Ecuador (UNAE-PINE)
	<b>UKI partner</b>	Peartree Languages
	<b>Course length</b>	8 weeks
	<b>Number of groups/cohorts</b>	3 groups (Dragon, Puffin, Cardiff), 1 cohort
<b>Participant profile</b>	<b>Total number of CPs</b>	33 enrolled, 29 completed
	<b>Language level(s)</b>	A2 – C1
	<b>CPs' teaching context</b>	Primary school to pre-university high school teachers of English (students aged 6 – 18)
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	<b>Synchronous platforms used</b>	Zoom
	<b>Synchronous session length</b>	1.5 hours (lessons) 45 minutes (EFB) 1.5 hours (webinars)
	<b>Synchronous session frequency</b>	2 sessions per week (24 hours live lessons per CP, overall course) EFB – Weekly (8 sessions in total) Webinars – bi-monthly, 4 in total
	<b>Asynchronous workload</b>	1.5 hours per week per CP
<b>Course content</b>	<b>Language development focus</b>	Building confidence to operate in English in the classroom – productive skills, particularly speaking
	<b>Methodology focus</b>	Communicative language teaching modelling methodologies and encouraging reflection to apply learning in own teaching context
	<b>Technology focus</b>	Introducing free EFL digital tools, and application of affordances to the low-tech classroom

## Description of the partners

The National University of Education (UNAE) in Ecuador seeks to transform and innovate education not only from the academic perspective, but also by valuing our multicultural richness. The school of Pedagogy of National and Foreign languages (PINE) strengthens the UNAE mission by creating outreach programs for people who do not have easy access to education in Educational Zone 6.

Peartree Languages (PL) is a private language academy in Cardiff, South Wales, established in 2005, accredited by the British Council and members of English UK since 2010. Peartree was partnered with Palestine as part of the PRELIM 1 project and in December 2021 gained a UK – Indonesia Digital Innovation Grant from the British Council to deliver an online teacher development programme for up to 200 teachers in 2022. As we continue to navigate the post-pandemic context for UK EFL, we strive to continue to engage with our learning community, to build new relationships and diversify our course offerings.

## Key features of the context

UNAE-PINE was officially mandated by the local education authority to encourage participation in the project due to an identified gap in teacher English language level and confidence. It is a requirement for teachers of English in Ecuador to attain CEFR level B2. CPs were permitted to attend sessions during working hours and attendance was strictly monitored.

A pre-course questionnaire and needs analysis was designed by Peartree Languages and initially 34 CPs expressed an interest. Dropouts (5 post-induction) were due to live lesson clashes with the regular school timetable. No issues in connectivity were identified by the CPs, and UNAE-PINE submitted a successful application to receive a further connectivity grant from the British Council.


In terms of demographics, all CPs spoke Spanish as a first language, the CPs came from 8 towns, 17% were male, 83% were female, post-qualification service ranged from 2 years to 21 years and 57% had not taken any CPD courses in the last five years.

## Outline of the course and rationale


Course element	Design Principle
<u>Live lessons</u>	Interactive input to build CP productive skills, increase knowledge, introduce, and model a range of methodologies and increase confidence to use English.
<u>Asynchronous tasks (OATTs – Online Asynchronous Tasks for Teachers)</u>	Selection of level appropriate additional material to support learning in live lessons.
<u>CP Self-reflections</u> <i>Weekly for Puffin and Castle groups</i> <i>Mid-course for Dragon group</i>	Structured opportunity to develop reflective practice.
<u>English for Breakfast (EFB)</u> Weekly, 45-minute whole group live tutorial delivered by Peartree Languages	Opportunity for CPs to submit questions in advance or pose questions ad-hoc on any area of English language teaching or learning on which they required additional support, or to recap any unclear element of live lessons / OATTs.

<p>Academic Manager following an interactive, dynamic format supported by session recordings and companion slides</p>	
<p><u>Master-trainer webinars</u> Delivered by internal and external teacher training experts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing creative thinking and collaborative practice in the teenage classroom</li> <li>2. Word stress and intonation</li> <li>3. Building classroom confidence</li> <li>4. Top tips for vocabulary teaching success</li> </ol>	<p>Topics based on plugging knowledge / skills gaps identified by CPs in needs analysis, recommendations from ETA and consultation with Peartree Languages tutors.</p>
<p><u>Final presentation</u> 10-minute final presentation on a topic of professional or personal interest in the final week of the course.</p>	<p>Opportunity to teach language of presentation delivery, peer-reviewing, constructive criticism and giving opinions in addition to CPs taking a deep dive into a subject of personal interest using the English language and receiving feedback.</p>
<p><u>Monitoring and Evaluation</u> Weekly PL teacher meeting lead by Curriculum Supervisor, Academic Manager or Centre Manager.</p> <p>CP end of course questionnaire</p> <p>CP end of course individualised report</p> <p><i>Specific comments on: Verbal presentation, self-reflection tasks, confidence developed, even better if..., performance and participation (See Fig. 1)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information and idea sharing</li> <li>- Check on administrative procedures / CP connectivity</li>   <li>- Measure learning outcomes</li>   <li>- Provide CPs with a written record of areas of improvement and accomplishment</li>   <li>- Collaborative approach to internal Academic Management</li>   <li>- Formal induction to present the course</li> </ul>

PL teacher formal peer observation schedule	- UNAE-PINE Opening Ceremony to socialise the course to the local education authorities / wider University community
General meetings	- Formal closing ceremony, including student of the course prizes



<b>PRELIM II English Language and Teacher Development Course 2022</b> XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX <b>Course dates: 01/02/2022 - 24/03/2022</b> <b>Class group: Dragon</b>	
<b>Course outline</b> <b>Week 1- Introductions and Getting to Know People</b> Focus: Icebreakers, Asking questions - STAR activity, Classroom contracts <b>Week 2 - Education around the world</b> Focus: Dis/agreeing, Giving opinions, Reading practice, Comparatives & superlatives <b>Week 3 - Listening / Reading skills</b> Focus: Lesson plan language , Teaching receptive skills, Task design for a video clip <b>Week 4 -Speaking / Listening skills</b> Focus: Pronunciation, Listening: SVEN story, Past tenses, Fluency practice <b>Week 5 - Combining all 4 skills through story based lessons (Storytelling)</b> Focus: My strange / scary experience, Past Tense revision, fluency & writing <b>Week 6 - Pronunciation &amp; Teaching with music and song</b> Focus: Using music & song in English language lessons, Parts of the body <b>Week 7 - Active v Passive &amp; Language for Presentations</b> Focus: The fox and the crow active vs passive, Presentation tips and tricks <b>Week 8 - Presentations</b> Focus: Speaking, Listening, Peer feedback, Fluency practice.	
<b>Verbal Presentation</b> <b>Comments:</b> You successfully delivered an interesting presentation using some of the useful presentation language we covered. Your slides were personal and colourful and very emotional for everyone! The whole class had questions or comments about pets which was lovely to hear and I was so	<b>Self-Reflection Tasks</b> <b>Comments:</b> You have talked about losing your fear and being inspired by the PRELIM course and I know you will continue to take the ideas you have learned into your own lessons to inspire your students too :).



proud of you for making such a meaningful contribution to the Dragon class.	
<b>Overall Comments</b> <b>Confidence Developed</b> The PRELIM course has given you the opportunity to use your spoken English a lot more, XXXX, and it's been great to see your confidence developing as you became more comfortable asking questions. You were always such an excellent participant in the breakout rooms, encouraging your classmates to make the most of every opportunity to speak in English! You worked really hard for the whole 8 weeks and it truly has been my pleasure to work with you. I hope you stay in touch with me and continue to 'meet' either in real life or in a Zoom room with your other teaching colleagues in the PRELIM community in the future. I wish you all the best :). <b>Even better if...</b> You can motivate yourself so that your learners also feel like your lessons are fun and useful at the same time. Step outside your comfort zone and try a lesson with music or a song or a story with pictures! <b>Performance and overall participation</b> You attended all of the Dragon sessions and completed all of the homework tasks. You fully participated throughout the whole course, interacting really well with your classmates in breakout rooms, verbally in the main room and also making use of the chatbox. Your final presentation was absolutely wonderful - congratulations, XXXX!	
<b>Attendance</b> Online classes: 100% Webinars: 100% English for Breakfast: Always	<b>Pratim Course Tutor</b> Date:

Figure 1. Sample End of Course Report

# Project findings

## Working in partnership

Through a range of communication channels communication was regular and constructive. The ETA commented on several occasions that the weekly written feedback proved to be a concise and useful snapshot the course evolution. Training was organised and delivered by UNAE-PINE to familiarise and support course tutors in the use of Moodle as an asynchronous learning tool.

UNAE-PINE worked continually to liaise with the local authorities from the Zone 6 Ministry of Education to ensure the CPs were given the correct permissions to attend the live lessons and to achieve official recognition for the programme. Thanks to our partner's organised approach and constant contact with

CPs, administration required on our side in terms of managing the CPs was minimal, allowing us to focus exclusively on delivering the course and the materials.

Peartree Languages presented UNAE-PINE with our post-course recommendations for developing a local CoP in our end of course meeting and we look forward to a long-term relationship of educational collaboration and friendship.

A further highlight of PRELIM 2 for us was the opportunity to collaborate with another UK-based PRELIM course provider, CELT, who we approached with the suggestion of 'gusting' on each other's PRELIM 2 courses to further strengthen this connection locally and to develop our own professional experience to the benefit of the CPs on our respective projects.

Neil Harris (CELT) attended the PL / UNAE-PINE opening ceremony and later delivered a guest master-trainer webinar on our course, while Nicky Partridge (PL), provided a guest master-trainer webinar on the CELT-VietTesol project.

An opportunity to work more closely on a good-will basis with one other UK based organisation was a very fruitful extension to the 'partnered' element of the project as it provided a deeper dive into another project's course design and CP learning outcomes.

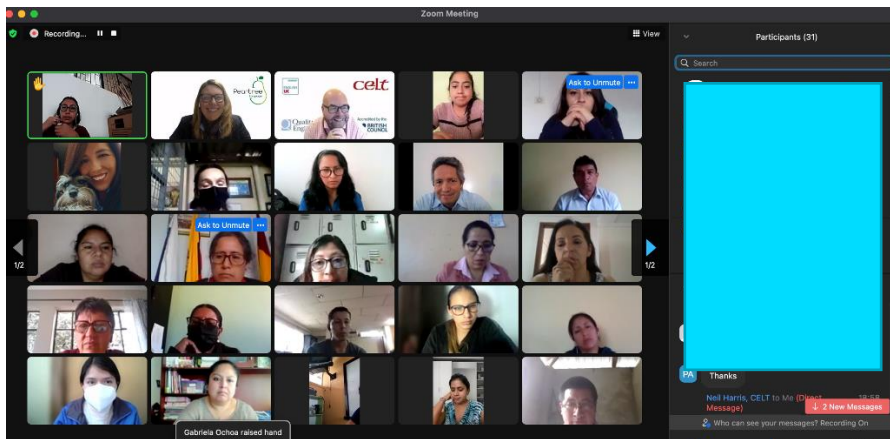


Figure 2. Neil Harris - Top Tips for Vocabulary Teaching Success Webinar

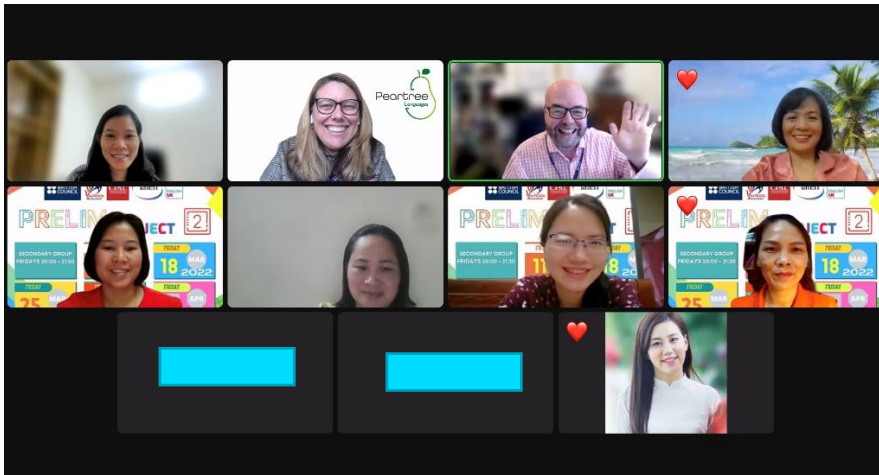


Figure 3. Nicky Partridge – How to encourage 'out of the box' thinking, speaking and collaboration among teenagers - in English! Reciprocal webinar for CELT/VietTesol PRELIM 2 Partnership.

## Working with the CPs

A strong learning point from PRELIM 1 was the need to establish clear and controlled communication channels with CP expectations managed from the first engagement. Clear procedures were established for reporting absence, accessing support between sessions, and the uploading of asynchronous tasks as well the funnelling of this information back to course tutors, which significantly reduced time-consuming ad-hoc messaging. It was decided that additional social media channels would be an unnecessary information overload.

CP engagement was high throughout all aspects of the course. CPs were formally required to complete three feedback forms. Attendance to pass the course was 80% and with few exceptions (where CPs watched session recordings and completed additional self-reflection tasks), all CPs graduated with notably 100% class attendance in the A2/B1 group (Dragon). Attendance in the optional English for Breakfast session (which took place at 7am Ecuador time), was consistently around two-thirds of all CPs, demonstrating commitment. All course tutors commented on the constructive, enthusiastic, positive, and cooperative attitude of the CPs.

The content-rich timetable, with clear, but concise, opportunities for out-of-hours interactions was appreciated by CPs. We saw good levels of engagement across the whole cohort, and we will adopt this approach in future, similar projects.

## Designing/delivering the course

The initial request of UNA-E-PINE was to design a content-heavy language course, with as many hours of live input as possible to assist CPs to reach an overall, certified level of B2.

A process of negotiation resulted in a scheme of work based on our experience of achievable outcomes gained from PRELIM 1, CP stated needs and a certifiable high number of input hours. Asynchronous course elements would be uploaded to Moodle for future cascading / capacity building in country. Conducting this negotiation to the satisfaction of all stakeholders and upskilling course tutors in the use of Moodle was an informative learning curve for us.

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Broadly speaking all classes followed a similar workflow, with discretion used by individual course tutor to adapt suggested materials to the level and emerging needs of the group. The initial needs analysis was shared with tutors, along with the mid-point feedback to allow for tweaks to be made to content in the second half of the course. We learned that the scheme of work needed to be fully negotiable to allow for differing group paces, requiring skilled and experienced course tutors who can respond reactively and positively to change.

On the whole lesson delivery was extremely well managed. In the final feedback 100% of CPs agreed with the choice of Zoom as the chosen platform for live lessons and tutors ultimately found the Moodle platform a boon. As one tutor commented: *“I found Moodle most useful for assignments and giving feedback on weekly reflections and a good place to store resources”*

## Course outcomes

It was clear from CP submitted self-reflections, from tutor feedback and CP mid- / post course comments that teacher confidence to operate in English in the classroom, and pedagogical knowledge, was greatly improved through the mixed-method approach of the course. Quantitatively, in data from the final CP feedback questionnaire, 71%, 90% and 67% of CPs believed their improvement to be ‘excellent’ in development of own teacher toolkit, language skills acquired and own confidence to use English in the classroom, respectively. In qualitative terms, from the same feedback, one CP noted: *“The PRELIM 2 Course was the best experience during my professional preparation. Thanks so much.”* A CP-produced [clip](#) sharing reflections, learning obtained and gratitude for the PRELIM 2 course encapsulates the multiple positive outcomes of this course.

Regarding long term capacity building, as Heidi Matute, Teacher-Investigator and representative of UNAE-PINE concludes: *“PRELIM 2 attended to 250 teachers indirectly around the Educational Zone 6, particularly in the remote Amazon region. This would not have been possible without the help of local authorities from the Ministry of Education. Working with PRELIM 2 was successful, teachers learnt fresh methodologies and feel more confident to use the English language in their classroom.”*



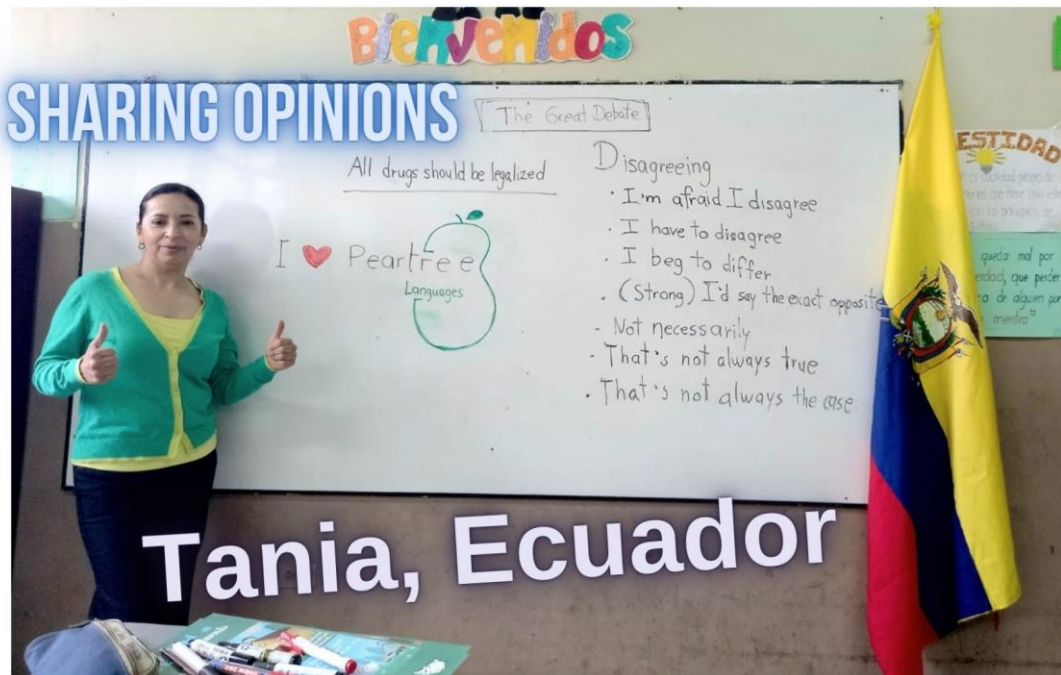


Figure 9. Applying learning to the local teaching context.

At PL, working with a team of very experienced course tutors provided an excellent in-house CPD opportunity, through a round of official peer observations. This was fully embraced and end of course tutor feedback universally indicated that this was one of the (many) personal highlights of being involved in the PRELIM project. One tutor commented: *“Having peer assessment is great as it is less stressful being assessed by another fellow teacher rather than a teacher trainer or academic head and it feels much more supportive in nature.”* Another added: *“I really enjoyed working on PRELIM 2. I think the main aims of building peer support networks and building confidence are so interesting. It’s a rewarding course and really enjoyable to work on.”*

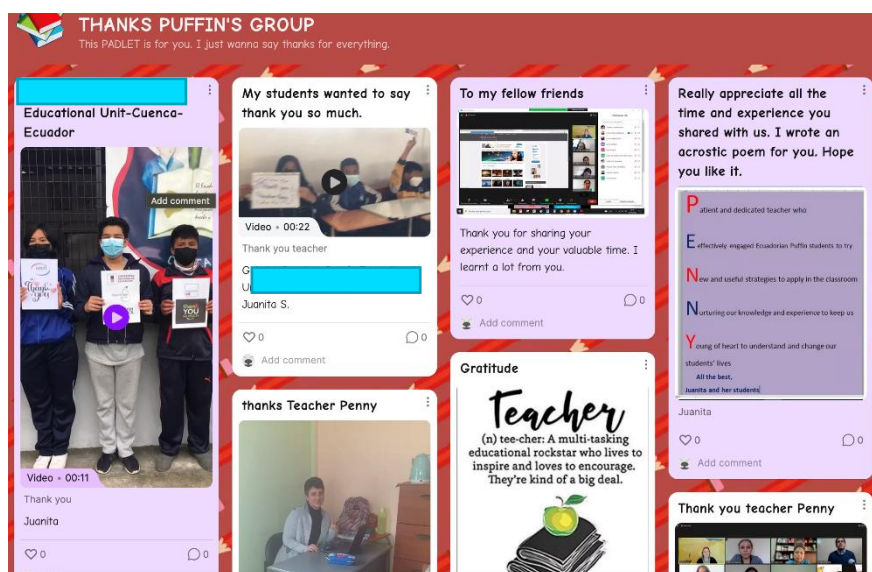


Figure 10. Snapshot of a digital ‘Thank You’ card, designed using a modelled online teaching tool, Padlet.

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While it is imperative to underpin the course with a structured, but flexible scheme of work, the English for Breakfast and webinar elements of our course, which were dynamic and reactive in nature, both in terms of topics chosen and delivery style, were highly appreciated by the CPs and, context permitting, we would employ this approach to a greater extent into future courses.

#### *Webinar and English for Breakfast (EFB) CP feedback*

*“All webinar were so good. I learnt so much with them. Webinar 2 (Pronunciation) for me was the most interesting, funny and the teacher was so good. Webinar 1 (Out of the Box Thinking) it so good too. I had to match this one because there is not an option that say ALL WEBINARS ARE GOOD.”*

*“The webinars were about interesting topics. the information was specific and useful.”*

*“I think English breakfast were interesting and important for us. Good formats, good, interesting and important information. The most important thing of every class is that they were so practical, dynamis and funny.”*

*“Very interesting (EFB), and the most important was that the teacher always gave us the confidence to say something and to practice our pronunciation. I learned a lot of things from him, like grammar topics or how to correctly pronounce the verbs in the past tense and how to teach the students this pronunciation.”*

Towards the end of the course CPs were returning to the face-to-face classroom and some were seeking guidance on how to apply the affordances of online learning tools acquired on the PRELIM course to the low-tech, or no-tech physical learning environment. Due to time constraints, we were not able to explore this, however, as the world returns to presential learning, the mastering of this reversal for many teachers will be an area of continuing CPD.