



THE USE OF TEDDY BEARS TO HELP DEVELOP INTERPERSONAL CONTEXT TO PROMOTE INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

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Abstract: *This article is based on the findings of using a teddy bear as a tool to provide a way of increasing pupils' motivation toward learning by means of using a stuffed animal such as a teddy bear named Ken Bear and relating it to learning a L2. It was developed in hopes to improve not only the motivation of students but give a positive backwash on the institution itself by giving the school a positive interpersonal context. Voluntary students participated in this project, which consisted of taking care of a teddy bear as a friend or playmate for a day or a few days. At the end of such time, the students would write a short entry into the bear's diary in English if possible, if not, in Spanish or just a picture with a few words. Results indicated that this project was a huge success based on the opinions of students, teachers and parents.*

Key words: TOY-TEDDY BEAR/ INTRINSIC MOTIVATION/ INTERPERSONAL RELATION/ SECURITY OBJECT/ STIMULUS/

Resumen: *El siguiente artículo esta basado en los resultados obtenidos de una investigación cuyo objetivo fue el utilizar un oso de peluche como una herramienta para incrementar la motivación de los estudiantes hacia el aprendizaje del inglés como segunda lengua. Esta trabajo investigativo fue desarrollado esperando mejorar no solo la motivación de los educandos por medio de este recurso novedoso, sino también darle un giro positivo al ambiente de relaciones interpersonales en la institución donde se realizo este proyecto.*

Los estudiantes sujetos de esta investigación, participaron en forma voluntaria, lo cuál consistió en cuidar el oso de peluche, al que se le llamó Ken Bear, como si fuera su amigo o compañero de juego por un día o varios. Al final de este tiempo, los estudiantes escribieron una pequeña composición de su experiencia en compañía del osito. Esta composición, realizada en idioma inglés, debía escribirse en un diario que portaba el oso de peluche dentro de un salveque. Si los estudiantes por alguna razón, como la edad o limitación hacia la expresión en este idioma, no podían realizar tal tarea, se les permitió hacerlo en Español o bien, ilustrar con un dibujo que incluía algunas palabras en este idioma. Los resultados indican que esta estrategia fue exitosa de acuerdo a los resultados obtenidos que se vieron reflejados en el trabajo de clase de los involucrados en ella, y a las opiniones recolectadas por esta investigadora de los padres de familia y docentes involucrados en esta investigación.

Palabras claves: JUGUETE-OSO DE PELUCHE MOTIVACIÓN INTRÍNSECA/ RELACIÓN INTERPERSONAL/ OBJETO DE SEGURIDAD/ ESTÍMULO/

1. Introduction

Each and every human being at one time or other has wanted a teddy bear to give them friendship and companionship. In English speaking cultures, teddy bears are a powerful and emotive symbol of childhood, sharing the good times and bad times with its owner. Familiar playmates for most children, teddy bears are seen as warm, friendly, tolerant, accepting and compassionate friends. A teddy bear may be a replacement friend, offer

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emotional support in a crisis, or provide comfort and security. Most importantly, teddy bears represent feeling of being safe, and they have equal appeal to both girls and boys. Many authors consider them as 'security objects' as Richard H. Passman (1976) defines them.

Security objects are items, usually soft and easily held or carried, that offer a young child comfort. Security objects are also referred to as attachment objects, inanimate attachment agents, nonsocial attachments, comfort habits, transitional objects, not-me possessions, substitute objects, cuddles [...] (Passman, 1976, p. 468).

These same authors, also deem the 'security objects' a normal part of a child's development. They are seen as a "*transitional experience between the infant's ability to distinguish the inner subjective world from outside reality*" (Winnicott, 1953, p. 89). John Bowlby considered these 'security objects' or 'transitional objects' to be a "substitute" for the absent mother. He also felt this to be normal as well as desirable in a child's growing development.

According to Passman (1976), being attached to a security object such as a teddy bear can be beneficial to a child.

Left in an unfamiliar playroom with a supportive agent (mother or transitional object), children played, explored, and refrained from crying more so than did children who had their favorite hard toy or who had no supportive agent available. (Passman, 1975, p.468)

Thus, teddy bears have become known as security objects as their popularity has increased over the years

1.1 Theories on Security Objects

An old and generally discredited theory, which began in the 1970's and continued to a lesser extent into the 80s and 90s, saw 'security objects' as being unhealthy for children who were overly insecure and anxious. It was deemed necessary to take these objects away from the child even though there is no evidence to support the need for such drastic actions just because a child demonstrates an attachment to said object(s). Studies have found 'security object' children to be no less insecure or maladjusted than any other child (Passman, 2001, p. 1).

There are three active theories today, according to Passman (2001). The *first of these is the Psychoanalytic Theory* that hypothesizes the need of a child to have a transitional object between the child's outside and inside worlds after the child has formed an adequate

relationship with his or her mother. In this instance, the object helps to increase feelings of self-control and self-discovery.

Second is the Ethological Theory that suggests that the object in question has become a type of surrogate mother and should only be allowed to form when the relationship between mother and child is fixed.

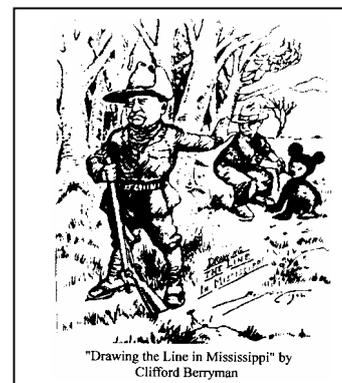
The third theory is the Social Learning Theory that asserts the 'security object's' physical characteristics (how it feels, smells, tastes, etc.) can be rewarding in itself. A child will begin an attachment to the object once it associates his or her mother's 'nurturing and distress-reducing' aura to the object in question. Since a child can more readily control an inanimate object as opposed to his or her mother, the child should form an attachment to the said object but relatively independently from the mother herself.

Of the theories stated above, none of them can explain why some children become attached to a 'security object' while others do not. It is speculated that certain factors must be present for a child to feel a need for a 'comfort object' such as cultural and socioeconomic factors. Some other contributing factors may be child-rearing practices, a mother's sensitivity to her child's security needs and even the security of a child's attachment to the mother. However, there is no clear evidence to support these claims on which factors are needed for a child to have a need of a 'security object' (Passman, 2001, p. 2).

On the other hand, research has shown that the security object need not be touched for the child to feel secure. If the object can be heard or seen, it seems to have the same effect as if the child touched the object itself. It should also be noted that not all 'comfort objects' need be soft and touchable, but it could also be a picture, a film, a videotape, or even an audiotape of the mother in order to promote an ambience of security and trust (Passman, 2001, p. 4).

1.2 History of the Teddy Bear

Peculiar as it may be, the teddy bear came to being in two different countries approximately at the same time in 1902. In the United States, it was associated with Theodore Roosevelt, also known as Teddy Roosevelt, when he refused to shoot a tied bear as a trophy on a hunting trip in Mississippi. A Washington Post editorial cartoonist, Clifford Barryman, immortalized the incident coupling it with the Mississippi line political dispute. A New York shopkeeper by the



name of Morris Mitchom displayed two toy teddy bears, which his wife had made, in his novelty store window as a tribute to the incident. After seeing the popularity of this new toy, Mitchom requested and received permission from President Roosevelt to name them "Teddy's Bears."

At the same time, the Teddy Bear was also born in Germany by a man named Richard Steiff, who designed the stuffed bear after his observations and sketches he had made of bears at Stuttgart Zoo. Steiff exhibited the bears at the Leipzig Fair in 1903, where an American buyer bought several thousand of them and shipped them to the US. By 1906, the name teddy bear was popular throughout the US and Europe.

1.3 Teddy Bears in Education

As previously explained, a 'security object' for a small child normally represents his or her mother and as such can be used as a substitute for the child's mother when she is not present. These objects can be used by other professionals such as teachers, doctors, babysitters and of course the parents themselves. They help ease the separation from the child's mother and father and create an ambience where a stranger may be able to interact with the child himself.

For schools, especially grade school levels, teddy bears can be a powerful tool in which to develop a positive interpersonal context, meaning a social environment such as an educational institution, schoolroom, or work group, as it motivates students' "autonomy, competence, or relatedness" as per the cognitive evaluation theory (Cameron, 2002, p. 45).

The perception of the environment or ambience (mood, feel, or atmosphere) seen as controlling or not is the most important aspect of interpersonal context. When rewards are used in a controlling manner to increase students' performance, the intrinsic motivation declines, but when the rewards are used in a non-controlling fashion, the intrinsic motivation increases among students.

Let us now define intrinsically motivated activities. Edward Deci defines it as:

[...] ones for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People seem to engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic reward.... Intrinsically motivated behaviors are aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences, namely, feelings of *competence* and *self-determination* (Deci, 1975, p. 23).

In 1982, Ryan published a study comparing performance-contingent rewards that were implemented in a controlling and non-controlling manner. His findings showed that performance-contingent rewards are not harmful, but the interpersonal context showed positive and negative effects due to these rewards. This shows " that performance-contingent rewards (and verbal rewards) take their meaning from the interpersonal context" (Cameron, 2002, p. 45).

Losing students' interest in a particular activity stems from pressure administered by teachers or others giving their pupils rewards for their performance. This does not happen when rewards are given without the element of pressure on the students. The key to positive effects when giving rewards is the manner in which they are implemented, meaning administrating rewards without the authoritarian supervisory style.

Much has been studied in the cognitive field, especially pertaining to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, however, there is still a need to ascertain what types of rewards may be used to bring about a positive effect on the interpersonal context.

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of using a teddy bear as a positive factor in which to increase students' love of learning and positive feelings about themselves. This topic was identified as being of importance to educators in providing knowledge on how to improve their classroom interpersonal context.

Little has been investigated on what types of rewards can be used to achieve a positive atmosphere in the classroom and on how to implement them (once identified) in a non-controlling manner. Jones (1987) indicated that the will to learn, or motivation, is a component of metacognition to the extent that it plays a self-regulatory role in learning. Jerome Bruner (1996) argued that people needed to free themselves from the control of rewards and for that matter punishment as well. He claimed that " autonomy of self-reward" was the most effective way to help students think and learn. As Lepper (1988) noted some individuals are " intrinsically motivated" and undertake a particular activity " for its own sake" . In terms of learning, this means that they become involved " for the enjoyment it provides, the learning it permits, or the feelings of accomplishment it evokes."



According to www.wholepop.com/features/teddy_bears/therapy.htm, teddy bears have been used by many rescue departments all over the world such as the police, fire and paramedics as an excellent tool in reaching scared, lost, and traumatized children. The Children' s Museum in Boston has even been successful in calming

children's fears of hospitals and for that matter doctors in the Boston area by having kids bring in their teddy bears for a free medical check-up given by real medical professionals. And until recently, The Teddy Bear Project, which had been exchanging teddy bears between many countries including Argentina, Canada, Ecuador, England, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, the USA and many more countries, had 4000 classes participating in their project. Its aim was to promote cultural awareness through quick e-mail exchanges of the teddy bears' diaries.

G. J. Ybarra, R. H. Passman, and C. Eisenberg made a study in 1977 and found that... during a routine third-year pediatric examination, the security object enhance rapport with the examining nurse. Children attached to a blanket who were allowed access to it were rated as less distressed and experienced less physiological stress - as evidenced by heart rate and systolic blood pressure - than children undergoing the medical evaluation without their security object. The comfort provided by a blanket in novel situations has even been shown to enhance children's learning (Passman, 1977, p. 25).

However, there is insufficient information pertaining to the use of teddy bears in a classroom environment to stimulate a positive school environment. The objective of the present article is to determine whether a stuffed animal such as a teddy bear can help students develop an intrinsic motivation to learn by making a positive interpersonal context at Colegio Bilingual San Ramon by means of associating security, trust and a non-judgmental friend to English through the school mascot, Ken Bear.

2. Method

The Ken Bear Project was started at Colegio Bilingual San Ramon in February 2004. The variables of this quantitative study were chosen to determine the effectiveness of the proposed activity based on students' intrinsic motivation. The variables were measured by means of three questionnaires, one for students, another for parents, and finally one for teachers. These questionnaires were given out in August of 2004 after the participants had taken Ken Bear home with them at least once and had completed at least one diary entry. It should be noted that only two to three students had taken the bear home more than that due to time and the number of students interested in the project itself.

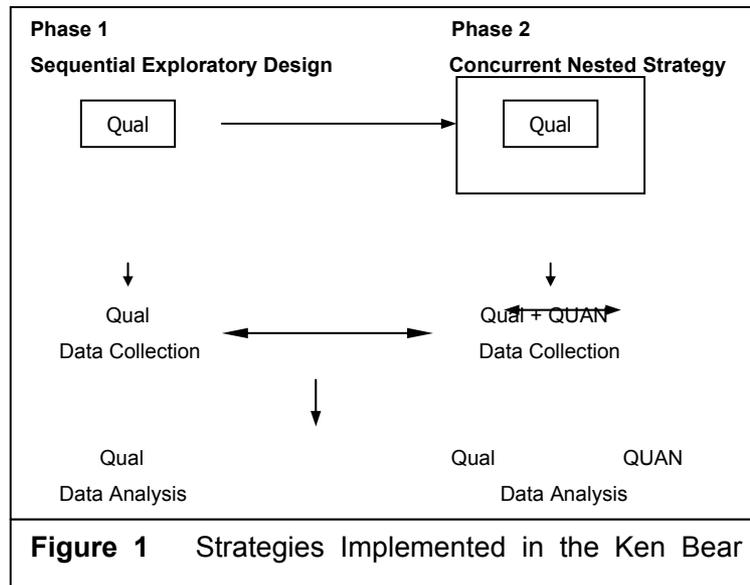
A Mixed Method Approach, also known as multimethod or multimethodology, was applied during this investigation since the researcher based knowledge claims on facts and

actual events. The strategies of inquiry employed were collected sequentially to best understand the research problem. The data collection involved gathering both numeric information (cross-sectional study using questionnaires) as well as text information (diary entries with some pictures and drawings and open-ended questions on the survey to parents and teachers) so that the final database represented both quantitative and qualitative information, adapted from the discussion by Creswell (2003).

In Phase 1, a qualitative / case study method was used to better understand the motivational levels of the students who volunteered for the project. The data that was collected during this phase was then analyzed in order to create a survey based on the problem at hand. Following this came the micro level analysis in Phase 2, which implemented a quantitative study that looked at the statistical relationships between the motivational outcomes in elementary and middle school grades. Concurrently nested inside the quantitative survey was a qualitative open-ended question to parents and teachers to obtain their observations and opinions on the Ken Bear Project. Once the quantitative data from phase 2 was collected and analyzed using an SPSS program, it was then compared to the qualitative data, which had been categorized and converted into numeric form. The final phase of this project was the interpretation of the entire analysis, qualitative and quantitative. Each phase in the project is briefly described and illustrated in **Figure 1** below. The notations in the figure, reprinted from Creswell (2003), has been

adapted from Morse (1991) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), who suggested

- A " → " indicates a sequential form of data collection.
- Capitalization indicates an emphasis or priority on the quantitative or qualitative data and analysis in the study.
- "Quan" and "Qual" stand for quantitative and qualitative, respectively, and they use the same number of letters to indicate equality between the forms of data.
- Below each figure are specific data collections, analysis, and interpretation procedures to help the reader understand the more specific procedures used.
- Boxes highlight the quantitative and qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2003, p. 214).



3. Subjects

The subjects who participated were Costa Rican elementary and middle school students from preparatory to sixth grade, whose ages were between six and twelve years of age. At the time of the study, forty-five students had participated in the project and were given a questionnaire in order to collect the data to this quantitative but also qualitative research (see Method above).

4. Materials

The teddy bear used in this project had to be big enough that it looked like a very small child, but not too big that a preparatory child could not handle without some help. The bear was outfitted with the following items: two school uniform t-shirts size 6, one school issued navy blue P.E. shorts, one pair of beige school socks, one navy blue school cap, two sets of cotton pajamas with a bear design including a nightcap, one pair of navy blue underpants, one pair of navy blue school shoes size 8 for children, one Winnie the Pooh children's backpack, one bear design toothbrush, and two small notebooks with typed instructions to the project inside the front cover. The following is a copy of those instructions...

Hi, my name is Ken Bear. I would like to be your special friend today. I will sit next to you very quietly in class while we listen to our teachers. We can do everything together. We can go everywhere together, but don't forget to feed me too. In my backpack, you will find my pajamas and tooth brush, so I can spend the night at your house. You will also find my diary where we can write some sentences about what we did while I was with you to keep as my memories. You can also include drawings and photos. Ah, remember to put all my belongings inside my backpack, be on time for school, and show me the way to Teacher Tamatha the following morning.

Love,

Ken Bear

The core of the project was the analysis of the questionnaires using the SPSS 7.5 program for Windows. It was therefore very important that the questionnaires sent out were clear-cut enough and best described the idea of the project. The first of these was the Student Questionnaire, which consisted of eleven statements. Students responded to these statements by circling or coloring one of the bears corresponding to the chosen answer. The grading scale began with ALWAYS, meaning the student completely agreed with the statement, and at the extreme end of the scale was NEVER, meaning he/she did not agree with the statement stated. The Parent Questionnaire comprised of three open-ended questions and three multiple choice type questions, while the Teacher Questionnaire contained five open-ended questions and three multiple choice questions, the same as the parents' form.

5. Procedure

In order to make this project an intrinsic motivating stimulus and not an extrinsic one, this project was presented to the school body as a voluntary activity, which students could sign up for by giving their name and grade on a slip of paper to the coordinating teacher. Once the slips of papers were collected with the required information, the project leader pulled a name each day and then sent the teddy bear to the appropriate student in his or her classroom. The student, who had been drawn that day, was given a small chair in which to sit

Ken Bear next to him / her during class periods. It was the student's responsibility to take care of the bear until the following morning in which he would be returned to the project manager. All students who participated in this project had to complete a diary entry in Ken Bear's notebook. This could consist of just a few words in the L1 with a drawing for preparatory and first grade students to a detailed account of what the child did with Ken Bear in grades fifth and sixth, who were also instructed to write their entries in English. Each participant (student and parents) then completed a questionnaire mid-way through the year as well as teachers who observed the project first hand in and outside their classrooms. The qualitative (diary entries, pictures, drawings and open ended questions) and quantitative (surveys) data was then analyzed and categorized using the SPSS 7.5 program for Windows.

6. Results

The information presented here is the result of the data analysis interpreted from the quantitative and qualitative instruments mentioned previously. The researcher made a careful analysis of the collected data after applying each of the instruments and then compared the variables to obtain integrated conclusions on this mixed method investigation. From the preliminary data gathered in the first phase from the diaries and categorized into common themes, 70 students in all took Ken Bear home and completed a diary entry. Forty-five girls from Preparatory to Sixth Grade participated, but only twenty-five boys volunteered for the project also from Prepa to Sixth Grade. Of these students, 91.4% used a drawing to express themselves more fully when writing in the journal. The same 91.4% felt Ken Bear was not just a stuffed toy but also someone they could really talk to and trust. This positive attitude towards an inanimate object can also be seen in the photographs that were added in the diary by some students and their parents (**see Photo 1**). In phase two of this investigation, only forty-five students completed the survey, which contrasts greatly with the seventy students who had completed the diary entries. Twenty-nine girls and sixteen boys turned in the questionnaire giving the researcher the following quantitative data.

Photo 1 A picture IS worth a thousand words. This student received Ken Bear for the three-

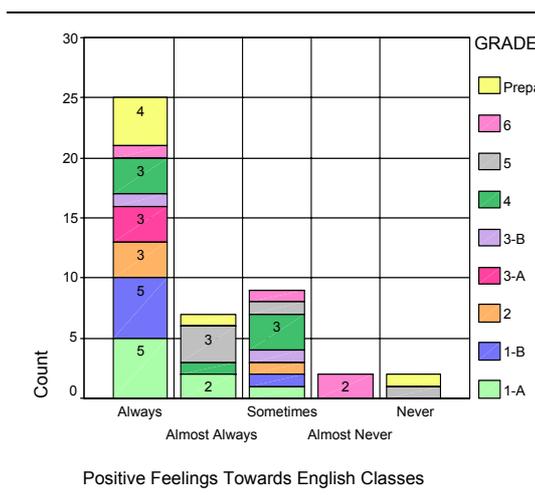


Thirty-six subjects out of forty-five had a high interest in this project which was calculated from the student questionnaire. This survey had a scale of one to ten 'Bears' for students to rate their interest, one being low interest in having the bear for a day and ten being the child really was interested in participating in the Ken Bear Project. The majority of

the students, a total of thirty-four, put ten 'bears' on how much they wanted to get Ken Bear. It should be remembered that this was a purely voluntary project, which brings up the question on why there were two students who put two ' bears' as how much they wanted him and three students put three ' bears' . If this project consisted of only voluntary subjects, why were there some students who gave such a low rating? At this time there are no answers, but a speculation that maybe once the child received the bear he/she was **a)** bored with it in a short amount of time, **b)** someone made fun of him/her for having a teddy bear saying it was babyish to have or **c)** some other reason that may come to light later on.

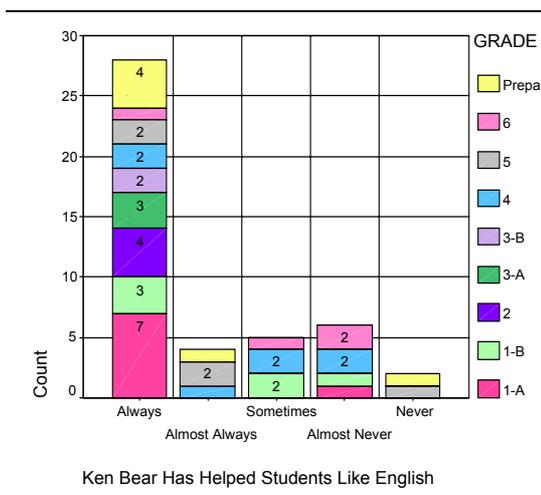
Graph 1 shows the number of students and the positive feelings towards English since Ken Bear was introduced to the students, the findings clearly show the positive feelings most students now have towards English as a L2. A total of twenty-five students out of forty-five are now always positive when it comes to English with just seven who put almost always, nine with sometimes, two with almost never, and another two who put never.

Graph 1: Number of Students and the Positive Feelings towards English since the Introduction of Ken Bear to



Graph 2 illustrates the number of students who feel that Ken Bear has helped them like English more – based on their grade level.

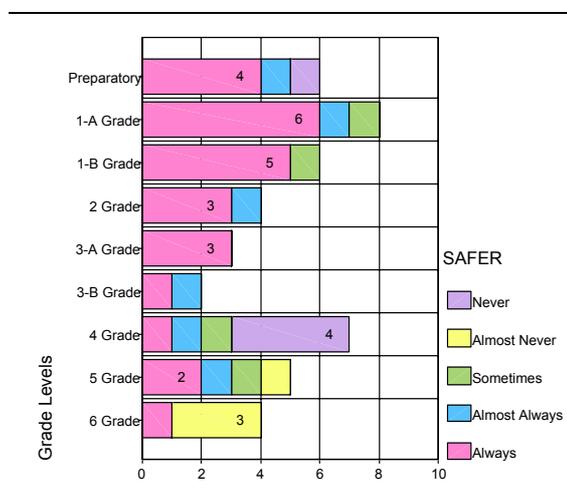
Graph 2: Number of Students Who Feel that Ken Bear has Helped Them Like English More – Based on Their Grade



As it is seen in Graph 2, twenty-eight out of forty-five students said they always like English with only eight students who were negative with almost never and never written as their response on the questionnaire.

Graph 3 also shows how well Ken Bear made students feel safer based on their grade levels. It can be noted from the graph that most of the first cycle (preparatory through 3rd grade) felt safer than the second cycle (4th through 6th grade).

Graph 3: Number of Students Who Feel Safer with Ken Bear Next To Them in Class – Based



As for writing confidence, the results demonstrate the effectiveness of using a diary as a voluntary homework in which students wrote an entry explaining what they did with Ken Bear during the period of time they had him. Overwhelming, the vast majority in first and second cycle said yes the diary did give them more confidence with 29 saying always, 8 saying almost always, and 6 saying sometimes with only 2 saying the diary almost never gave them confidence in writing.

When it came to analyzing if students could open-up to a stuffed animal, the bulk of the students who participated in this project said they could share their problems with the teddy bear with twenty-one saying always, seven saying almost always, and eight with sometimes. On the other hand, there were only three who put almost never and six with never on their questionnaire.

The number of students who felt that Ken Bear had helped them express their feelings openly, the better part of the voluntary students in first and second cycle felt they could be more open with their feelings since meeting Ken Bear with twenty-three out of forty-five giving always as their answer, seven with almost always, and five with sometimes. There were only five students who put almost never and another five who put a flat never.

From the accumulated information taken from the student's questionnaire on whether if the pupil's felt understood by Ken Bear, again, the predominance of the bulk of the pupils in this project said they felt understood with 77.8% giving always, 6.7% with almost always, and 11.1% with sometimes. Only 4.4% of the volunteers in the project said they almost never felt understood by this stuffed animal.

The number of students who saw Ken Bear as another classmate and attended classes with them, once again, the mass majority said they saw Ken Bear as their classmate with 73.3% writing always, 6.7% giving almost always, and 11.1% with sometimes. On the other hand, 6.7% of the students said they almost never felt Ken Bear to be a classmate and 2.2% put never as their answer.

To round off this research, teachers and parents were also asked their opinion on the effectiveness of this project to help develop intrinsic motivation in the students as well as making a positive interpersonal context at Colegio Bilingual San Ramon by means of associating security, trust and a non-judgmental friend to English.

Teachers noted they saw a 100% improvement in their students' motivation, while only 17.6% of the parents noted no new motivation. This minority of parents who saw no increase in their child's motivation is shadowed by 79.4% of other parents who did note a difference in their son or daughter's intrinsic motivation.

Based on the opinions of parents and teachers, students may be able to associate English with a stuffed animal in order to improve the motivation to learn a second language. The majority of parents at 61.8% and teachers at 66.7% said an overwhelming yes; a stuffed animal can help the intrinsic motivation towards a L2 class. At the same time, 35.3% of parents said no with 22.2% of teachers also giving no as their answer. A few teachers, 11.1% to be exact, and parents, 2.9%, gave no opinion at all with N/A as their response.

Finally, the teachers' opinion on if this project has helped the interpersonal context at Colegio Bilingual San Ramon. All of the teachers answered with a resounding yes.

7. Conclusions

The possibility that a stuffed animal, such as a teddy bear, led this researcher to infer that students could develop an intrinsic motivation to learn by making a positive interpersonal context to an institution by means of associating security, trust and a non-judgmental friend to English through a school mascot, in this case, Ken Bear. The findings analyzed previously gave evidence to support this theory as well as teacher and parent comments that were given in their completed questionnaires. The following are some of these items explained in laymen's terms.

- < Teddy bears can give confidence to students to do well in class in first and second cycles. For first cycle (preparatory through 3rd grade) the majority said Ken Bear always gave them confidence, but in second cycle (4th through 6th grade) there was a minority of only one who said the stuffed animal always gave them confidence. It can be concluded here that this project, as per giving confidence, does better in first cycle where students are more likely to feel insecure in a school environment and relate better to a bear to help them feel sure of themselves.
- < This project shows how teachers can improve the intrinsic motivation of students to write by means of using a non-stressful project such as a stuffed animal, which helps pupils write and give confidence to express themselves in a written form without any pressures of it being marked with red ink or graded.
- < As it was mentioned previously, there were more girls than boys who were interested in participating in this project. These findings could mean that girls have a higher interest since it is a type of doll, while boys prefer other forms of toys.
- < Peer pressure seemed to have an affect on the sixth grade students, who are located in the high school pavilion. Several high school students demonstrated that participating in the Ken Bear Project was infantile.
- < Students were very excited to have the opportunity to play and take care of the bear. They also liked to share it with other peers during their break periods.
- < Motivation can also be heard when a child was selected to receive this loveable bear, said, "Look teacher, I won Ken Bear", and seemed very excited.

- < The way in which students wrote about the bear also shows that they really enjoyed the company of Ken Bear.
- < The questionnaires support the idea that a stuffed animal can be seen as a non-judgmental friend and classmate with only a minority who cannot relate to a teddy bear.
- < Students' self esteem is heightened when they get the bear.
- < Feelings of responsibility are encouraged by the activity.
- < The family gets involved in the process of sharing in a school activity.
- < Ken Bear has become a part of Colegio Bilingual San Ramon as a pet, as a friend, and of course, as the school mascot.
- < Feelings of belonging have taken place during this project especially in first cycle.
- < This project was very motivating to students especially at the beginning of the school year, due to this, it is necessary to add new clothes to the bear, change out any damaged or broken items such as a broken zipper on its book bag, and add a small game relating bears to English such as a memory card game.
- < The fact that the older students had to write in English to note down what they did with Ken Bear helped their intrinsic motivation to learn English with a purposeful activity.
- < The positive reaction from kid's faces, when they let you know that they got Ken Bear for the day supports the positive interpersonal context at Colegio Bilingual San Ramon.
- < The project supports the "Ejes transversales" when it comes to values.
- < The students really liked Ken Bear, and they are always asking, "Who won Ken Bear?"
- < The value of sharing has been practiced through this activity, and the feeling of belonging has taken part during the process.
- < In first grade, when Ken Bear was visiting, the students seemed friendlier, more loving, and the class came to order with ease, which shows that the bear was not a distraction in the least when it came to the first graders.
- < Ken Bear brings out the best in children -- their love, happiness, responsibility, tenderness, and caring for someone (or something) other than themselves.
- < This project could also be modified to use in a single classroom to help maintain discipline.
- < Second cycle (4th through 6th) did not enjoy or appreciate Ken Bear as much as first cycle (Preparatory through 3rd grade), which could be due to the Costa Rican culture and the fact that bears are not part of it. They see it as one would a foreigner from another country ...at a distance but not letting it into their hearts and souls.

- < Students related the bear to the English teachers.
- < This project also promoted the school while off the school grounds, since the clothes the bear wore had the school logo. Besides going to the student's home, some pupils took him to their grandparents' house, the grocery store, and even the amusement park.

It can be concluded that it is possible to increase our students' intrinsic motivation and give an institution a positive interpersonal context through the use of a stuffed animal.

This study has taken a step in the direction of analyzing an unanimated object in a school / home environment to improve kids' motivation to learn, but it is possible of course those other schools may not have the same success rate as did Colegio Bilingual San Ramon. In years to come, this project may not be as effective at the same school; it could in fact have entirely different results.

The method outlined in this article should be replicated in other schools in order to analyze if a stuffed animal, such as a teddy bear, can really improve the intrinsic motivation of students as well as give a positive environment to a school for students to learn as it did with the students who participated in this research.

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