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Idiomatic Language and Proverbs in Traditional Greek Tales

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Abstract

Stereotyped language of fairy tales in Greek traditional storytelling is examined in a selection of geographical regions of the Greek Islands and the close areas of other varieties of climatic and morphological areas of languages and dialects in Greek. The social issues of cultural components that may appear at language of tales is examined in a case of using storytelling as a methodological tool in teaching language at school. Storytelling and proverbs can adjust on different subjects of teaching at school such as History, Physics, Religion, Philosophy for Children. Values and attitudes are in school language textbooks involved through folk tales and other folk traditional stories. Our study presents some of these language examples of fairy tales and folktales to search the architecture of works that may be important to compare to other Countries and Language examples of tales.

Keywords: stereotyped language, folk tales, Greek language, teaching methodology, comparative literature.

1. Introduction

In our study we examine formulaic language of fairy tales and folk tales from Greece in five different geographic regions (Kyklades Islands (Aegean Sea), seven Islands – Eptanisa (Ionian Sea), Thrace (Northern-East Greece), Crete (South Island) and Hepirus (West Mainland)). The reason of our choice in the genre of fairy/folktales is the rapid contemporary interest of the Greek people to tales in an era of crisis in politics, economy and society and the superiority of tales in children's choices of reading at their primary education. Motif and rhyme within the grammar of traditional tales serve functional roles at the beginning and the end of the story in formulaic words and phrases. These involve functionality as intrinsic to fairy tales' language: Its entire architecture is arranged along cultural context lines. Comprehension depends on experience of the participants in this context. We can categorize tales in formulaic examples of: (1) the *field* which serves what's going on in the plot, (2) the *tenor*, which serves who is taking part in the plot through persuasive, polemic, explanatory or other language and (3) the *modes*: which provides a tale with the role played by language as didactic, rhetorical, explicatory or explanatory.

2. Formulaic language and Greek fairy/folk tales in educational settings

Our hypothesis at this level is that identification of possible formulaic sequences can be taught systematically, provide experience of cultural issues in comprehending texts of folktales to inexperienced audiences and also define fairy tales and folk tales as a genre which may be the missing point of assessment in language acquisition. Moreover, there are many second language learners in Greek schools for the last two decades. Multicultural educational methods appear to have a preference in fairy tales and theatre education for their importance in teaching language through artistic curriculum. Children work with tales a lot lately in Greek schools (zone of innovation in Primary education as a program of the Ministry of Greek Education and a new teaching subject of *Filanagnosia* as a term for “reading friendship” – friendship between children and the books). We also introduce a powerful component in the process of presentation of Fairy tales in Films, videogames and TV productions as a vehicle of applied formulaic language in context at international educational settings. Relationship between *formulaicity* and *creative* language is not a new idea. Linguists presented fragments of a universal formulaic puzzle in meaning making through language and tales through connotations and collocations (Meunier & Granger, Eds., 2008; Hoey, 2005).

Activities of recognizing clichés in fairy tales and myths, idiomatic phrases which work as morals, proverbs and very specific phrases of traditional tales’ identity can be involved in children’s games with language at school. The guessing game of what a formulaic phrase (usually of a high frequency) could mean in its holistic context is another possibility of children’s involvement in formulaic language acquisition. Children’s observation during their storytelling and reproduction of stories can provide teaching of Language with new conclusions about what storytelling and creative writing can bring in class (Ellis, 2008a; Wray, 2002). The development of a linguistic criterion about the right schematic-idiomatic phrase at the right time, in dialogues is a matter of working with tales, as we observed in production and comprehension of language at Greek primary schools for the last two years (2012-2014) in a Program of Multicultural Communication in co-operation with schools all over the country. A role of communicative competence in the development of story maps implies the awareness of a fantasy land that everything starts with the phrase “Once upon a time” or “Start of the tale, Good afternoon”. Functions of fairy tales as we observe are strongly connected to formulaic language in certain categories that we identified: Beginning and end of narration, time in the narration, etc. (Speelman & Kirsner, 2005; Ellis, 2008b, 2008c).

3. The case of the Greek tales

Since it is not safe to define formulaic language from the high-frequency of phrases’ appearance in speech we’ll try to introduce the examples of discourse for the genre of tales which showed clearly that Formulaic phrases are more popular in Kyklades fairy and folk tales (about 40% of the text). Fairy tales’ formulaic language is an important linguistic phenomenon in all Greek tales (20-24%) of the text. Information for second language learners of Greek are easy to be misunderstood when formulaic language is involved our study focused to the formulaic examples of the beginning and end of stories only, for reasons of accurate examination of the data. From our point of view, formulaic language of traditional fairy tales is a serious issue of meaning making and understanding language as mother tongue for native and nonnative speakers. It is not rare in Greek traditional tales to find cultural clichés as phrases from another era which have survived through traditional storytelling and writing. They often witness another cultural reality (for example, horses as transportation) and primitive agricultural life. Corpus research of formulaic language in different languages reveals the shared schemata of the human mind and language (Butler, 1997; Altenberg, 1998a, 1998b).

In a definition of our perception about the term, before we present the stereotyped schemata of formulaic language in Greek tales (an anthology of the most familiar 300 tales from different places), we need to explain that by formulaic language we mean a sequence of stereotyped words which may be continuous or discontinuous in a sentence which is prefabricated (Siyanova-Chanturia, Conklin & Schmitt, 2011; Conklin & Schmitt, 2008). These can be retrieved and stored as a whole from memory and are used in our everyday language. These patterns of ready-made expressions in semantics are amalgams of creative imaginative thinking and serve as frozen, stable and familiar expressions with specialized meaning in cultural context of language education.

Examples of stereotyped language and the role of prosody in
formulaic memorization of a story from Loucatos and Megas Collections
(two classical and recognized sources for the Greek ethnographic folk tales)

FIELD: Formulaic examples of language in Introduction/the beginning of Greek traditional tales. Rhyme and language prosody in a formulaic memorization of stories

1. Once upon a time. "Once uvon a time" (instead of "upon" as dialectic varieties: for a/vola, time/dime) In Greek: "Mia for a ki enan kairo";
2. Once upon a time, they say, ...'(s)he says...;
3. Once here was a.... (name descriptive adjective or noun) of hero (boy, king, girl, frog...);
4. Once upon a time when the animals could speak as we do, there was a (name of main character...);
5. Different versions of Beginning of a story in Epirus: *There was and there was not...* (Itan kai den itan);
6. "Fairy tales do not have salvation. They are a watermill which grinds nonstop. That's why after I tell the tale of the Red Rose Girl (Rodokokkini), I'll stop and I won't tell another tale";
7. Beginning of the fairy tale, good afternoon (e.g., in the "Two Gkoyntoyrades" Syros island);
8. Verse Schemata: *Red string tied to the reel spool, give the kick to turn, and let the tale start, and our good companion to say good evening to our good companion. Good evening to your lordship, good afternoon* (tale "The priest and the crazy women" - Place: Ithaca-Seven Islands-Ionian Sea. In Greek /rime Verse: Kokkini klosti demeni stin anemi tiligmeni / Dostis klotso na girisei / Paramythi na arxinisei kai thn kali mas sintrofia na tin kalssperisei - kalispera tsi afentias sas - kali sas espera.
9. *Mythi mythi mithiako - tale tale taley*
Siko pano na sto po - get up so as I tell you
Mythi mythi mithiako - tale tale taley
Katse kato na sto po - sit down so as I tell you
(Lefkada, Eptanisa: "The immortal woman" Beginning in rhyme).

FIELD: Formulaic examples of language in ending the tales

- And they lived good and we lived even better than them (and they lived happily ever after): "Kai zisane aftoi kala ki emeis kalitera". After the end of this formulaic expression there are other sentences such as "kai mou dosane koulouri kai mou to fage o skilos o kountouris" (we translate it in a free verse: *And they gave me a bagel and it took it and ate it from me the dog whose name was the Kountouregel*);
- And they passed their time life and chicken (zoi kai kota);
- good end, everything good: Telos kala, ola kala);
- End of the category of "The why stories": ...and since then these animals have their tail short and their back white;
- End of the fairy tale, good evening.... (Epirus, Kyklades);
- And that's how the story ends;
- "Money here and money there, but I didn't take a cent, because I wasn't there". Storyteller's third person's – narrator (title: "The short man and the dragon", from Paxi island);
- Lies and truths, that's how the tales do. (Title: "The miser priest", Kefalonia island);

- *And they lived fine and we lived bad and cold* (in Greek: “aftoi zisane kala kai emeis kala kai psyxra”, Title “The immortal girl”, Lefkada island);
 - *And they got married. And we were there and as we saw everything and listened and that’s the way we told you all these.* (Thrace);
 - *And I saw her when I passed from these places and she told me.* (Thrace);
 - *Neither we were there nor you believe it ...miden ego imoun ekei miden eseis na to pistepsete.* (Title: *ax ali mou*, Tinos island - Kyklades);
 - *“...and I passed from there with a red underwear”*, Rime - (Kai perasa ki ego apo ekei me ena kokkino vraki);
 - *“lies and truth that’s the way that fairy tales go, too”* (Psemata kai alithia, etsi einai ta paramythia. Kyklades).

FIELD: Formulaic phrases to express the change of situation in the story plot in relation with time perception

- *One day...* (to describe that something new happened...);
 - *The same time, at the moment...* (hour...);
 - *From day till night.* (all day long-duration);
 - *He comes closer... at last* (finally, after a long time). *Paei konta, kamia fora...*;
 - *Until you say “cumin”.* (it happened very fast: “The little ring”, Mykonos island, Kyklades);
 - *Road... he takes; road ...he leaves.* (to denote a long trip-duration);
 - *In a moment here and it appears* (Kai mia stigmati na sou kai faneronetai)- formulaic syntax.

FIELD:

TENOR/MODE in Rhetoric questions and explanatory formulaic phrases

In a rhetoric question to note the change of situation through an action, in terms of persuasive polemic, exhortatory function of language:

- *Do you know what I think?* (TURN from monologue / to dialogue: *Xereis ti skeftika...*);
 - *But what else could (the character), do...* (third person narrator: *ti allo na kanei?*);
 - *What else could the king say?* (instead of saying: the king could not do otherwise and he agreed). (Ti na pei o vasilias?);
 - *What to see.* (surprise) *Ti na dei...* (he saw something which when you hear it you’ll be surprised (rhetoric question). Also in the fairy tale “Mrs. sea” (Santorini Island).

Proverbs as morals in the tales-the didactic mode

Hatred was left to them. (In Greek: “Tous emeine i kakia”, The bull-tree, from Kithnos, Kyklades)

The apple will fall under the apple tree (a child looks like parents)

As the fate is written and what is written cannot get unwritten kind of proverbs.

In Thrace the end of tales with proverbs are common, they include what the main character should be (e.g., *Mr. Andreas, takes but doesn’t give*). These morals are inspired from Aesop, too.

To learn an art not to be hungry. (Kyklades)

When he heard it he flew with the north’s clouds (as the proverb says: Kyklades)

“Run, look for him/her and you, Nicholas do wait.” Treha yireve kai Nikolo karterei. (when somebody leaves and we will never find him, no matter how much we try. What is gone; is gone.)

Other formulaic phrases in fairy/folk tales –Frequently used in the Greek Language

I pass life and chicken and nothing is missing in my life (Zoi kai kota tin perno kai tipota den mou leivgetai...: from the tale “The two mice”, Sifnos island - Kyklades); when it is not in use but like takes its place in syntax at the beginning... which also means as: *San girisan piso*);

This, as you say, ... (pou lete...). So...as you would say, ...

But don’t you say to me? (Ma de mou les), It means “tell me something..”;

He told her the “kathecasta”. (From an ancient-archaic word that passed in the modern Greek language as a formulaic expression “Tis eipe ta kathekasta” (“The bronze castle”, Milos island);

- *To made someone of the salt....ton kano tou alatiou...* He argued with him and gave him a severe lesson;

- (to note “An abandoned area”) *where even a bird doesn’t fly*: “mide ‘ pouli petameno”;

- *For the “good” that I want for you*, “to kalo spou sou thelo”, (threatening INDUCEMENT: do something so as I don’t harm you);

- *You ll see what I’ll do to you...* (negative meaning) threatening INDUCEMENT);

- *this and this* (“ Afto kai afto” ... : he told everything to the listener) REPETITION; *and not to talk a lot*, “Kai na min ta polilogoume”);

- *He looks here, he looks there* (he is seeking for something), but nowhere he can find it (In Greek: Koitazei edo, koitazei ekei, pouthena den to vriskei). REPETITION-rhythm.

Formulaic language for “love” in Greek traditional tales

- *my son is crazy with her*. (Einai trelos mazi tis, tale): tale named: “H katsikoula”, “The little goat”, Paros island.

- *he ll fall down to die. If he doesn’t marry her: Tha pesei na pethanei* (*He ll drop down dead*).

- *... And the bad sisters were left in the cold {water} of bath*. (In Greek: “meinane sta kria tou loytrou”. It means that ... *They just waited for love, in vain*.

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Return Migration as an Answer to Face the Need of English Teachers in Mexico: Challenges and Realities

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Abstract

Migration has been part of the history of Mexico and the United States for many years. In this article, we aim to address the experiences of young return migrants who teach English as a foreign language in public schools in Mexico. They lived a number of years in the United States and recently returned to Mexico. We incorporate the voices of these participants into our own to give the reader a window into the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom in Mexico. Through qualitative research and following a narrative approach, results show how these return migrants become English teachers, how they relate to the two educational systems, and how they see their future as professionals. Conclusion address that with each case there is complex story that leads to other possibilities and as such may be a wider issue of social transition through migration.

Keywords: English teaching, return migration, National English Program, education system.

1. Introduction

Migration has been part of the history of Mexico and the United States for many years. Families root themselves in the United States looking for the “American dream”, and other families go back and forth from one country to another for a number of reasons, creating bonds on both sides and developing transnational agency. Others come back to reside in Mexico. This is the case of the six stories we share, where university students, who are return migrants, discuss their connections with English and Spanish in the US and how they feel when settling down in Mexico. Most importantly, we present how these return migrants become English teachers, how they relate to the two educational systems, and how they see their future as professionals. In this article, we aim to address the experiences of young adults that teach English as a foreign language in public schools in Mexico. We incorporate the voices of these students into our own to give the reader a window into the EFL classroom in Mexico.

2. English teaching and learning in Mexico and the National English Program

English has gained importance in Mexico because it is considered as an international language with an active role that enables citizens to contribute to the academic world and the world of commerce (Ramírez Romero, Pamplón Irigoyen & Cota Grijalva, 2012). The everyday reality is that Mexico depends on investment from transnational companies that come to Mexico in search

of employees who can use English in the workplace. According to Heredia and Rubio (2015), these employees are classified as better prepared than those who do not speak another language.

The English proficiency of Mexican children and youth is generally low (Davies, 2009; Education First, 2014). One report ranked Mexico, among other Latin American countries, with the lowest English proficiency (Education First, 2014). In practice this is what we see in the classrooms where we are asked to observe English teachers. This is where our return migrant students have particular value in Mexican society. The schools and government institutions assume that by inserting return migrants in the classroom it will somehow magically improve the quality of language teaching rather than focusing on the curricular, material, and training deficiencies that we see continually in EFL classrooms. The result is a continued focus on redesigning and renaming the EFL program instead of addressing the underlying issues of hiring qualified teachers and making English a formal part of the curriculum.

In 2017, the Mexican Ministry of Education passed the PNIEB (National English Program) as part of a number of educational reforms to strengthen Mexican public education (SEP, 2011a). Until 2017, the PNIEB had the objective of developing students' "competencies related to the language and culture in order to successfully respond to the communication demands of the global world" (SEP, 2011b: 9). Throughout K-12 schooling, the *Secretaría de Educación Pública* (SEP) held each state in Mexico accountable to help students acquire proficiency in English at an intermediate level (see SEP, 2011b). This was the first federal program designed to provide access to English learning for working-class Mexicans. Under President Peña Nieto's administration, the Secretary of Education reported that 1,000 English teachers were needed for the 2018-2019 term in order to start the implementation of the new program. Furthermore, as many as 180,000 teachers are needed over the next ten years. This looked good on paper but was never really put into practice.

However, PNIEB started losing importance when it was merged with other reforms and policies, like the *Nueva Estrategia Nacional*. PNIEB weakened due to teachers' lack of understanding of the program, inconsistencies between political discourse of the SEP and practice of the program that was never officially part of the school curricula, the persistence of traditional audiolingualism teaching practices, low socio-economic status of students, and large classes with 40 plus students (Davies, 2009; Roux Rodriguez, 2013; Sayer, 2012, 2015a, 2015b).

In sum, we have witnessed at close hand how SEP has implemented two English educational policies in order to respond to a globalized world, more specifically, to participate in international markets. Yet, these policies have faced challenges in practice because they have never gone beyond political discourse. These challenges highlight the need to improve the practice of English teaching.

2.1 Return migration to improve English teaching in Mexico

Improving English teaching and the preparation of English teachers require us to consider who we recruit to these programs. Even as we seek to supply thousands English teachers that are needed in Mexico over the next ten years, we need to recruit highly qualified applicants to English teaching programs. We have found that recruiting young adults with extensive experiences in the US is an area of opportunity. However, these American-Mexican students often return to Mexico with baggage from the US and how they were treated in the US. Over past several years, more Mexicans have left than migrated to the United States, even after living there most of their lives (Christiansen, Trejo Guzman & Mora-Pablo, 2017; Hamann, Zuñiga & Sánchez García, 2008; Mora-Pablo, Lengeling & Basurto Santos, 2015; Tacelosky, 2013). This includes voluntary returns, as well as deportations (Silver, 2018). Some return migrants remain in Mexico to work in transnational companies where English is mostly used (Anderson, 2015), while others enroll in higher education programs taught in English (Christiansen, Trejo Guzman & Mora-Pablo, 2017;

Rivas Rivas, 2013), though admission to these programs often presents social and administrative challenges for returnees because often they are not welcomed back into Mexico.

Return migrants usually speak English and Spanish, but they do not necessarily fit in either society. When they try to start an English teaching career in Mexico, this gives them an advantage over other potential English teachers because the school system feels their English can correct the missing pieces in the curriculum and it perpetuates the idea that speaking the language is enough to teach it. However, their return to Mexico is not easy. González-Barrera (2015) argues that a limited number of programs in Mexico provide returnees with opportunities to transition back into the country (e.g., to assist them with employment or education). As a result, the opportunity to become an English teacher, receive pay, and a small amount of acceptance with no training is a strong drawback for gaining initial acceptance in society.

Regarding these concerns, several Mexican associations (e.g., Federal Executive Unions, the Ministry of Public Education and the Congress of the Union) and universities have formulated plans to (re-)integrate return migrants. For example, the *Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior* (ANUIES) launched a temporary program in 2017 called *Programa Universitario Emergente Nacional para la Terminación de Estudios Superiores* (PUENTES). This program has the aim of facilitating social, economic, cultural and educational integration of return migrants (ANUIES, 2017). PUENTES also seeks to support return migrants with enrollment, validation of legal documents, and career advisement so they can start or conclude their studies in a Mexican Higher Education Institution (ANUIES, 2017).

The University of Guanajuato has taken this call seriously and the results have been evident in several BA programs. The BA in ELT has admitted return migrants at increasing rates in the last five years. With native-like proficiency in English, return migrants are trained in this program to become English teachers, while being supported to integrate socially into the university. This is important because for these students it is the first time they are in a space in Mexican society where they are completely accepted and seen as valuable by us as teachers in the program.

3. Methodology

We relied on a qualitative paradigm, following a narrative approach. In order to collect the data, participants were asked first to write an autobiography and then they were interviewed individually. They signed a letter of informed consent and were told that their names would remain anonymous in order to keep their confidentiality. These were carried out in English or Spanish, depending on the participants' decisions. For the purposes of this article, we translated those extracts that were originally in Spanish. Data was analyzed following an on and on-going process and there were moments where we went back and forth between the autobiographies and the interview transcriptions. We relied on paradigmatic cognition, which entails "classifying a particular instance as belonging to a category or concept" (Polkinghorne, 1995: 9). We looked for similarities in the data and then grouped them in a same category.

The six participants (one male and five females) included in this article are all considered return migrants with transnational experiences, according to the definition of Petron (2009): those who maintained contact with both sides of the border and have established connections at different levels (i.e., family, education, identity). As they are now in Mexico, we refer to them as return migrants, in the US one would probably refer to these same people as heritage speakers. We chose six of them for the purposes of this publication to show representation of the issues they face when trying to become English teachers in Mexico. They do not belong to the same cohort, rather, they represent different cohorts at different times. The stories that we share are from six students that enrolled in our BA in ELT between 2013-2017. They were all

practicing teachers in private and public sectors. Table 1 provides a profile of the six return migrants.

Table 1. Participants' profile

Name	Place of birth	Place of residence in the US	Reasons to emigrate to the US	Reasons to return to Mexico	Average schooling years in the US	Reasons to become an ELT
Yadira	Guanajuato, Mexico	Illinois	Taken by family	Family reasons	5	Encouraged by a former teacher
Gemma	Nevada, US	Nevada		Family reasons	7	Encouraged by brother
Angela	Valle de Santiago, Mexico	California	Taken by family	Deportation	16	Encouraged by husband
Laura	Guanajuato, Mexico	California	Taken by family	Family reasons	7	Encouraged by a former teacher
Oscar	Dolores, Hidalgo, Mexico	Idaho	Taken by family	Wanted to join his family and help them with their business	16	Encouraged by friends
Esther	California, US	California		Parents divorced	7	Encouraged by friends

The return migrant teachers ages range between 20 to 35 years old. They now live in different parts of the State of Guanajuato and in the past, they lived in California, Idaho, Illinois, Nevada, and Texas. Oscar went to the United States as early as 11 months and Yadira at eleven years old. Yadira, Gemma, Laura and Esther received their education mainly in Mexico, while Angela and Oscar did not return to Mexico until they started their university studies. It should be mentioned that Yadira, Angela, Laura and Oscar were born in Mexico while Gemma and Esther in the United States. Their family instilled in them a strong sense of attachment to the Mexican culture and they identify strongly as Mexicans. For this reason, we have included them as return migrants. In their upbringing they were constantly in contact with Spanish and the Mexican culture.

We share how these participants started their connections with English and Spanish in the US, and then how they felt when settling down in Mexico. Then we narrate how these students became English teachers, how they relate to the Mexican and American educational systems, and how they see their future as professionals.

4. Discussion of findings

4.1 *"You are Mexican and as a Mexican you should speak Spanish"*

Esther was born in South Lake Tahoe, California. Her father had settled down in the US since 1976 as undocumented. Her mother was also Mexican and at home they only spoke in Spanish, as Esther recalls:

I am an only child. My parents only spoke Spanish, so I have to say that my first spoken language was Spanish. I attended Bijou elementary school at the age of five and I learned English.

She also mentions that she did not have to be enrolled in ESL classes, since she started learning English formally at school at an early age. In her narrative, Esther acknowledges that the “only Spanish at home” rule helped her with her Spanish:

While I was growing up, I remember that my parents were enemies when it came to speaking English at home. My father would get very disappointed if I would speak English at home and he would tell me “You are Mexican and as a Mexican you should speak Spanish”. So my brain was like a switch. When I entered my home, I would automatically speak Spanish. I have to mention that I am very grateful with my parents because if it was not for them, I probably would not speak Spanish at all.

When asked whether she felt either American or Mexican, she did not hesitate to state that she always felt Mexican, even when she was born in the US. She said that the fact of having both parents demanding to keep her heritage at home and the Spanish only rule, she always identified more with her Mexican side. In contrast, Yadira, who was born in Mexico, and at the age of 13 she moved to the US, finds it difficult to identify with one culture or another:

I have a conflict. At times I feel more attached to the American culture, but I also appreciate the Mexican one. And as I have lived some years here in Mexico again, I started to like it too.

She refers to English as the commodity that saved her life, since with this skill she was able to find a job as a teacher when returning to Mexico, and this is the reason why she considers English an important aspect of her life. However, she soon realized that speaking the language was not enough to become an English teacher and that she needed to study and have a certificate in order to validate her knowledge of the language.

4.2 *Becoming an English teacher and finding out about the BA in ELT*

Gemma was born in Reno, Nevada. When she was two years old, her parents decided to move back to Mexico. But when she was seven years old, the family came back to the US and she stayed there until she was 14 years old. When returning to Mexico and trying to decide what to do with her life, she discovered that the University of Guanajuato offered a BA in ELT. Gemma examines how she started in our program.

I found out that the *Universidad de Guanajuato* had the *Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés* [BA in ELT], so I came with two of my classmates. They came to check for the area of law, and I came here but I think the time to get registered and everything were very close, and I knew for a fact that in my school that they were not going to have the paperwork. So I decided to take a year off so I didn't directly come here. And then I started working in PNIEB and there's where I met Andres.

Gemma did not enter immediately into the program but decided to teach at the public school level, encouraged by friends who saw her ability with the language. Notice that here her only qualification was that she spoke English. There she met a friend who was instrumental in guiding her through the university registration process for.

Andres helped me to do the registration work and how to fix everything, and he came with me to the school to turn in the paperwork and do the exam. I actually got in...and at that time I had left for the United States, and my plans were to stay there and work. Actually, I was working in a casino, and I noticed that my English was kind a rough around the edges, because I wouldn't speak it at home. For everything I was speaking Spanish... I asked my mom “Should I stay here or should I go?”... My family then told me “No, you should come back, and do school”, and for that reason I came back, and started here in the BA.

Similar to Gemma, Yadira mentions how someone encouraged her to become an English teacher merely because she was able to speak the language. Her English teacher in Mexico

realized that she had a different level of English than the other students in her class. Because of this, her teacher offered her opportunities to participate in class with different tasks.

Well, he was my English teacher and at the beginning of the year we took an exam, so he noticed those who spoke English already more than others. The ones who got a better grade, he called us in. Later he asked us where we had learned our English. Then he gave us exercises and more work, like essays, more linked with our level. And later he started to ask us for help, to help other classmates who had problems with the language and those that liked the language.

It is often the case for EFL teachers to find return migrant students in a beginning class. Teachers sometimes tell the student that he or she does not need to attend the class because of the student's English proficiency, or teachers often make the students take the class as a regular student, with no changes to the class content. Either way the students are classified as different and separated from the general student population.

4.3 Emotions of institutional struggles and finding a place in the BA

Angela moved with her family to the US when she was four years old and she lived there until she was 21 years old. She did not choose to return to Mexico, but she faced deportation due to a traffic offense. She left her life in the US and had to start from zero when returning to Mexico. She did not know what to do with her life, but her husband encouraged her to become an English teacher. She provides us with more specifics of her challenges of entering into the BA:

To enter the BA was very random, because my husband's always been very supportive and he always told me: "You need to start too, and what are we going to do?" And it was very hard to validate all of my *constancias* [papers], and my high school diploma, because my name is very long. So in my high school diploma, they didn't write my name correctly, and when I wanted to validate it here, it was like impossible. So I had to take high school again, plus Spanish was very hard and it was a while since I've been in school.

Again, we see how friends or family members influenced the participants' decision making to become English teachers. When returning, she encountered problems with her papers, as she had left everything in the US:

... Just this year PUENTES was passed...It's one that, when Donald Trump became president, they made this rule, that for people coming back from the States, that if you didn't have your papers in order it didn't matter; you could enter the university. Then I was like: "Oh, my gosh, this is my time". And I applied, and I was the first one to apply.

After a number of hardships, she decided she had to get an education. She received support from the PUENTES program. She realized that it was her status as a migrant that gave the chance to study. The PUENTES program opened the doors for her and she took advantage of this situation to consider what she wanted to do in her life: teach English.

Once she entered into the BA, Angela reflects on her emotions concerning this process:

I think the BA program is great... I mean I think the fact that everything is in English makes me feel at home... I feel like I'm at home here because everyone speaks English and I flourish here. Like all the things that I know I can pass on to my classmates and they see it as like "We are glad Angela is here" because they say that "the fact that you speak with us and participate and we all get along. You create this environment and you make us appreciate what we are going through.

Angela brought up an array of strong emotions, such as empathy, gratefulness, rapport, security, among others, when describing her career entry. She was also aware of the pros

and cons of studying and working at the same time. It is evident that she understands the juggling of these two activities will pay off in the long run of her professional development. However, what we think is at the forefront is that the fact that the program is in English made her feel at home and accepted. This is a reoccurring theme in return migrant students in our program. The BA is the place where they are accepted in society here in Mexico.

Gemma voices her emotions regarding how she feels about becoming a BA student:

It brings joy to my life at certain moment and I found that I was actually very indecisive about the degree program that I had chosen. At the beginning I was like "Am I really made out for this?" Throughout the semesters, and with my classmates, this is something that I see myself doing and I belong to it... I wanna do by the time I am 30, and I like studying, finding the joy in it. At first I was very skeptical, cause I don't know if it was actually made for me.

Although she questioned if she could become a teacher, Gemma recognized that she is now a member of a BA and also the EFL profession. We need to highlight that she had doubts about wanting and being able to do this. This we think goes back to the stereotype in Mexico that all you need is to speak English to be an English teacher. Over time this membership of the BA group provides her with security as to how she identifies herself in the present and future.

4.4 Comparing educational systems

Having been educated in both countries, participants were able to see the differences of both educational systems. They have experienced the differences first as students in the US and later as students and teachers in Mexico. Laura, for example, moved to the US when she was three years old. Her mother was already living there and asked for her children to be brought by any means to the US. Laura started her education there and when comparing both educational systems, she clearly makes a distinction between the involvement that parents showed in their children's education in both countries:

In the States, the parents would get together, and see how their kids were advancing and improving, and here it's like each time you have a grade to give to them, the parent would be like: Ok, you sign and that's it. They wouldn't discuss more.

Laura's experience in how she has perceived the Mexican system is not positive. She compares what her mother had to do for her and how she sees that parents in Mexico are not as involved in their children's education:

... Every day my mom had to sign my homework, so that my teacher could go through it and that I had actually done it and it would also let you see that the parents were involved in the education. And here, they don't really, I mean, from what I see they just send them to school and the teacher has to give you everything, like the values and at the same time teach your subjects and [I think] it's like: no, you can't do that.

Laura has navigated two educational systems, but her transition into the Mexican educational system as an English teacher is discouraging and disempowering, provoking a conflict in the way she perceives what education should be and the realities of dealing with parents who do not take responsibility for their children's education. Similarly, Angela even describes the educational systems as completely opposite, emphasizing that in Mexico, teachers do not pay close attention to the students' individual needs:

Well, in the States it was very structured, and I think here the school system is very different because when I see my daughter and how I teach as well, we don't focus enough on the individualities that each learner may have, I think. It's like also very rigid. I think that a lot of teachers are unmotivated because of external factors, because maybe they're not getting paid on time or maybe they have too many students or the parents don't support enough.

Even when she mentions similar factors that Laura brought up to the discussion, Angela goes further and implies that teachers can be demotivated due to their working conditions, which are different from those working conditions of the teachers in the United States.

However, Angela also mentioned how she has seen that the values attached to the “privilege” of going to school are not appreciated in Mexico, and how in her case, her mother made her realize what she had and she valued it:

But as the generations go by, I think values have been damaged. They don't care if they don't do homework anymore. When I was in school I was like “Oh my God! If I don't turn it in, something's gonna happen. My grades are gonna go down”. When I was in high school, I ditched classes like twice and it was the first time my mom whipped my butt because she said: It's an honor to go to school, and if you don't wanna go to school, you're gonna go walking. And they made me appreciate it.

Comparing both educational systems can be influenced by their experience as students, but, as we can see in these excerpts, participants now evaluate those systems considering their own vivid experiences as teachers. They compare academic aspects of both systems. The participants' recollections are often portrayed as nostalgic and yearning for the old, and sometimes, it seems that their descriptions portray one system as “better than the other”.

Nevertheless, considering their current position as English teachers in public and private schools, these participants have developed a sense of duty and they try to help their own students when they find out that they have a return migrant in their own classes, as it will be further explained.

4.5 Helping other returnees

As English teachers, participants find similarities between their own life experiences and their students'. Oscar is another participant who was taken by his family to the US at the age of eleven months old and spent almost 21 year living in the US, with constant vacation trips to Mexico. He has studied his BA and is currently finishing his MA at the University of Guanajuato and he has taught English for six years. He has researched the topic of return migration in public schools. He wants to help those return migrants to become visible in the educational system. About this, he states the following:

I think that's something really important that I need to consider as a contribution to working together with the parents of students and the administrators, because I mean through my research I found that these students were still invisible with the administrator. So what does that tell us? It tells us that nothing is being done for the specific linguistic needs of the students in this context. So perhaps it's something I could work on.

As a result of the participants' academic trajectory, they have witnessed how teachers sometimes disregard the return migrants in their classes or they do not consider the value they could bring to the classroom. Instead of using this knowledge to their advantage, teachers tend to avoid it and with this they create a difficult environment for the return migrant who is adapting to a new educational system. In other cases, teachers gave all the responsibility to the return migrant to take over the class, as Gemma recalls:

My teacher in high school [in Mexico] made me suffered. She felt offended every time I read something because my classmates said that I spoke better than the teacher. I mean... I didn't say it, they did, but they took it personal. And she asked me to leave her class, she told me she would give me a 10 as a final grade, but she did not want me in her class.

For Gemma this was discouraging as she did not understand why the teacher was doing this. What we can see here is how this teacher in particular portrays a common scenario of English teachers in Mexico with low proficiency of the language they teach and they feel threatened by a return migrant with native-like proficiency.

Gemma's story resonates with Laura's. In this sense, Laura has a precise point of view of what she would not do to her students:

I wouldn't treat them [my students] as I was treated. For instance, I wouldn't make them do the class, and I would send them a message that I could identify them are returnees, or they are native speakers. I would set them aside: if you feel like something to say, or if you can participate more, and help me out, feel free, go ahead.

From Oscar and Laura's excerpts, we see two ways return migrants navigate becoming English teachers. Having experienced teachers on both sides of the border, their perceptions of teachers reflect both positive and negative views. Now that they are English teachers themselves, they rely on these past experiences to make their own decisions about how to support return migrants in their classrooms. They demonstrate a personal commitment to meet their language and educational needs.

4.6 Looking into the future

When analyzing their own teaching experience, Laura acknowledged the advantages of being a "native speaker", but she also recognized that in order to be a teacher, she needed something else:

Being a returnee or a native does not assure the fact that you are gonna be a teacher. I personally have experienced that fact that I have a hard time explaining grammar points. I actually have to sit down, analyzing and trying to figure them out, and then I can teach to my students. Being a native speaker or a returnee, all you have really is being the model of the language, but further than that, it does not assure that you're gonna be a good teacher. It doesn't mean that with the knowledge you have, you're gonna be able to express it, or share it with your students.

Currently, the Mexican government has implemented a new plan where return migrants have the possibility to become English teachers in one year, after taking a course on classroom techniques and classroom management. Even though this invests more time than the previous DACA six-week course, the plan takes for granted that they have the language skills and a short course will suffice their limitations as potential English teachers. We can see how Laura is keenly aware that teaching English is more than speaking it. Oscar refers to the Mexican government initiative in the following manner:

I think [forcing returnees to be English teachers] is bad idea. One because for us in our profession it's a step back in what we've been working towards to achieve which is the professionalization of the area and for it to be more academic. And also this is a bad thing for these people who are returning because they aren't being given other alternatives. It's like: "Okay so you know another language, just teach. That's all you can do here in Mexico. You can't do anything else".

In Mexico the stereotype is quite strong that the return migrant is only capable of teaching English. This has played into a labeling where the bilingual immigrant is seen as someone inferior as he or she has no ability to study or become something else in a professional sense. Boxed into this situation, they have made the most of the process to integrate themselves into the community. However, for these students, they have chosen to follow this path and they now embrace their profession and want to become better at it, as Angela points out:

Well, I want to finish my BA, but I want to go into the Masters and then I would love to become a teacher trainer like to go and give courses because I think that I have a lot of things to offer. My goal is to become a teacher trainer. (Angela)

Angela seems to have plans for her future as professional. Others have thought about studying an MA, and taking advantage of what the Mexican government offers, such as scholarships to study a graduate degree, as in Gemma's case:

I'm thinking about doing the Masters, and I'm still trying to decide on the one specifically here in Applied Linguistics, or one in the States. And I have been talking to my tutor about that, and he is guiding me to stay for the one here, and telling me like "Oh if you get it, you could get the scholarship. They'll pay you to come to the school". So, he is like giving me all these pointers so that I'll stay for this one. So, I'm still deciding, and he is making a very convincing point. So, I'll start right after I finish the BA, just get in to the MA, right after back. (Gemma)

In the case of Oscar, he is in his last semester of the MA in Applied Linguistics in English Language Teaching with us and he is considering pursuing PhD studies, as he does not want to stop at this level:

... One thing that I've kept in mind is to not stop working because the moment I stop working, I feel bad. If I take a day off, because I said I could have done this yesterday not now doing it today. Es como "*No dejes para mañana lo que puedes hacer hoy*" something like that. And so, I think that's something that I've worked on and I've done, all I need to do is keep working keep working. (Oscar)

Oscar is probably one of those cases in which his personal experience has influenced his current professional life. He is interested in the topic and his goal is to keep working on the topic to be able to help others in the same situation.

5. Conclusions

In this article, we examined the professional lives of six return migrants who decided to enroll in the BA in ELT offered at the University of Guanajuato and become formal English teachers in Mexico. As mentioned before, it is often the case for English teachers to begin teaching without formal training and this is the principal issue that affects their initial development as professionals. As such this article has also focused on gaining a better understanding of the challenges this situation causes for them, while studying this BA program and teaching EFL in public schools in Mexico at the same time.

These return migrants have plans to integrate themselves within the profession and it is clear that their main objective is to contribute to society and help other returnees, such as themselves. Overall, the voices of these six show how complex the social reinsertion of return migrants can be and how they continuously face struggles to find academic and job opportunities due to, sometimes, ineffective educational programs. We think this shows a natural process of how they become attached to the profession through formal preparation as an EFL teacher. This leads us to believe that educational deficiencies in the Mexican educational system help to maintain this phenomenon rather than addressing it.

The above undoubtedly calls for closer attention and more research which focuses its attention on revealing the transitions return migrants suffer from the educational systems in the United States and Mexico. Also, more effective educational programs which aim at making their lives more about inclusion rather than exclusion in the education systems and labor markets they work in. This inclusion refers to their being recruited and prepared for the profession which will hopefully eliminate their stigmatized labeling. In short, we think that the focus is about finding a way to value what these return migrants have and to make them a stronger part of society avoiding created stigmatization based on language.

This valuable understanding sheds light on the intricacies of lived experiences and the resources they bring as language teachers and learners, transitioning through the stereotypes placed on them by the educational system. Recruiting and preparing returnees to become EFL teachers is of importance to help meet the needs of the different levels of education: federal, state, local and university. We recommend that these returnees incorporate themselves with mono-national Mexican peers within educational programs that prepare teachers in order that all learn from each other and are aware of how each are of value by their integration within the EFL profession. For policy makers, it is of concern to not overlook who these individuals are. They are labeled as being deficient in Spanish or in English, making their educational insertion in Mexico problematic. Policy makers – at federal, state and local levels - must provide the means to include this type of students and be sensitive to who they are within an educational context rather than viewing them as a resource to cover up a national English language teaching deficit.

Finally opening a dialogue of these issues will help to make sense of these experiences and in turn this will be of value for all involved. To conclude, these implications and recommendations are also of interest for other countries that may have similar contexts. What we have learned above all else in this experiencing of working with return migrant students is that there is no-one-size fits all answer. With each new student, there is complex story that leads to other possibilities and as such may be a wider issue of a never-ending story of social transition through migration.

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Teaching Intervention to Support Reading Skills in Student with Intellectual Disability

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Abstract

This article examines whether students with intellectual disability (ID) can respond to a teaching tasks with multiple reading skills in the secondary education. Research methodology is mixed with qualitative and quantitative data. We exploited the methodology of observation and the methodology of intervention in a student with moderate ID who was studying at a class of general middle school in region of Peloponnese, Greece. The program used for the student was the Targeted, Individual, Structured, and Integrated Program for Students with Special Educational Needs (TISIPfSENs). A questionnaire was also used, which was distributed to 103 adults. The results of the survey revealed that the student with ID was able to respond to word decoding skills and comprehension skills. Still, adults seemed to have a positive attitude towards use of TISIPfSENs. In the conclusions, it was emphasized that the TISIPfSENs can support multiple reading skills for students with ID.

Keywords: intellectual disability, TISIPfSENs, reading skills.

1. Introduction

In Greece, in the context of the inclusive education policy for students with intellectual disabilities (ID), the provision of parallel teaching support is applied under Law 3699/2008. According to this institution, the general education teacher supports all students in the general classroom, and the special education teacher only helps the student with ID. However, despite the placement of students with ID in the classroom, it is difficult to participate in the curriculum because of the ineffective teaching approach (Strogilos, Tragoulia, & Kaila, 2015). This study attempts to highlight differentiated teaching interventions through an educational program to enable students with secondary school IDs to be able to meet as much as possible the learning objectives of their school classroom.

1.1 Intellectual disability

According to the diagnostic tool “Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders fifth edition (DSM V)”, intellectual disability (ID) is defined with the intelligence and the adaptive behavior (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). As such the diagnosis of intellectual disability is characterized of lacks in mental and adaptive function behavior at the same time during adulthood. Students with ID have difficulties in their academic skills due to certain their learning

characteristics. They have difficulty in keeping their attention and focusing on essential elements of the learning process. They exhibit weakened short-term memory (for example, to keep the teacher's instructions) and working memory (for example, keeping information in memory while performing another cognitive process) while their involvement in learning is suppressed as they have not motivations (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2017). A possible previous failure accompanies them throughout the course of education, and so they have a sense of failure. Still, they present deficits in oral skills (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2017).

- Students with intellectual disability have difficulties in reading skills.
- TISIPfSENs is a proposal for the teaching of multiple reading skills to students with intellectual disability.
- The use of visual meaning facilitators and informal pedagogical evaluation tools are some of the elements that contribute to effective differentiated teaching intervention.

1.2 Reading interventions for students with ID

A study by van Wingerden, Segers, van Balkom and Verhoeven (2017) examined the linguistic and cognitive factors that affect students' reading skills with a 60.38 IQ (Intelligence Quotient). The researchers compared the skills of reading comprehension, decoding, acoustic comprehension, and the factors that contribute to their conquest, such as vocabulary, grammar, short term memory, rapid automatic naming and functional memory, among students with ID and their peers developing normally. They concluded that the skills of students with ID fall short of the skills of their peer group.

Until recently teachers of reading skills in weak readers or students with ID were focusing in teaching of sight words. In international bibliography there are a lot of researches which highlight the efficiency of teaching sight words to weak readers or students with special educational needs (SEN). Spector (2011) when referring to students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) claimed that this population can learn sight words by evaluating differential positive reinforcement, systematic prompting and visual supports. Also, Van der Bijl, Alant, and Lloyd (2006) studied the techniques of modified orthography (MO), traditional orthography (TO), their combination and their comparison. In their results they stated that all three techniques help students with ID and mostly the combination of MO and TO when using right the images which can contribute effectively in the teaching of sight words without preventing students with ID from learning the printed form of the word.

The use of images has a controversial role in the teaching of sight words to students with ID. According to Fossett and Mirenda (2006) many researchers claim that the use of images distracts students making them losing focus when it comes to the recognition of the word. However, they suggest that images can be useful if they are used in ways that promote active and not passive learning. These same researchers made a search to compare paired associate and picture-to-text matching techniques for teaching a small corpus of unknown words to two children with developmental disabilities. Results showed that the participants dealt with activities which demanded the active combination of images and words. According to the same researchers, the question of using the image for the teaching of sight words doesn't need to focus on whether the images should be used but how they should be used. Furthermore, Didden et al. (2006) refer that the sight word can be incorporated in the image and that the fading of the image has proven to be effective in the teaching of children with ID. During the fading of the incentives (image for example) the focus of the student moves gradually in the sight word. Results of the research indicated that the procedure word alone was more effective. However, this teaching can make students with ID make mistakes. During the research certain students with ID had a faster and successful improvement while being taught through picture-fading. In addition, the same

researchers concluded that the sight words teaching could be the first step to a complete educational program of reading for students with ID. Finally, according to Richardson et al. (2017) another possible strategy which could ensure that the student pays attention in both the image and the word is the matching of words and images which can benefit the acquirement of key-word reading.

Historically, attention to reading instruction for students with ID focused on sight word recognition, rather than instruction on decoding or comprehending (Bouck & Bone, 2018). However, the teaching of sight words shouldn't be the only way for teaching literacy to students with ID because students are taught words as whole symbols, without considering the matches of letter-sound and they would only recognize the taught words (Allor et al., 2018). During recent years, the interest of researchers for the reading skills of students with ID moves a step further. More particularly, they study the way of acquiring reading and lingual skills based on the belief that the students with ID can learn how to read similarly with their typically grown peers but in a slower tempo (Allor et al., 2010). According to Gargiulo and Bouck (2017), a complete reading program for students with ID needs to have activities of phonemic awareness (the ability to identify sounds units words), phonics (the ability to sound out words), fluency (pace and precision of reading), vocabulary (number of words known or acquired) and comprehension (the ability to understand what is read).

Reading is a complex procedure and is accomplished through abiding the ability of decoding written symbols which are connected while abide to grammar and syntax rules and they produce syllables, words and sentences while they contribute to the understanding skill as a procedure of receiving, process and use the meaning of the word, the sentence or the text that someone listens or reads (Wood-Fields, Judge & Watson, 2015). Referring to the ability of decoding, it has been claimed that typically grown students need to have the phonological awareness skill, namely the ability to recognize the relation between sounds and matching letters and the rapid naming skill to acquire it (Soltani & Roslan, 2013). Decoding is a crucial skill for the inexperienced or weak readers since they could enter and study a decodable text (Cheatham & Allor, 2012). Researchers suggest that despite their difficulties in knowledge growth students with ID can acquire decoding skills. A study of Soltani and Roslan (2013) showed that phonological awareness is a requirement for the decoding skill independently of other phonological abilities and IQ. Furthermore, the results of the bibliography review of Hill (2016) highlight that researchers went beyond the typical approach based on sight words in students with ID, materializing reading interventions based on phonics and highlighted the successful results of students in reading (letter-sound correspondence skills). Also, according to Lemons et al. (2016) many students with ID including children with Down Syndrome (DS), have teachers who are not sure about the kind of reading teaching they should use to amplify their performances. Teachers of children with DS and ID should incorporate more strategies than sight words approach. The same researchers claim that the teachers should provide completed reading interventions which should include activities of phonological awareness and phonics. Similarly, Baylis and Snowling (2012) with their study results encourage teachers to use letter-sound-knowledge activities in students with DS. The goal of their study was to plan an effective program which would promote the reading skills in students with DS, the letter-sound-knowledge skills and the phonological awareness and then examine if the program would bring general benefits to the decoding through non-word reading. Results indicated that al 10 children who took part in the research showed a general amelioration in reading of separate words and texts. Phonic-based instruction can benefit the growth of literacy in children with DS.

Literacy procedure also includes the ability to comprehend any text given to them. Allor et al. (2010) examined if the students with IQ (40-69) had an improvement in their reading skills and if they were better when taught a complete reading intervention. The teaching intervention included multiple skill strands, as concepts of print (title and the authors' name of a

book, detecting text from left to right showing individual words), phonological and phonemic awareness (with hand rhythm), letter knowledge, phonemic decoding, word identification, fluency, comprehension strategies, (making and checking predictions, sequencing, making inferences, story grammar, content webbing, and writing summaries) vocabulary, and oral language development. Results showed that students had a statistic improvement in every skill. Similarly, Alberto, Waugh and Fredrick (2013) tried to study reading, teaching and understanding of individual words and connected text with the use of simultaneous prompting. Its' study provided data to support a systemic approach for the teaching of connected text as a material of sight words being taught to make ID students capable of reading a text. Those students had generalized the sight words skills to become independent readers. Also, Buckley and Bird (1993) suggest the following methodology steps for the teaching of reading: acquirement of a fundamental sight vocabulary from the student, identification and matching of sight words, reading and its meaning, the certainty that the student has learned the words he's been taught making sure that the student will enjoy his success, teaching of new words which are necessary for the creation of phrases and sentences, focus in the meaning of words (through real objects or images), understanding of sentences (simplification of grammar and syntax) and finally, teaching of individual vowels, the voices produced by letters , and syllables having as a goal for the student to point a letter and linguistically identifying the sound of it.

Students with ID usually have a limited access when it comes to reading texts because of their limited reading skills, limited access to the teaching procedure, non-support and beliefs of the teachers. For the support of understanding interventions, the story was differentiated by modifying the story, making the story shorter, giving the hero the students' name or by using images and having discussion about the text (Shurr & Taber-Doughty, 2017). According to Fajardo et al. (2014) the technique "easy to read", or that of a simplified text is one of the strategies teachers use to ameliorate the reading-understanding performance of the students with ID to read long texts or texts with technical difficulties. Jones, Long, and Finlay (2007) in their study claim that incorporating images-symbols to texts. Their study focused in the use of Widgit Rebus symbols (Widgit Software). The sample was made of 19 adults with IQ between 50 to 79. Results made it rational to conclude that the addition of Widgit Rebus symbols in written text greatly improves the understanding of some adults with moderate and severe learning problems. However, future research is demanded to reproduce this analysis, extend it in other image-symbol systems and providing instructions about the way with which symbols must be incorporated in a text.

1.3 Targeted, Individual, Structured, and Integrated Program for Students with Special Educational Needs (TISIPfSENs)

This article uses differential teaching of multiple reading skills in a student with ID of a general class utilizing a Targeted, Individual, Structured, and Integrated Program for Students with Special Education Needs (TISIPfSENs) (Drossinou-Korea, 2017). TISIPfSENs is analyzed in five phases as it follows:

The first phase of the TISIPfSENs includes the systemic empirical observation during which the teacher of special education studies the case of the student with ID and according to his experience concludes in hetero-observations concerning the individual, family and school history as well as the diagnosis of the Center of Diagnosis, Differential Diagnosis and Support or the medical-pedagogical centers. So, the teacher of special education builds a first image for the students learning profile (Drossinou-Korea, 2017). The learning profile of the student will be completed with the second phase of the TISIPfSENs. The second phase is utilized in the framework of the informal pedagogical evaluation and is suggested for the recording of the skill level of the student in different sectors through the completion of Checklists of control of basic skills

(CBS) (Drossinou-Korea, 2017). In the third phase, the plan of the educational program is structured. The basic elements a teaching plan must have among others are: the time schedule of the teaching intervention, the educational goal and its' analysis in teaching steps (Task analysis) (Christakis, 2013). Finally, the teacher of special education needs to define and record the pedagogical materials. Their choice is done based on the level of the students' intellectual ability, his learning difficulties and his skills. The Forth phase of the TISIPfSEnSs includes the realization of the educational goal through direct teaching (one by one) using differential teaching methods in the classroom. The place in which the educational intervention is going to take place is defined in this phase (Drossinou-Korea, 2017). Finally, the fifth phase of the TISIPfSEnSs includes the evaluation of the student and the teaching program as well. The student undergoes an evaluation with similar activities with which he was taught and then he demonstrates whether he understood what he learned or not (Drossinou-Korea, 2017).

2. Purpose

The goal of this study is to highlight multi-language skills teaching intervention through the application of TISIPfSEnSs. Specifically, we examine the following research questions:

How a TISIPfSEnSs contributes in the enforcement of multiple reading skills in a student with ID according to quality data?

Furthermore, which is the opinion of adults referring to the contribution of the TISIPfSEnSs in the enforcement of reading skills in a student with ID according to quantity data?

3. Methodology

The methodology of this study is mixed as it is made of quality and quantity data (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2006). The qualitative data of the research was extracted from the student case study with ID. The quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire, which was completed by some adults.

3.1 *Sample*

In this research we included a case research of a student that was diagnosed by the Center of Diagnosis, Differential Diagnosis and Support with moderate ID. He is in a general class of the middle school in the district of the Peloponnese in Greece. In the general class there is the teacher of general education and the teacher of special education who is sitting next to the particular student. Furthermore, 103 adults from the district of the Peloponnese took part in the research. Out of these 67 were teachers of general education (65%), 22 were teachers of special education (21.4 %), 6 were parents (5.8%) and 2 special education stuff (1.9%). There were many female participants (72.8 %) against males (27.2 %). The adults who took part in the research were asked to evaluate key aspects of the teaching intervention applied to the student with ID through TISIPfSEnSs.

3.2 *Research tools*

The quality data from the research of the ID student was gathered through the methodology of observation and with the informal pedagogical evaluation. This was done by using the Checklists of basic skills (CBS) of learning readiness and the special education needs according to the Framework Curriculum of Special Education (FCSE) and the Form of the Teaching Interaction (FTI) (Drossinou-Korea, 2017).

(a) Checklists of basic skills (CBS)

The lists are designed to examine either the presence or not of specific characteristics and behaviors. They can be constructed for every each field of development, such as social, sentimental and cognitive skills. Checklists need to be structured by the teachers. Control lists are useful and effective (Herr & Ed, 2012). The use of visual representations for the presentation of data from evaluation activities makes their understanding easier (Given, 2008). CBS of learning readiness contains areas of observation when it comes to Oral language, Psychomotor Activity, Mental skills and Emotional organization skills (Figure 1). CBS of the FCSE contains areas of observation, Learning readiness, Basic academic skills (reading, understanding, writing, speech production), Social skills, Creative activities and Pre-vocational readiness (Figure 2).

The completion of CBS is done through excel panels as it follows (Drossinou-Korea, 2017): in the horizontal lines, teacher exhibits the skills of every area that are evaluated according to interactive pedagogical relationship and experience of the students' performances in class and in behavior. In the vertical lines, teacher exhibits the school semesters regarding the typical and mandatory education counting in ascending order from number 1 which corresponds to the first semester of attending kindergarten up to the 26th semester of study, corresponding to the third grade of the second semester of the (6th class of Secondary education) Lyceum. The horizontal compact line that penetrates the horizontal lines, is the "base line" (yellow color) which corresponds to the current semester of the students according to their chronological and/or school age (In this study case of a student, the line is yellow and it was placed on the first semester of the third grade of middle school). The first fluctuation line (black color) shows the disturbed or normal performance of the students in each skill during the initial observation. The second fluctuation line (red color) shows the disturbed or normal performance of the students in each skill during the final observation.

(b) Form of the Teaching Interaction (FTI)

FTI is the less standardized way of observation data collection and does not include predefined questions and answers (field notes) (Given, 2008, p. 342). FTI is abstract data which can be written or recorded. This form includes the students' data, the teaching goal, the date of every teaching intervention and the recording of important crosstalk between teacher and student during the daily teaching intervention.

For the quantity data a special questionnaire was made based on the research question. In the first part of the questionnaire were the questions which outline the social profile of the participants. The second part included questions designed to examine key points of teaching intervention to support language skills in ID students using TISIPfSEns. Questions were of Likert type in which the respondent was called to state the degree of agreement or disagreement in a scale of five points (1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Undecided, 4= Disagree, 5 Strongly Disagree).

3.3 Methodological procedure of quality research

The research was conducted in a general high school classroom by the special education teacher who supported the student in literary lessons. The teaching intervention was in the course "Ancient Greek Texts from Translation – Dramatic Poetry – Helen of Euripides" and lasted 9 months. The course of research was based on its five phases governing TISIPfSEns:

3.3.1 First phase of TISIPfSEns

Initially the school stuff and the parents of the student had an interview with the researcher-teacher and according to his experience he concluded with hetero-observations referring to the individual, family and school history. The student with moderate ID was 17 years

old. He was studying in the third grade (first semester) of general middle school in an agricultural area in Peloponnese.

3.3.2 Second phase of TISIPfSENs

According to the CBS of learning readiness in “oral speech” the student was evaluated from the initial observations as quite limited in skills of “clear and precise expression” with a great deviation from the base line (1st grade of primary school, 2nd semester). In “mental abilities” the researcher-teacher of special education recorded lower levels of performance for the student with ID in the areas of “working memory”, “visual memory” and “acoustic memory” (4th grade of primary school 2nd semester). Furthermore, the area that has to do with the “focus concentration” was also recorded (2nd grade of primary school 1st semester) (Figure 1). According to the CBS of the frame of the curriculum of special education there were inconsistencies and poor literacy and linguistic skills of the student with ID (Figure 2). Referring to the skills of writing and reading the student could recognize, spell and write all the vowels and consonants of the Greek alphabet and he could write some words such as his name and surname (1st grade of primary school 1st semester). However, he couldn’t read fluently, analyze and synthesize enough syllables-combinations like (consonant + vowel). Furthermore, the student couldn’t write and read many words except his full name and some specific words required for his own living (toilet, hi etc.). The student couldn’t understand a simple and brief text except some sight’s words. In general, the student with ID didn’t have any phonic skills mechanisms and phonemic awareness. According to the above the student with ID couldn’t stand up to the goals of the course of ancient Greek Literature Drama “Helen” and that’s where the teaching intervention was done.

3.3.3 Third phase of TISIPfSENs

An educational program was planned for the course of Ancient Greek drama of Euripides translated in Modern Greek. The educational program was 2 hours per week in a general class of middle school through the method of direct teaching. The teaching goal was for the student to be able to “decode words by understanding simple sentences” which was divided into 10 teaching steps. The pedagogical material was individualized. We used the multi dimensions with emphasis to the (3D) dossiers for the teaching as well as the meaning the words in this intervention. Dossiers included cards with columns: every card included 10 words while the second column included images. In the third column there were 10 matching movable cards-words and certain visual meaning facilitators which the student was called to identify with stable words when the last column included activities of word coding and decoding. Furthermore, a 3D reading machine was modified for the teaching of understanding little texts. 3D reading machines were structured in two levels: the lower level (cup of the box) includes images in the form of comics which students put in logical chronological order (start, middle and end) to complete the story. The upper level included a story map of the story (characters, place, problem, solution, self-evaluation of the student).

3.3.4 Fourth phase of TISIPfSENs

The student using the first column of the card had to observe words and repeat their spelling with the help of the teacher. Afterwards, the student was called to understand the meaning of the words (second column) using the images as a motive of attention enforcement. In the third column the student with ID was called to correspond the stable cards with the moveable ones. In certain moveable cards there were only words and not images. In this fact, the student observed the morphology of the words. Based on the belief that decoding words would help for the better teaching of sight words, the student was called in the fourth column to write down as many words as he could or decode every letter or syllable separately with the help of rhythm (clapping hands). Furthermore, many activities were made in the project folder for the better decoding of words (Figure 3 & 4).

Teaching of understanding skills with 3D reading machine (Figure 5): initially, the student was called to observe images (in the form of a comic) and read the brief text of the dialogue. The dialogues were made of sight words with which the ID student was taught. Subsequently, the student would put in order the images he was given (from three to six) so they would match in sense with the storyline of the story. However, another activity had to be made for the student to understand the plot of the story. In specific, the student with his teacher played a role game putting the heroes of their story and their dialogues in a table. Afterwards, the student needed to fill the story map with moveable cards which had sight word (which he has been taught) on them (Which is the lesson that he is being taught? Who is the author of the book? Who are the heroes of the story? Where does the story take place? What is the problem of the heroes? What solution do they find?). In the end the student should self-evaluate his performance and the teaching material by putting the emoji that expresses him (happy, sad and indifferent).

3.3.5 Fifth phase of TISIPfSEns

The teacher-researcher of special education proceeded to the evaluation of the teaching program. He gathered all the data of the CBS and the FTIs (through sound-recorded visual and video material). Then, wrote down the results of the teaching intervention.

3.4 Methodology process of quantity research

The procedure of extraction of quantity research lasted 9 months and was as follows: Initially a bibliography review was made, then the goals were formulated, the research questions were written and then the research tool was designed. Afterwards a pilot research was made, to note possible uncertainties in the formulation of questions and to finalize the questionnaire. For the validity of the structure of the questionnaire a pilot research was done in twenty-eight adults. The validity pointer of the Cronbach-a questionnaire gave a result of 0.88, for the 30 variables. Before the conduct of the research there was a full update to the participants for the theme and the goal of the research, the procedure and the educational benefit of it. Furthermore, the participation of the teachers in the research was voluntary. Afterwards the data was collected and was processed and analyzed with the use of the statistic package S.P.S.S. (edition 23.0).

4. Results

According to the CBS of learning readiness (Figure 1): In “oral speech” the student was evaluated a semester above the initial observation in abilities of “clear and precise expression” (2nd grade of primary school, 2nd semester). Also, after the intervention mostly in “working memory” and “visual memory” there was an improvement of a semester accordingly (2nd grade of primary school, 2nd semester). Similarly, in “attention focus” there was a progress in the performance of the student (3rd grade of primary school 1st semester). According to the initial observation in “sentimental organization” the student with ID showed a low “self-sentiment” and didn’t show enough interest to learn. However, after the teaching intervention there was an improvement in the certain areas of a semester accordingly. During, the initial observation in the CBS of the FCSE, the student was lacking in reading skills (Figure 2). This made it impossible for him to attend the curriculum of his class. Observing more his basic skills like reading, understanding and writing, these results came up during the final observation: the student had an improvement of two semesters (2nd grade of primary school 1st semester) in reading skills (like phonological awareness and letter-sound correspondence) when in comprehension skills there was important improvement: the student had a progress of one semester comparing to the initial observation (1st grade of primary school 2nd semester).

According to the FTI we had the following observations: In general, the differentiated material enforced the “attention focus” and the “interest to learn” of the student. The student ameliorated his clear and precise oral expression referring to understanding questions of the story. The images of the story map were a motive for the student to answer clearly to questions like “who the heroes of the story are?” etc. Similarly, images which accompanied sight words contributed in the enforcement of the visual memory. To the matching of sight words, the student had as much time he wanted to respond to the activity. During the matching of sight words, our initial thought was to remove the images from the moveable cards, but this wasn’t effective so, the images remained in moveable cards with difficult words. When the words had two or three syllables with the sequence of vowel-consonant the student did better observing the word and matching it with the moveable card. Referring to decoding skills, we gave the student the chance to write alone as many words as he could. He found interesting the activity in which handclaps determined the letter or the syllable he should spell. However, except the dossiers we had to organize an extra folder with more decoding activities. The student managed, to read 80 new words out of 120 which was our initial goal. The teacher-researcher, using the 80 words, constructed small text (such as a comic) to evaluate the student's comprehension skills. So, the student managed to understand the plot of Euripides ancient drama “Helen”. He learned basic points of the story with the help of the story map. For the consolidation of the story’s understanding we had to make a “role game”. Finally, the self-evaluation of the student in the 3D reading machine contributed positive to his self-sentiment.

According to the questionnaire the participants had a positive point of view towards the contribution of the TISIPfSEnS which promoted a complete reading program to students with ID as their answers were between neutrality and complete agreement having as an average score 4.28 out of 5. With their answers they highlighted the most important elements of the TISIPfSEnS which promote reading skills of students with ID. In particular:

To the question about the usefulness of individualizing student instruction for students with ID, 71.8% answered they agree or they strongly agree it is useful, 28.2% showed neutrality and less than 5% answered that it hasn’t any usefulness (Table 1).

Table 1. Individualizing student instruction

	Frequency	Percentage%	Cumulative percent %
Disagree	5	4.9	4.9
Undecided	24	23.3	28.2
Agree	33	32.0	60.2
Strongly Agree	41	39.8	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

To the question about the usefulness of the evaluation tool “Form of teaching interaction” the outcome seems positive without negative opinions. 89.3% answered they agree or strongly agree it useful when just a 10.7% showed neutrality (Table 2).

Table 2. Form of teaching interaction

	Frequency	Percentage%	Cumulative percent %
Undecided	11	10.7	10.7
Agree	44	42.7	53.4
Strongly Agree	48	46.6	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

To the question about the usefulness of the “Informal Pedagogical evaluation” the outcome seems positive without negative opinions. 87.3% answered they agree or strongly agree it useful when just a 12.7% showed neutrality (Table 3).

Table 3. Informal pedagogical evaluation

	Frequency	Percentage%	Cumulative percent %
Disagree	1	1.0	1.0
Undecided	11	10.7	11.7
Agree	53	51.5	63.1
Strongly Agree	38	36.9	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

About the degree in which the differentiation of t of the text helps students with ID in their reading skills, the participants answered positive or neutral. 97.1% answered they agree or strongly agree it is useful when the rest 2.9% showed neutrality (Table 4).

Table 4. Differentiation of the text

	Frequency	Percentage%	Cumulative percent %
Undecided	3	2.9	2.9
Agree	55	53.4	56.3
Strongly Agree	45	43.7	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

About the degree in which the 3D reading machine helps students with ID in their reading skills, the participants answered positively or neutrally. 97.1% answered they agree or strongly agree it is helpful when 2.9% showed neutrality (Table 5).

Table 5. 3D reading machine

	Frequency	Percentage%	Cumulative percent %
Undecided	3	2.9	2.9
Agree	39	37.9	40.8
Strongly Agree	61	59.2	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

About the degree in which the “dossier” helps students with ID in their reading skills the participants answered positively or neutrally. 98.1% answered they agree or strongly agree it is helpful when the rest 1.9% showed neutrality (Table 6).

Table 6. Dossier

	Frequency	Percentage%	Cumulative percent %
Undecided	2	1.9	1.9
Agree	27	26.2	28.2
Strongly Agree	74	71.8	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

To the question how helpful the images for the reading skills of students with ID are, the opinion of the participants seems positive, without negative answers. 87.4% answered they agree or strongly agree they are helpful when 12.6% showed neutrality (Table 7).

Table 7. Pictures – visual meaning facilitators

	Frequency	Percentage%	Cumulative percent %
Undecided	13	12.6	12.6
Agree	41	39.8	52.4
Strongly Agree	49	47.6	100.0
Total	103	100.0	

5. Conclusions

To TISIPfSENs is a useful pedagogical tool for promoting student integration in mainstream schools (Drossinou-Korea, Matousi, Panopoulos & Paraskevopoulou, 2016). In the present study it functioned as an educational tool of teaching procedure that contributed effectively to the enforcement of the reading skills of the student with ID that studies in a general middle school. This was concluded from the recordings of the quality data in FTI and CBS according to which the student with ID had a progress in his reading skills. Furthermore, according to the opinion of adults this was a result of some of the characteristics of the TISIPfSENs, like the individualizing of the program, the form of teaching interaction, the informal Pedagogical evaluation and the differentiated material (differentiation of the text 3D reading machine, dossier and pictures). According to Lemons, Allor, Al Otaiba, and LeJeune (2012) some of the elements a curriculum needs to have, as applied in our research using TISIPfSENs, is to enhance language skills in students with intellectual disabilities and are as follows: defining a realistic teaching objective and dividing it into teaching steps, implementing multiple differentiated activities escalating difficulty, the implementation of direct teaching and the use of informal pedagogical assessment tools.

Referring to the differential material it is useful to say that the use of pictures as a reading skill teaching technique, enforced the attention focus of the student and acted effectively in activities of sight words, decoding words and understanding of brief texts (like comics). The use of picture can enforce the reading skills of students with ID if they are used properly (Bouck & Bone, 2018). Shurr and Taber-Doughty (2017) using the technique of Picture plus discussion (preliminary debate with photos connected to the text before reading. After this phase, and with the photos still in place, the researcher reads aloud to the student and finally, debates based in photos after text reading) showed that students with ID of middle school responded satisfyingly in understanding text activities. Furthermore, through this study was proven that a student with moderate ID can respond quite well in multiple reading skills having as a goal the acquirement of literacy which is the decoding and text understanding (Fajardo et al., 2014; Ryndak, Morrison & Sommerstein, 1999). This is confirmed from Allor et al. (2013) who studied how students with ID could ameliorate and transfer their reading skills in certain texts. The specimen was made of three students with ID. The study took place in two junior schools and a middle school. Results showed that students with ID could read certain texts (properly modified) when showing improved ability of word decoding. Similarly, Alberto et al. (2013) examined a complete literacy program in students with ID through teaching of sight words and phonics which lead in reading and understanding of connected texts. The results of their study gave birth to expectations about the abilities students with ID can develop.

The basic goal of the study was to suggest a teaching methodology to support reading skills. However, an important limitation of this study is that this methodology was only for student with moderate ID. This makes necessary for the TISIPfSENs which focuses in multiple reading skills to be used in more students with moderate ID, so the results that are extracted would be more valid.

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Appendix

Figure 1. CBS of Learning readiness

Figure 2. CBS of framework curriculum for special education

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