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# **Bilingual Project: 25 Years**

Learning English is something essential nowadays. But it can be hard: many people get discouraged as soon as they start studying it. A big factor in this is the relationship acquired with the language; which at the same time depends on the way it is learnt. For instance, I don't know if I would feel the same about English if it wasn't because of what has been taught to me, both in school and high school through the Bilingual Project.

I started learning English from a very young age. Teachers would find different ways to teach us, such as playing games or watching cartoons. I think that's the first step to successfully learn a new language: getting used to it when you are young and learning it in fun ways. When I entered 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade we focused more on grammar, pronunciation, reading... We started to take English on a more serious level. By that time, I didn't understand why. But as I entered high school and became more mature, I realised the reasons and the importance of this.

The bilingual program was now optional, and there was a newer focus on learning English. And, as we got more deeply into learning the proper grammar or tenses, we also got opportunities to improve our skills that we never had in our elementary years. For instance, each year a person from an English-speaking country would come and teach us about topics related with their culture. On a similar level, there was also the exchange program, to connect and speak with native English speakers of our age. Some years these students would come to our classrooms and chat with us. I think these were the best and more entertaining ways to improve our hearing comprehension. In terms of vocabulary, as well as what we saw in these classes, taking other subjects in English, such as Biology or History, helped us get a wider view on it.

Each day we get at least one class in English, so we get used to speaking and hearing the language every day. I'd say that all the exposed before and much more has helped me and my classmates a lot in our process of learning the language. It has also encouraged me to practice more by myself, and to set new goals for my future, since being able to speak English will give me a lot of opportunities. Thinking that the Bilingual Project has been done now for 25 years, I can't imagine how many people have been in my situation and are probably now benefiting from it! That's why I hope this project can be kept for more years in order to reach to as much students as it can, so they can see how learning English can be easy and fun, and that there is nothing to get discouraged from!