



iTEP Case Study: Teacher Testing

Assessing the English Proficiency of
Public School Teachers in Ecuador.

About iTEP

The International Test of English Proficiency (iTEP) was introduced in 2008 to modernize English language assessment with on-demand scheduling, 24-hour grading, and accurate test data. iTEP provides a convenient and cost-effective testing option delivered in a highly secure test center environment or remotely at-home.

iTEP offers academic testing for secondary schools and universities for both admissions and on-campus ESL programs. iTEP also offers a range of career testing used by companies around the world to determine English proficiency needed for hiring and promotion decisions. For more information see www.itexam.com.

Case Summary

In 2018, the government of Ecuador implemented a universal requirement for English teachers in the country: show proof of English-language proficiency to continue teaching students. Due to the increasing importance of the English language in commerce and business, plus the conclusion that a portion of the country's English teachers possessed insufficient skills to fully teach the language, Ecuador chose to require validation of language proficiency moving forward. iTEP Ecuador was awarded the government contract, and iTEP Ecuador representatives worked directly with government officials to design specific reporting metrics, thereby providing Ecuador's education leaders with the exact information and data needed. Reports provided overall scores

indicating skill levels in grammar, listening, writing and speaking. In addition, demographic and school data were also shown. To kick off the partnership, iTEP Ecuador implemented four mass group testing dates in 12 months, effectively testing 6,585 teachers with the iTEP flagship test – the Academic Plus exam.



The Problem

With increasing global commerce and an interconnected world market, the Ecuadorian government has moved to place an emphasis on English language education to provide more opportunities for students and future business leaders. To ensure students receive the best education, teachers from the preschool level up to the university level are now required to

prove English language proficiency. Ecuador's leaders sought a solution focusing on test reliability, test security, and the infrastructure, to quickly test thousands of teachers in the country's various regions, thus providing parents and students reassurance in the skills of their local English teacher.

The Approach

To provide the best possible education to Ecuador's students, testing began in 2018. Regulations required teachers to retest every two years and with each exam, they had to prove effective language skills in speaking, writing, grammar and listening. Scores were needed in an easy-to-read and quantifiable format, providing universal scoring for all teachers, regardless of school district or location. Teachers achieving certain levels of English proficiency received increased compensation for their efforts and skills and had the opportunity to improve their scores for either government accreditation or additional pay.

The iTEP Solution

"Twenty years ago, knowing English was a plus in our country," said Valentina Silva, iTEP Ecuador Business Manager. "Now, it is a must!"

To start this teacher testing project, iTEP Ecuador representatives began implementing additional infrastructure to provide high-level service to the country's teachers. iTEP formed partnerships with schools and universities across the country's regions to create temporary mass testing centers, including the use of physical space, Internet connectivity and equipment, such as computers. iTEP created help desks with extra staffing to provide information and trouble-shooting capabilities in various regions for the large number of teachers testing within the same timeframes. Testing began in December 2018, and four testing dates were

scheduled between December 2018 and November 2019 to provide options for the country's thousands of English teachers. Once teachers registered and tested, they were a part of iTEP's database, meaning they received information about when to retake the exam and even how to improve language proficiency in the future, leading to better scores. Over the past few years, the large in-person testing centers with testing on specified dates were the only options for teachers. Due to the coronavirus and related issues, iTEP Ecuador was pleased to be able to offer secure in-home or local testing for teachers. With iTEP's ever-improving security functions, the government could be certain that even with in-home testing, scores and identity verifications were reliable. Ecuador's government has been impressed with the quick score turnaround, the data and information provided, and the ability to provide universal testing to all teachers. Teachers appreciated the opportunity to prove skills and receive a salary increase. Test-takers also appreciated the 90-minute test structure as well as the recorded portion for the speaking exam. An at-home test, instead of a person-to-person exam, offered a more relaxed test-taking environment allowing individuals to show their skills without the interference of fear or nerves. iTEP Ecuador will continue to test teachers in 2021 and has proven that iTEP testing can be valuable for assessing English language proficiency of not only students but also English teachers! iTEP International, with its in-country partners, can provide both the appropriate exam and testing support needed for large government projects.

“ La prueba iTEP tomada por el INEVAL en el 2018 constituyó un reto para los docentes y una forma de establecer la valoración entre nuestras destrezas idiomáticas y la actualización de conocimientos y nivel de acuerdo al MCER. ”

Juan Echeverría, teacher.

"The iTEP test taken by INEVAL in 2018 was a challenge for the teachers, a way to establish our level in general of the language and an update of knowledge and level according to CEFR."