

UNIVERSIDAD DE LOS ANDES
FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES Y EDUCACIÓN
ESCUELA DE IDIOMAS MODERNOS

**LA EXPERIENCIA DE SER TRADUCTORA EN EL JARDÍN BOTÁNICO DE
MÉRIDA**

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MÉRIDA, FEBRERO, 2011

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BOTANIC GARDEN**

Informe final de Pasantías presentado por la Br. Belinda Torres Méndez como
requisito parcial para optar al título de Licenciada en Idiomas Modernos

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Título del informe: The Experience of Being a Translator at the Mérida Botanic Garden

Identificación de la institución Sede:

- Organismo: Jardín Botánico de Mérida
- Departamento o Unidad: Fundación Jardín Botánico de Mérida
- Dirección: Avenida Alberto Carnevali, La Hechicera, frente a la Pista de Atletismo de la ULA
- Nombre y apellido de Responsable Institucional: Yelitza León

Cargo: Presidenta de la Fundación Jardín Botánico de Mérida

Duración de las pasantías: 3 meses

- Fecha de inicio: 4 de marzo de 2010
- Fecha de finalización: 4 de junio de 2010

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1. Introduction

After finishing the schooling period one inevitably thinks about the final duties like the internship. This final job, although it is part of the education process before graduation, gives us a taste of how a hypothetical future will be. Most activities students have to do over this period take them to an undetermined state in which they not only learn but also have to demonstrate their abilities as professionals, and almost play the role of real employees. After this period, they acquire knowledge and experience from a working environment. They learn about their profession and also about themselves as people.

What is unusual is to think that any learning whether intellectual or personal could arise from what people call simple translation assignments. Some people find hard to believe the demand of different elements (apart from the intellectual effort) that are needed to perform well in a translation job.

In my particular case, the internship was directly related to my main field of study, which is translation. All the tasks they assigned me during this period were so much more than just homework for a class, they made me realize that in the hypothetical future, that is already close to me, it is necessary to have a group of skills that no university, no school teaches us and that are only achieved by the process of experience. What is more, I realize that in each assignment there is a new

knowledge of which we have to be aware in order to put it into practice for our future jobs.

I spent three months working as an intern for the *Fundación Jardín Botánico de Mérida* (Mérida Botanic Garden Foundation), where my job was basically to translate and investigate for the Botanic Garden. The Mérida Botanic Garden Foundation is part of the Botanic Garden and it is in charge of organizing all sorts of events, education programs, and budget for several purposes like the improvement of infrastructure or creation of material for publicity. The Foundation is also in charge of assigning jobs to the guides, volunteers, and interns. Hence, my work for the Garden was done through this Foundation.

In this report I intend to tell briefly about the experience during those three months at the Botanic Garden Foundation. First, I give the description of the place, when it was founded, with which purposes, and what it has become now. Before it was opened to the public in general, it was part of the Science Faculty, and it was a place for investigation purposes only. Then the projects for the Garden followed the idea of integrating the community of Mérida to educate it and involve it with the natural life of the country. Later I explain with more detail what these projects are about. In the Profile of the Host Institution.

Second, I explain my purpose as an intern at the Foundation. I worked for three months doing tasks all focused on the development of the education program of

the Garden. They included a direct translation of a paper, a research about different botanic gardens in the world, and a presentation of new ideas for the Garden. This part of my report is the Nature of the Internship.

Third, in my Reflection Essay I describe the whole experience in detail, what I found pleasant, what I learned, and what I found unpleasant during the internship. I comment about some issues I learned as a student, as a professional, and as a person during and after the experience. Finally, I give my conclusions and recommendations to both the host institution and the School of Modern Languages.

2. Profile of the Host Institution

The *Jardín Botánico de Mérida* (Mérida Botanic Garden) is a natural area located in the north of the city, committed to investigation and recreation, and it belongs to the University of Los Andes. Mr. Juan Carlos Gaviria, who is the current director of the Garden, proposed the project of a botanic garden in 1991; so the University donated 44 hectares of land to create it. The Garden was founded with scientific and academic purposes which aim to the preservation of nature and the development of an area where the vegetal diversity could be appreciated and studied. Progressively, its workers have developed small plots of the territory given for the Garden. Today only 6 hectares, approximately, are functioning for research and exhibition, and more is expected to be developed every year.

Since 2000 the Garden stopped being a place used only for academic purposes and it opened its doors to the public in general. As it is part of the city, this place also serves as a green lung; thus, its goals combined different concerns such as research, education, and recreation for tourists or citizens of Mérida. Nowadays, the Garden provides different methods for people to get involved with nature and vegetation, especially with the native vegetation of the state.

The Garden started to gain importance in the state and in the country because of its special characteristics. Due to its geographical location, its life diversity has no comparison. It gathers Tropical, Andean and Desert vegetation, among others. This

Botanic Garden actually exhibits most of the vegetation which belongs to different ecosystems of the state and even of the country. Additionally, the Garden achieved the biggest collection of bromeliad plants in all Latin America. Because of these reasons, it has become an important centre of research for most Venezuelan and international scientists, and a source of inspiration for new ecologists who work for the preservation of the environment.

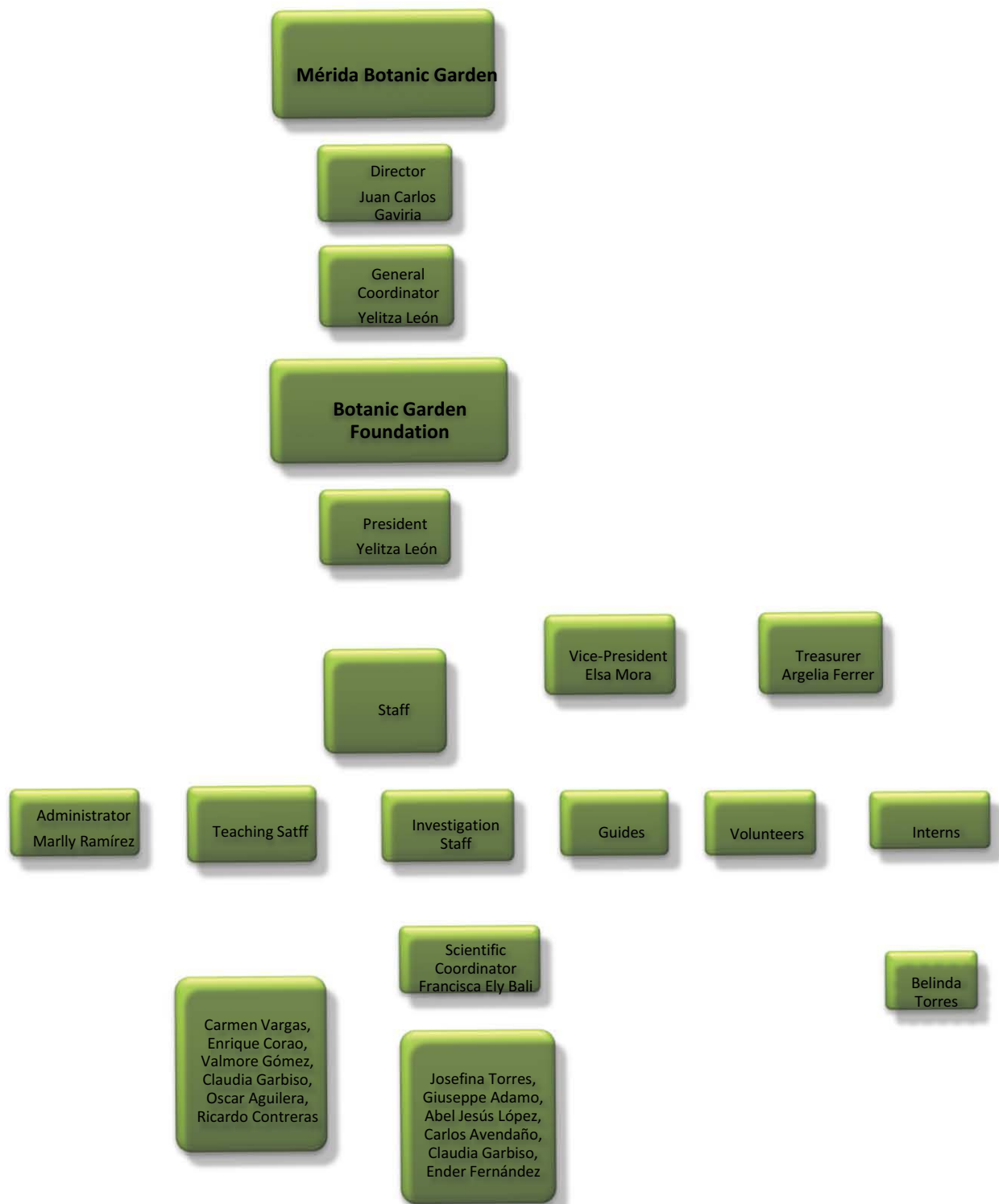
One of the biggest projects for the Garden today in alliance with other gardens of the American Continent is to grab the attention of the community to make it get involved with the process of environmentalist education. This project addresses especially the young inhabitants from the city surroundings, who should become the guardians of many of these precious ecosystems like the Andean Páramos or the Cloud Forest.

Since the beginning, the Botanic Garden has developed an education program and has tried to keep it updated in respect to other gardens of the world. They have implemented projects such as:

- *Proyecto Sembrando Los Valores Ambientales, SELVA*, in English Cultivating the Environmental Values: it is an education program to teach people about preservation of the environment by promoting activities in which they can participate.

- *Proyecto Páramo Andino, PPA*, in English Project Andean Páramo: it is an international program to preserve the Andean Páramo ecosystem. The Mérida Botanic Garden participates through the *SELVA* education program by addressing the Andean Páramo communities to instruct them about this rare and delicate ecosystem, and to teach them how to treat it and preserve it.
- *Proyectos Ley Orgánica de Ciencias y Tecnologías, LOCYT*, in English Organic Law of Science and Technology: in accordance with this law, the Botanic Garden offers a series of different activities related to environmental education such as, courses, workshops.

The Mérida Botanic Garden Foundation is an entity that belongs to the Botanic Garden. As a foundation its work is varied; to raise funds by receiving donations from national and international organizations or independent donors; to organize different programs to be implemented in the Garden, as well as the social events for the public in general; to carry out tasks such as, publicity, budgets, personnel hiring, and subscription to the Garden, among others. As an intern, my work for the Garden was done through this Foundation. My supervisor was the general coordinator of the Garden and the president of the Foundation, Mrs. Yelitza León. She works with interns and volunteers in organizing many of the activities within the place. She assigned me all the tasks to work on during the internship.



3. Nature of the Internship

During the three months I worked at the Mérida Botanic Garden Foundation, my assignments were diverse but mainly related to translation, which is my main field of study in the School of Modern Languages. I completed a direct translation task, a research project, and even the presentation of new ideas for the guided tours offered at the Garden. I worked based on a project proposed to develop the education program of the Botanic Garden, which is focused on providing all sorts of environmentalist activities for school groups and grabbing the public's attention to participate in the Garden. Nowadays, many people collaborate with the education program in order to improve it, one of these people is Mr. Roberto Rodríguez, who completed the botanic studies in the Kew Gardens of London and received the Diploma in Environmental Education; his final paper was dedicated exclusively to the development of an education strategy for the Mérida Botanic Garden. In this project he presented the goals of the Garden regarding education, the current projects of the Garden, and his plan to achieve a richer education program. He included not only the potential activities to be done with the kids in the Garden, but also the infrastructural improvements for people with disabilities and the rest of the public, and the budget needed to complete all these works.

My assignment as a translator at the Botanic Garden Foundation was divided in four tasks, each one with a specific deadline:

- **1.** The first task assigned was a direct translation. It was the paper written by Mr. Roberto Rodríguez as a final work for his studies. It was composed of thirty pages which I translated in about ten days. When reading the text I realized that the information on which I had to document myself was about the news of events of other botanic gardens, their history, and their projects related to education for children or for the community in general. I also made some research about international entities and their purpose regarding ecology or botanic gardens. With the proper research to carry out the translation of this paper, I could understand better the needs of the Garden on environmental education for children.
- **2.** As a result, after working with this paper, I could have enough information to start with the second task, it was a research project. I had to look for some other education strategies from different botanic gardens of the world, and then make a comparison between the strategy thought for this Botanic Garden and those that were thought for other gardens. The purpose of this project was to take some ideas from other gardens as inspiration to create new ideas for this one. The result of this second task was a model of the type of activities they could carry out in the Garden apart from those activities proposed by Mr. Roberto Rodríguez.

There was a pattern repeated in most gardens (the biggest and most important ones) that lacked in this Garden; a series of activities that were fundamental for the efficacy of their education strategy; based on this series of activities, I wrote some ideas and integrated them into this big research project.

My research was based on the previous education strategy paper written by Mr. Roberto Rodríguez, but I added those ideas that he did not include in his work. To present the research, I thought of implementing one of the tools that I learned to use over the schooling period, treedbnotes (TreeDBNotes.Ink ©). This is a program that serves to create a database; it shows the document in form of a tree allowing us to appreciate a division of different categories of the information presented. Though what I did was not exactly a database, I thought of treedbnotes as my main tool to save the information investigated because it would give me the chance to separate and organize all the activities in different groups. By the deadline of this task, I presented the project converted into a more common format that my supervisor could use in the future in a practical way.

The information collected aimed the following topics:

➤ Education strategy thought for this garden: the education program which they develop every year (*Proyecto SELVA*) and the education strategy translated. The strategy was focused on three important goals for the development of the garden:

1. –To increase the number of school children who attend the garden.
2. – To raise the interest and involvement of school population in the environment.
3. –To augment the budget needed for carrying out the whole project (I did not work based on it because my assignment was more related to the education area).

➤ Education strategies from other gardens: ideas I found that could be included for school groups within the garden, considering the first two goals presented before.

And also for other audiences such as public in general, people with disabilities or senior citizens, and people with special needs.

For goal one, the purpose was to expand the options offered to the public, that is, different sorts of activities whether recreational or educative. See Appendix 1.

For goal two, a more extensive and detailed information was provided, including the group towards which the activity was addressed, whether kindergarten, primary school or high school, as well as the type of activity. See Appendix 1.

For this research I made emphasis on educative and recreational activities for school groups, I added as well ideas regarding other aspects apart from the education strategy. These were elements of publicity (virtual information) to grab the public's attention, and aspects of the infrastructure to improve the comfort of the Garden. Being these ideas not part of the education strategy, I showed them in my work as an alternative, also noticing that said ideas lacked in this Garden in comparison to other gardens in the world.

- **3.** The third task was also related to the development of the education strategy. After providing a model in the previous assignment I had to write actual educational and dynamic activities with detailed instructions to carry them out. I had to do a research and find activities of that nature, then based on them, I had to write new ones for guided tours addressed to schools students; always having in mind the education strategy and its goals. I wrote thirty different activities for the Garden and

it took me two months to complete this task. The activities I wrote were organized by age of children to whom such exercises were addressed.

Most of the formats I used for the activities were inspired on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) games: “Gardening with Children”. The activities included instructions on how to plant food seeds, how to build a composter, how to build a worm farm, games inside the Garden to learn about the interaction with plants or other beings that dwell there. There were also exercises which combined Botanic with different fields of knowledge, such as Mathematics, measuring a tree or counting seeds; Geometry, recognizing parts and shape of plants; History, learning about interesting facts of traditions and uses of plants. I added the list of materials needed for the exercises, and, in most cases I also put some general culture information about the specific plant or seed, and any fact related to the activity. Regarding the invented exercises, the first I presented was a game of riddle: describing a native plant without saying its name the kids have to identify it inside the Garden. This idea was taken from different types of exercises I read online; however, it was basically created and presented by me. Another activity I wrote was a tablet on which the kids can stick seeds and classify them based on their characteristics; for instance, the seed shapes could be round, with spikes, with wings, among others. In the tablet the kids can organize the seeds they collect at the Garden. See appendix 2. I wrote this activity inspired on exercises from the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Florida; they show a series of games with materials they provide to

the kids: pictures, tablets, books, etcetera. The main idea of my game is to offer kids some material that can be taken home in order for them to enjoy while they learn.

4. The fourth assignment was the prose translation of an advertising leaflet. It was written in Spanish and I had to translate it into English. The leaflet indicated the address of the Garden and the Foundation, the areas of the Garden and its map. It also provided the contact information. The leaflet had two pages. Although I was not trained in prose translation, I accepted the challenge because the text was short and clear, and also because it helped me to introduce myself into this practice, since I intend to add prose translation to my academic preparation in the future. I completed this task in three days.

4. Reflection Essay

The Experience of Being a Translator at the Mérida Botanic Garden

The internship is one of the most important steps of a learning process, for it helps us to reinforce our self-confidence and forge our academic training by putting it into practice. It also teaches us about the professional experience before we graduate. In the School of Modern Languages there is a variety of choices for us to do internships. Since languages studies are strictly linked to the social work, most internships offer the student the possibility to develop social skills. Being a language assistant, working for international organizations, among others, are some of the possible jobs to perform as an intern. As obvious as it may sound, during this period, the student has to be able to face several challenges which demand his/her social or humanistic skills, and which become then the objects of reflection. All the experiences, either good or bad, could serve as a trigger or a source of inspiration to write a great story. For instance, when the internship is carried out abroad, the reflection could focus on the cultural aspects the student experienced and found interesting in the foreign country. These are social challenges that make him/her grow not only as a professional but also as a person.

In the same way, in a translation internship, the student has to deal with all these aspects of adapting him/herself to the working environment and later reflect on the tasks assigned as well as the experience as such. However, there is a slight

difference between an internship in the field of translation and those I mentioned before. When preparing to be a translator, the difficulties to overcome during the studies and subsequently, in the internship, reside in a cognitive performance more than in a social performance; the problems, solutions, discoveries, etcetera, are nearly all inside the translation work itself. During the internship, there is a new working environment and a team with whom the translator has to interact, but these are obvious elements which do not represent the most important part of the work. A social skill is not so relevant to perform well, a great deal of work is individual and it is basically a cognitive process. As a translator, this is what I experienced during my internship. Almost all the challenges I had to face were related to my tasks on translation and yet, they helped me to grow both professionally and personally, giving me the chance to reflect on so many aspects not only about the translation process but beyond it.

Therefore, my reflection in this essay presents every assignment of the internship with two main approaches. The first, about the intellectual struggle and the challenges involved in each assignment, besides the aspects I could learn which made me improve as a professional, and the second, about the personal and emotional growth resulting from the experience.

As I mentioned before, the work assigned for the whole internship was related to the first project I had to translate, the education strategy for the Botanic Garden written by Mr. Roberto Rodríguez. By doing this assignment I had to familiarize

myself with some ideas and projects proposed for the Garden to develop its education program. During this task I tried to follow the stages (analysis, transfer, and restructuring of the message) of the process of translation as we know it from its most basic outlook. I began my work by analyzing the complexity of the speech in order to understand the text and to know how deep I should go on my documentation. The text was not complex; the author used a simple speech. It was not related to Botany or any other relative science, but it was associated to education.

This translation was going to be used by the Director of the Garden, a person who could see and understand the goal suggested by the author and that could have enough power to make it possible. So, the text seemed very simple to understand, yet it was neither addressed to the general audience nor to the scientific community, but to a specific person or group of people working in the Garden. In this stage I had to introduce myself to the topic and comprehend the background and the purpose of the project. Documentation represented one of the most important aspects of this activity. What is more, it was essential to develop my whole work because it was not only needed for this translation assignment but also for others I had to carry out in the rest of the internship. However, later on I will do a further reflection on this fundamental stage.

After the documentation, I began to work on the transfer of the text. During this stage the message is reformulated into the target language. It is important to look after the meaning of the text but, in order to provide the most faithful version in the

target language, it is also essential to attend to the structure of the source text. Our freedom to reproduce the message is restricted by this fidelity; although I would like to clarify that my intention is not to take part in the controversial and unfinished discussion of fidelity. Again, my comments in this reflection glance off superficial aspects of the process of translation. So, in said text I could recognize immediately a basic structure. It made me think of language and its different registries (constructions) depending on the user. That is to say, when we speak English with a Spanish native, we understand everything he/she says, we feel identified with the vocabulary and with the speech. Then, when we try to understand an English native speaker, we experience a greater effort as we have to deal with a wider range of vocabulary and more complex structures of speech which we have not acquired yet. This is a very normal and logical situation. But I believe we understand the Spanish speaker speaking English not only because we share the mother tongue, but also because of the condition of being foreign speakers, as learners we use simple forms and a specific range of vocabulary. While translating the text, I noticed the author's simple structure as he is an English foreign speaker and he reflected this condition on his work.

So having translated the text, I worked on the final details of correction, in other words, the restructuring. Every work of translation represents a challenge, as translators we have to remain aware at all times of how we manage the information we translate; we have to choose meticulously every equivalent we provide in the target language and notice that the results are, in most cases, changeable. Now, when

we set the premise that no translation is absolute and perfect, we accept the fact that we will never be able of providing the exact translation of a message and thus, to think that such translation is easy to perform, is a mistake. This is why in this part of the process I found myself in a personal and moral confrontation. At first I felt that the translation of this text was actually effortless, so I started judging the work. The practice of translation has been one my biggest concerns as a future graduate because my possibilities of finding good professional opportunities depend on its cultivation. During this task I could not see how my skills were being tested and I felt anxious to finish as soon as possible to go to the next assignment hoping to get a bigger challenge then. For any person who is about to graduate there is always the feeling of insecurity regarding the professional future, assuming all the difficulties he/she may experience when looking for a job. I think that the work of a translator is commonly misunderstood and underestimated when it comes to all the competence that is demanded in the professional field. The concern of finding a proper job, where my assignments are linked to my preparation, has been increasing inside me as I feel this lack of acknowledgement of the profession. Ironically, after having assumed this point of view about this first assignment, I had to deal with another type of judgment as well, the one about myself as a translator. I felt insecure and ashamed because I thought this was an easy task. Translation is a discipline, it requires such a detailed performance, and no matter how much practice we have in the activity, there will never be the perfect translation. Therefore, in my case, ten days were not enough to do and correct every detail, and obviously, three months were not either, but how

would I know when to consider a translation a finished work? How many times must a translator correct his/her translation to be satisfied with the result? As it was my first translation assignment without the supervision of an experienced translator, I definitely felt doubtful concerning the final product. Although I succeeded in the task and translated the whole work, I never had a correction other than my own, and never read another version or example of this text in Spanish. My translation was the only one available by that time. Personally, I found this situation overwhelming, because I realize that in my future jobs it is unlikely to have someone to assist me with the translation of a text the way my professors did over the schooling period, and I will have to assume the responsibility of being the translator, proofreader, and editor of such text. Finding myself in this position leads me to do my best all the time, and be more exhaustive about the steps I should follow during the translation process.

In other respects, there comes the concern about the type of translation on which I will focus myself. A recent thought I have is what to do after I finish my studies. For me, the academic journey cannot end after I graduate from Modern Languages, there must be a specialization, a branch to exploit. Translation in our university is a main field of study; however, the training received is just the beginning of a professional in this discipline. Indeed, it is necessary to do a subsequent more detailed study to improve our knowledge and experience as translators.

With the second task I had to face a new challenge, a research work, and not a translation in the strict sense. I remember the instruction of our translation professors about the necessity of documenting before even trying to translate; of getting to know the text, the topic, and bearing in mind that the effort we have to do always goes beyond turning English words into Spanish words, to get to a transfer of the message, as I mentioned before, it is imperative to follow the previous stages and make a research first. Documentation is, in my opinion, the most important and fundamental step of translation, and the one that we as young and hasted apprentices, want to override in order to translate right away; however, it represents the longest and most laborious part of the whole process, and without it we are trying to work based on nothing but our judgment. We should not think of documentation as a simple duty of reading information and learning the specific terms, but more as to apprehend the knowledge in such a way that we can even become wise in the topic. In this case, I had the opportunity of getting deeper into the research activity. The task was to do my research project and present all sorts of ideas based on it. Again, the advice of our professors comes into my mind, the importance of being versatile; being a translator does not only imply to do translations, it is presumed that one is able to perform a list of different types of work, such as, summaries, outlines, changes of register, but most importantly, good researches and good writings. For this reason, a translator has to be aware of the possibility of such demands and be ready to carry them out. One of the difficulties of this assignment laid on the organization of ideas; how to present the whole information collected for the

research so that it could be a useful document for the garden's staff. This is why I used treedbnotes.

With this assignment I appreciated the relevance of being closer to my tools of research (encyclopedias, dictionaries, style books, etc.), of making them profitable for more than one task, and knowing how to manage them properly. Although this task was not a translation but a research, it made me relate both of them, because a research is what we are supposed to do in order to translate efficiently. Doing that assignment helped me to test my skills of research and practice more for my future translation tasks. A professional knows that a dictionary is not enough as a tool; he/she must prepare a glossary. He/she must use style books, parallel texts, databases, and even have the chance to discuss with other translators or experts in the field, whether in person or online. A translator must never take for granted all these elements, he/she should, in fact, integrate even more tools to the list. Thank to technology, we can now communicate faster with people, we can travel to other cultures without leaving our home, learn about different sciences, and so on. All these represent the new tools of a translator and a researcher, so we must take advantage of them. In addition, I noticed the importance of being updated regarding my duties as a translator, that is to say, to be prepared in case I have to run another project of these characteristics, having in mind that my assignments may be varied.

The third task represented a challenge bigger than the previous one. Back to the research project I had carried out before, the next step was to write new activities for the Garden inspired on other gardens I found online. The purpose of this step was to develop the education strategy; that is, to provide an actual activity after having presented the model.

Something I found interesting during this assignment was the creativity demanded to succeed. As representatives of this Faculty, the students of Modern Languages are used to exploit their creativity when they write. Four years doing essays, summaries, and even attempts of stories and poems have developed this quality in us. To have a good writing, as mentioned before, is one of the most important requirements for a translator. However, I did not know how creative my host institution expected me to be as a translator. Normally, we should keep neutral about a translation, but in my case, my supervisor asked me to interact with the original text. I liked this demand as I felt she asked me for more. It was good to explore other areas of my professional field, and that my supervisor considered my capacities in order to exploit them. This gave me the opportunity to grow professionally, and to continue exploring my abilities.

Moreover, this task made me discover new skills as a person as well, new ways to react in front of an unusual or unexpected demand, and to act a step forward in respect to the supervisor's requests, taking the initiative to contribute to the project, not just doing as the boss says and then go home and forget the work done.

This is why I decided to propose some activities. I felt free to do it because I became enthusiastic with this assignment and wanted to participate. How difficult it is not to get involved with our job. We always get emotionally attached to the activities we perform. This three-month internship taught me to be more receptive regarding this bond, I did not know it could be so important in the professional life, but I have come to understand that it is always a mistake to try to separate our emotions from our profession. Any activity we do with our time, working or studying, is related to us as people; hence, the satisfaction we experience when we do it is reflected on our attitude towards it, on the commitment we assume to succeed. This link gives us the motivation to continue and to do it right, so we should give the best of us all the time, no matter the simplicity or difficulty of the work.

As I mentioned before, there was an additional task while I did the research project; it was a prose translation of a leaflet. My supervisor gave me the chance to decide whether to do it or not. I thought of trying it. Every student of translation of our School has asked him/herself, why not to follow a subject in prose translation? It would complement our training as professional translators. Why not to study both translations, direct as well as prose. Most students feel the frustration of supervisors who demand prose translation, “if you are a translator you can do it”, they say; and when we try to explain why we do not do this kind of translation, they give us a terrible look of disappointment, and they almost tell us we are wasting our time in this School. I am sure each translation student of our School has suggested including prose translation to the Program of study because it was demanded during the

internship. Such a demand lead us to confront the dilemma, if we say “yes” to the assignment we have to carry out a task for which we are not completely prepared, and we could make some mistakes in the translation, if we say “no” we have to deal with the judgment of disapproval, and even take the risk of being labeled as incompetents. So we end up doing the work. With this task I noticed that we definitely need to learn how to work with prose translation, and although it is not included in our Program of study yet, we should add it to our professional profile as we see how English continues to be the lingua franca for technology, science, politics, economy, etc., and the fact that we translate only from it and not into it closes us the doors to connect and participate more with the rest of the world.

After finishing the internship my reflection is ambiguous about some aspects. Although I enjoyed most of this period, I had to confront myself constantly. I could not help noticing the fact that only one of my assignments was a translation. That made feel dissatisfied. I also wondered about what would be the advantages and the academic supports that this experience of working for the Botanic Garden would bring me later, either to find a job here in my country or to find it abroad.

These insecurities came to me since the very beginning of the internship. We all have heard once that there are scarce chances of being a recognized professional here in our country. As tough as it sounds, the chances of a good job in Venezuela are, in fact, not too wide. After we graduate, although there are some good places to work, we always take the risk of finding really bad jobs where the assignments are

shallow and obsolete, and new ideas or innovative projects are continually rejected. It is a very common scenario in our country that makes us all worried about our future. This is why most students in our university, especially Modern Languages students, appreciate very much to go abroad to study or to do their internships. It is academically more prestigious than here, and it expands their curriculum since they add an international experience to it. I am sad to notice that choosing a national internship, for most of us is like a lottery of good and bad opportunities, and even though I felt I possibly had to face up to this uncertainty myself, I applied for the internship here in our country. By the end of the period I felt I had been prejudiced by discrediting what the host institution could offer me. With this internship I was satisfied of being considered and appreciated. I never felt that I was just an intern who has been neglected and has nothing to do. I never felt they were exploiting me or taking advantage of me, and the project on which they made me work was very interesting and required my effort to be developed, I appreciated that. One of the most gratifying feelings came up when they told me that my work was already being applied in the guided tours and that more of it was needed. So a great learning I gained from this experience was to be humble and open-minded, it is never good to anticipate in our mind how good or how bad our job can be. Having a positive attitude and being prepared to work are the best ways to start a job, either here in Venezuela or far from home.

It is very important to remember that our work will be deficient when we do it wrong, no matter where we work, but if we do an effort our performance will be

considered a good job. There are never good excuses for us to do a bad or mediocre work apart from being mediocre ourselves. We all know this fact, but we do not actually understand it until we face the situations alone. When a problem cannot be solved unless we take part on it, it is the moment to realize how important it is to keep our professional integrity. As students, sometimes we could skip that sense of responsibility because we feel comfortable with our condition of learners, and we think that we have some immunity to the consequences of our lack of responsibility in real life. Nowadays I feel grateful for noticing these mistakes and trying to correct them. I believe we must motivate ourselves to work in national companies because it is important to improve the national reputation, not so much for the rest of the world as for us Venezuelans, who do not support the national potential as much as we should. We can improve ourselves as professionals, and make improve many places by investing our time and effort on them. This could be a way to present the translator in our country as a qualified and honorable professional.

5. Conclusion

I spent three months working at the Mérida Botanic Garden Foundation as a translator intern. During this period I learned more about the Garden, the projects and activities they have, and what we can do to participate and help more in order to improve and take advantage of this natural place in our city. Within the different tasks they assigned me I could experience difficulties and challenges that made me advance as a professional and as a person. These challenges during the internship taught me how to face work situations and to know what kind of feelings and attitudes cultivate for future works; humbleness, commitment, and creativity were some of the most important and precious attitudes that I learned to develop in my work or life in general. Despite the work I performed required mostly an individual and cognitive effort, I found out the importance of getting emotionally attached to the work because it helps us to remain motivated to attend the job and to do it right.

While doing the assignments I discovered new capacities I did not know were necessary to succeed in a work. I never thought that tasks of this kind could make me reflect on such aspects of my life and professional performance. I feel grateful to my host institution for the consideration regarding the work I carried out. The assignments I had to do were related to my academic profile and gave me the chance to explore my professional proficiencies and test myself to confirm what I actually had learned during the studies. Nonetheless, since I did not have many translation assignments during this experience, I could not help the feeling of wanting a lot more

practice on this discipline, as well as more and harder challenges which would have helped me to face the future. For this reason, I am glad to know that my academic experience is not over. I actually have so much more to learn about this beautiful and hard discipline, translation.

6. Recommendations

- To the Botanic Garden Foundation:

My recommendations to the host institution are to keep developing projects in which the students of the School of Modern Languages, translators, and researchers can participate. Also, the host institution should improve the tools to work properly at the office, I cannot argue that it is a very nice place, but it is not the best environment for a researcher. Sometimes they did not have Internet access and the computer they gave me did not function very well. This is why we agreed to do my work at home.

Additionally, it would be interesting if there were a big project in which many students of different areas could work. Thus, such an important mission as it is the improvement of the education program would be better achieved. I know that I was not the only one working with this project because it is very big, and it is after all the Garden's mission, but the work I did could have been richer with some complementary ideas. I do not think it is the work of one person but more of a team.

- To the School of Modern Languages:

To motivate the students of Modern Languages to participate and get enthusiastic with the national internships and, in this way we would be permitting

the national opportunities to improve, and make them know us as better professionals.

I also suggest to the School to go deeper into each type of translation in order to strengthen our experience and preparation. I believe it is a good idea for the University to provide us with more tools to be prepared. For example, more opportunities to work before we graduate, or to study in depth a branch of translation, not only to introduce us but to make us young experts in the field.

Finally, I recommend to the School the integration of prose translation training in our Program of study. As professionals who manage languages and who know how to work with translation, we must consider prose translation as a priority in our profile.

7. Appendixes

Appendix 1. Map of the research work made with treedbnotes.

File Edit View Tree Folders Notes Tools Help

Jardín Botánico de Mérida

Tree

- Estrategia educativa del Jardín Botánico
 - Programa Educativo
 - Estrategia
 - Meta 1
 - Meta 2
 - Otras estrategias
 - Grupos escolares
 - Para meta 1 y meta 2
 - Otras audiencias
 - Público general
 - Personas de la tercera edad y personas
 - Personas con necesidades especiales
 - Elementos del jardín
 - Dentro del jardín
 - Elementos virtuales
 - Información
 - Jardines botánicos consultados
 - Jardín Botánico de Kew
 - Jardín Botánico de Chicago
 - Jardín Botánico de Singapur
 - Jardín Botánico de Gales
 - Jardín Botánico de Buenos Aires
 - Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Meta 1: Aumentar el número de estudiantes que visitan el Jardín.
Con:

Actividades educativas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talleres. Muestras de teatro. Charlas. Visitas guiadas temáticas. Prácticas dentro del jardín. Competencias. Debates. Excursiones y campamentos dentro del jardín. Cursos de: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Jardinería. ✓ Horticultura. ✓ Pintura. ✓ Escultura.
Actividades recreativas	

Meta 2: Incrementar el interés y la participación de la población escolar por el medio ambiente.
Con disitintas actividades tales como:

Niños de preescolar y primera etapa de educación básica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitas guiadas temáticas. Algunos temas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ De dónde vienen las frutas y vegetales que comemos y qué importancia tienen. ✓ De dónde viene el chocolate y cómo es la planta del cacao. ✓ Formas y números: aprender sobre las características de plantas específicas, haciendo énfasis en el número y forma de sus hojas. ✓ Observar plantas: enfocándose en las partes funcionales de una planta; hojas, flores, frutas, semillas. Muestras de teatro. Personajes de la naturaleza (animales, plantas) enseñan a los niños algunos valores ambientales y valores humanos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Buen comportamiento. ✓ Buenos modales. ✓ Acerca del perdón. ✓ Acerca de la cooperación. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cómo germinar una semilla. Cómo cuidar una planta. Hacer un minijardín en un plato. Hacer un minijardín en una botella y así poder transportar algunas mascotas (hormigas u otros insectos). Qué es una huerta y cómo se hace (cómo se mantiene, qué animales son amigos y de ella y qué animales no lo son). Quiero adoptar un árbol.
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File Edit View Tree Folders Notes Tools Help

Jardín Botánico de Mérida

Tree

- Estrategia educativa del Jardín Botánico
 - Programa Educativo
 - Estrategia
 - Meta 1
 - Meta 2
 - Otras estrategias
 - Grupos escolares
 - Para niños 1 y niñas 2
 - Otras audiencias
 - Público general
 - Personas de la tercera edad y personas
 - Personas con necesidades especiales
 - Elementos del jardín
 - Dentro del jardín
 - Elementos virtuales
 - Información
 - Jardines botánicos consultados
 - Jardín Botánico de Kew
 - Jardín Botánico de Chicago
 - Jardín Botánico de Singapur
 - Jardín Botánico de Gales
 - Jardín Botánico de Buenos Aires
 - Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Meta 2: Incrementar el interés y la participación de la población escolar por el medio ambiente.

Con disitintas actividades tales como:

Niños de preescolar y primera etapa de educación básica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitas guiadas temáticas. Algunos temas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ De dónde vienen las frutas y vegetales que comemos y qué importancia tienen. ✓ De dónde viene el chocolate y cómo es la planta del cacao. ✓ Formas y números: aprender sobre las características de plantas específicas, haciendo énfasis en el número y forma de sus hojas. ✓ Observar plantas: enfocándose en las partes funcionales de una planta; hojas, flores, frutas, semillas. • Muestras de teatro. Personajes de la naturaleza (animales, plantas) enseñan a los niños algunos valores ambientales y valores humanos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Buen comportamiento. ✓ Buenos modales. ✓ Acerca del perdón. ✓ Acerca de la cooperación. ✓ Acerca de la responsabilidad. ✓ A dónde va la basura y qué podemos hacer nosotros con ella (clasificación y reciclaje de la basura). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cómo germinar una semilla. • Cómo cuidar una planta. • Hacer un minijardín en un plato. • Hacer un minijardín en una botella y así poder transportar algunas mascotas (hormigas u otros insectos). • Qué es una huerta y cómo se hace (cómo se mantiene, qué animales son amigos y de ella y qué animales no lo son). • Quiero adoptar un árbol.
Niños de educación básica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiero adoptar un árbol. • Huerta orgánica y posterior mercado para padres y representantes. • Visitas guiadas temáticas. Algunos temas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Diversidad: hojas, raíces, flores, frutos, semillas. ✓ Todo sobre árboles. ✓ Adaptación: cómo es que algunas plantas no autóctonas se adaptan a estas regiones. ✓ Morfología: características morfológicas de una planta para su clasificación- nombre, rol y usos-. 	

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Appendix 2. Exercises I proposed for the guided tours.

Semillas

¿Cómo se esparcen las semillas?

Existen muchas maneras:

- La gravedad: las semillas que son muy pesadas se caen de la planta.
- El viento: las semillas que son muy finas y livianas pueden flotar fácilmente en el aire e incluso recorrer distancias largas gracias al viento. Algunas tienen pequeños paracaídas o alas que las ayudan a volar, por ejemplo la semilla del diente de león.
- Los ganchos: algunas semillas están cubiertas de ganchitos con los que se pueden agarrar del pelaje del algún animal para viajar a otro lugar y eventualmente desprenderse y caer sobre la tierra.
- Los animales: las frutas son deliciosas para algunos animales; sin embargo, muchas veces sus semillas no pueden ser digeridas, pueden pasar por el intestino del animal y luego salir intactas a la tierra. ¡Tal vez no es la forma más agradable de viajar!
- Las vainas: una vaina puede contener muchas semillas dentro, cuando están listas para salir, la vaina explota y ellas se esparcen por toda el área.
- El aire: algunas semillas nacen con un poco de aire dentro que las ayuda a flotar en el agua lejos de la planta madre.

Datos interesantes:

- La semilla más grande del mundo es la del coco doble, puede llegar a medir hasta 50 cm de diámetro. Los cocos tienen una capa fibrosa y un poco de aire adentro, esto los ayuda a flotar lejos hacia un nuevo hogar. Algunos de ellos han flotado hasta 2.000 km en el océano antes de llegar a tierra firme de nuevo.

- Las semillas son la fuente de nuestras comidas favoritas. La pasta, la pizza, el arroz y los cereales que desayunamos primero fueron semillas.
- Las vainas de algunos tipos de orquídeas contienen hasta 3 millones de semillas cada una.
- Se cree que algunas semillas pueden germinar incluso después de 10.000 años.
- Existen algunas plantas con semillas venenosas; por ejemplo, la belladona es tan peligrosa que tan sólo dos de sus frutos podrían matar a una persona.

Actividad:

Explora el jardín junto con tus compañeros. Mira toda la variedad de plantas que hay y trata de encontrar semillas. Ahora:

- Escoge una planta al azar. Obsérvala bien. ¿Puedes imaginar sus semillas? ¿Cómo crees que sean? Si es una planta grande o un árbol, su semilla no necesariamente es grande también.
- Imagina dónde se encuentran las semillas de esa planta. ¿En una vaina o en una fruta? ¿O en ninguna de las dos?
- Ahora trata de encontrar la(s) semilla(s). Toma una de las semillas y llévala a tus compañeros para que ellos la vean.
- Cuéntale a tus compañeros lo que sabes de esta semilla. Si fue muy fácil o muy difícil de encontrar; si la planta tiene muchas o pocas; dónde se encontraba, en una vaina, en una fruta o en otro lugar.
- ¿Puedes describírsela a tus compañeros con mucho detalle? ¿Es grande o es pequeña? ¿Qué colores tiene? ¿Qué forma tiene? ¿Tiene alas o ganchos o es redonda?
- Después de apreciar todos estos detalles trata, con la ayuda de tus compañeros, de deducir cómo se esparce este tipo de semilla.

Datos y sugerencias:

Si lo deseas puedes llevarte esa semilla a tu casa y germinarla, de esta manera podrás aprender mucho más sobre ella y sobre la planta que la contiene.

Pídele permiso y ayuda a un adulto a la hora de realizar cualquier actividad.

Tabla:

Características físicas → Dónde se encuentran ↓	Alas	Ganchos	Paracaídas	Plumas	Con cáscara	Redondas de superficie lisa
En una vaina						
En el suelo						
Dentro de una fruta						
Simplemente en la planta						
Excremento de algún animal						

Actividad:

Materiales:

- Papel y lápiz
- Goma de pegar
- Guantes plásticos

Procedimiento:

- Recorre el jardín en busca de semillas, recoge la mayor cantidad de semillas que puedas.
- Sólo hay dos condiciones: una, no puedes recoger más de una semilla de la misma especie, es decir, no puede haber dos iguales; dos, no puedes arrancar de una planta ninguna de las semillas que recolectes, es decir, todas las que recolectes deben estar sueltas (en el suelo o sobre alguna superficie).

- Si vas a buscar en el excremento de algún animal recuerda ponerte los guantes.
- Cuando tengas una cantidad considerable de semillas comienza a trabajar.
- Pega las semillas en el cuadro que corresponde, para esto debes observarlas muy bien, si es necesario ábrelas y descubre lo que tienen dentro.
- Dibuja para cada semilla que pegues en la tabla una marca identificadora, esto te servirá de guía para rellenar la siguiente tabla.
- Ahora, según lo que has aprendido acerca de la propagación de semillas y después de conocer las características de las que has recolectado, marca en el cuadro cuál crees que sea el proceso de propagación al cual pertenece cada semilla. Escribe en cada cuadro la marca identificadora que inventaste para cada semilla.

Cayendo al suelo por su propio peso	Volando	Flotando en el agua	Viajando sobre algún animal	Viajando dentro de un animal	Cayendo al suelo por la explosión de la vaina	Otra (explicar)

Appendix 3. Introduction to the Education Strategy and its translation into Spanish. Original text written by Roberto Rodríguez.

Introduction:

This project will establish an Education Strategy for the Merida Botanic Garden for the years 2009-2014.

The Merida Botanical Garden began its education programme (E.P.) in 2000 through the Merida Botanic Garden Foundation, which is in charge of funding, planning and implementing the E.P.

The education programme consists of the following:

1. SELVA Programme (Spanish acronym of Cultivating Environmental Values) that targets schools and communities in and around Merida: Guided tours of the Botanical Garden; talks; workshops; tree climbing (canopy).
2. SELVA in *Proyecto Páramo Andino* (PPA): it targets highland (páramo) schools in two pilot areas: Gavidia (five schools, in Merida State) and Tuñame (five schools, in Trujillo State). It provides workshops and educational material for primary school teachers, and is implementing RETO SELVA-FAIRCHILD (adaptation of the Fairchild Challenge) in the pilot areas¹.
3. Horticulture school: it targets general public (young and adult).
4. Internships: social service, short term stays (2- 3 months)
5. Outreach: Musquito (Little Moss) conservation campaign (TV, radio, leaflets).

The strategy presented by this project will integrate these components in a single framework, focus resources to increase the participation of, principally, students (primary, middle and high) in the education programme, which includes the expansion of RETO to schools in the city of Mérida and other Municipalities. All this within the scope of the international treaties signed by Venezuela (CBD, CITES, Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, etc).

¹ Currently, the 11 primary schools of Gavidia and Tuñame are participating.

It is hoped that this strategy will also help in the difficult task of fundraising, by allowing us to show our commitment for a stronger education program, and the collaborative work with communities and other institutions.

Translation.

Introducción:

Este proyecto establecerá una Estrategia Educativa para el Jardín Botánico de Mérida para los años 2009-2014. El Jardín Botánico de Mérida comenzó su Programa Educativo (P.E.) en el 2000 a través de la Fundación Jardín Botánico de Mérida, la cual está a cargo de la financiación, planificación e implementación del P.E.

El programa educativo consiste en lo siguiente:

1. Programa SELVA (acrónimo de Sembrando Los Valores Ambientales): se dirige a escuelas y comunidades en y alrededor de Mérida: visitas guiadas en el Jardín Botánico; charlas; talleres; escalada de árboles (canopy).
2. SELVA en *Proyecto Páramo Andino* (PPA): se dirige a escuelas del páramo, este proyecto se divide en dos áreas piloto: Gavidia (cinco escuelas en el estado Mérida) y Tuñame (cinco escuelas en el estado Trujillo). Ofrece talleres y material educativo para docentes de educación básica y pone en funcionamiento el RETO FARCHILD-SELVA (adaptación de Fairchild Challenge) en las áreas piloto².
3. Escuela de horticultura: se dirige al público en general (jóvenes y adultos).
4. Pasantías: servicio comunitario, periodos cortos de trabajo (2-3 meses)
5. Alcance: campaña de conservación Musguito (televisión, radio, panfletos).

La estrategia presentada en este proyecto integrará estos elementos en un marco sencillo, reunir los recursos para incrementar la participación principalmente de estudiantes (educación básica, media y diversificada) en el programa educativo, el cual incluye la extensión de RETO hacia las escuelas de la ciudad de Mérida y otros municipios. Todo esto dentro del ámbito de los tratados internacionales firmados por Venezuela (CDB, CITES, Estrategia Global para Conservación Vegetal, etc.).

Se espera que esta estrategia sea de ayuda en la difícil tarea de recaudar fondos, permitiéndonos mostrar nuestro compromiso para una educación más sólida y el trabajo conjunto con comunidades y otras instituciones.

¹ Actualmente participan 11 escuelas de Gavidia y Tuñame.

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