

Teaching English “the environmental challenge”.

A Monograph

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**ABSTRACT**

This monograph gathers information about teaching English as a foreign language including environmental projects in order to show what authors have researched in this field, giving readers the opportunity to reflect on and study the choices when teaching in English as a possibility to propose meaningful experiences related to understanding the importance of knowing the environment in which we are immersed and how to transform teaching practices in order to increase students' awareness while strengthening communicative skills. Nowadays, the study of current global issues enrich the education field. In this way, educators must be ready to face and adapt their curricula according to what authors have explored and researched because through the understandings and outcomes of previous educational proposals meaningful experiences in class will arise, in this case teaching English generating awareness of the environmental context in Ibagué, so CLIL becomes the appropriate approach according to the following research.

Keywords: Environmental education, CLIL, foreign language, global challenges, communicative skills, science projects, awareness.

**DEDICATORY**

To God and Virgin Mary...

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Feeling surrounded by people who supported dreams, and inspired to express, I would like to say thank you for every single piece of advice, company and smile in which I found the ideal learning environment to reflect about the importance of cherishing nature. Thank you very much to my mother, Florcita, who motivates every single achievement and always holds my hand, to my father Raul Aguilera who is in my heart and showed to me the delicacy and majesty of God's creation, to Father Vaclac Koupil, who is my best friend and guides professional and life decisions with his words my, to my beloved husband Jaminton Aroca who is an unconditional part of this professional process, to my daughter Camila Aroca who teaches me how love transforms the whole world, to my brothers Raul, Carlos, their families and to my friends Juan Carlos Acosta, Andrés Castañeda and my teacher Norma Barrios who provided me with the technological material and gave me feedback during the studies, as well as motivation.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

During the review of different studies and articles of what teaching English nowadays means and its importance in the real context as well as the role of the teacher and the purpose of approaching students toward learning experiences, in which they can reflect and take ownership of facts linked to environmental issues, this monograph gathers information from studies that show what language teachers from different countries have done when going beyond the walls of the classroom by linking English with environment awareness.

These studies and articles were selected from academic sources taking into account the issues or needs of generating new student's attitudes when learning a foreign language, as well as how they lead their own process when having the possibility to communicate issues of their cities while learning more than grammar rules or isolated topics. Furthermore, the literature review was based on the results real teachers found while using this approach.

As a matter of fact, by emphasizing how teaching a foreign language, taking into account Ibagué's environmental situation, such as resources, problematic, how to recycle, the variety of fauna and flora; teachers will contribute to building better citizens, capable of expressing in a foreign language Ibagué's difficulties as well as solutions. Examples could be describing local birds and how to preserve their environment, or what environmental strategies students have



proposed when caring for their home municipality.

Reflecting on this possibility, the collected studies suggest how Content Language Integrated Learning CLIL becomes the right approach in which this monograph supports the importance of teaching a foreign language considering these prior studies an example in order to replicate in Ibagué, being this, the context that will heighten language acquisition allowing teachers to have a reference in which they can explore, plan and contextualize environments when teaching English in schools or educative institutions regardless the student's age. In accordance with this approach, there are studies based on Content and Language Integrated Learning that demonstrate effectiveness when students are exposed to experiences about a specific topic, in this case the environment. The following studies show the effectiveness of teaching English linked with environmental awareness:

The project "It's the Same World Through Different Eyes shows that the objectives of the project were to a) develop the students' receptive and productive skills in EFL), b) develop their sensitivity towards diversity, and c) enhance their citizenship awareness. Students were provided with opportunities to express themselves verbally and nonverbally, and participate in a variety of creative activities in a multimodal teaching context. The findings of the project indicated students' improvement in both their receptive and productive skills in the target language, and the development of children's citizenship awareness, and their sensitivity towards diversity. (Korosidou E. Grive E,2016, p.116).

According to Ajayi C. (2016), in the study *From Environmental Awareness to Environmental Responsibility* “To protect the environment therefore, we must refocus EE [environmental education] to change human’s view of the environment and attitude towards the utilization of its resources. Environmental education can become more effective in creating respect for the environment.” (p.60). One of the conclusions that Ajayi C. mentioned is: No education would be complete if it is not based on the understanding of nature which is ultimately our common home. If the west continues with their capitalist consumerism and we follow the trend in sub-Sahara Africa, we will denature our home and jeopardize the welfare of other species that constitute the community of life. (p.69).

Laanemets, U. Valdmaa, S (2016) mentioned in the conclusions that content learned through a foreign language can provide integrated knowledge and cogent arguments for critically thinking individuals and enable them to communicate their values and opinions and participate actively in different levels of social discourse.(p.38). This finding supports the relevance of including CLIL due to students developing thinking skills when knowing, understanding and being able to apply what they have learnt in their context.

In Colombia, Tunja the research article written by Mariño, C. explains the importance of understanding CLIL related to teacher’s training because: Even though the research carried out was systematic and rigorous, it is important to point out that this is just a first step in the research of an area that needs to be widely and seriously explored, especially in our context. (p.164) In addition to the CLIL Cs content, communication, cognition and culture, according to Mariño, C.,

should be considered before using CLIL in the teaching process, which means that competent teachers are necessary.

The collected studies seemed to agree, stating that benefits of including facts of the context when teaching a foreign language increase the students learning process while facilitating the acquisition of the target language. Furthermore, the field of merging environmental issues with English shows how teachers can reflect, adapt and transform their practices as well the curriculum toward wide global panorama considering the human being as responsible for caring the environment.

### **Significance of the Study**

Understanding what home means, invites teachers to look around and cherish every single resource that comes from Earth, in addition to contextualize education and benefit teachers, students, as well as the general community. Bearing this in mind, this monograph gathers information about how to generate experiences that foster caring of the planet while learning a foreign language based on approaches such as CLIL, supporting this significance in experiences researched in previous projects. For example; Sadykova A, Yashina M. & Zakirova L. (2014) showed in the experimental work in Kassan, Russia, was “aimed at testing the effectiveness of the pedagogical conditions used in the environmental education of senior pupils by means of a foreign language” (p.85).

The article *Implementing Environmental Culture in the Language Learning Laboratory* says themes such as global warming, deforestation, and water pollution are regularly featured in the news, thereby raising our awareness of the troubled state of the Earth's environmental condition. When educational institutions—from elementary schools to university-based English foundation programs—recognize the value of environmental education, language teachers will be in a unique position to promote environmental awareness while teaching English. (Sadikova, 2014, p.85)

Thus the previous experience and others that will be discussed in the monograph undoubtedly will motivate English teachers to provide contextualized classes, fostering the design of organized material that they can adjust and use for a specific purpose allowing the enrichment of the teaching-learning process, because the use of language experience is linking with their territory. In addition, it is important to mention the desire that English teachers find new fields in which they could improve the student's language competences, but at the same time go further and find significance of caring the environment, letting inquisitiveness in mind, for example it could be a future curriculum adaptation in the context of Ibagué, Tolima.

Omoogun A. (2016) writes about the importance of human perception and attitude towards the environment, motivate the purpose of this study, because language teachers are called to implement strategies in order to develop communicative competences as well as understanding of their context. For that reason, in this document it is possible to understand the English teacher's role, taking into account responsibility in every single action, because teachers guide students who will lead projects in their municipality.

The call for Environmental Education that presumably subsumed environmental awareness is an effort directed at reducing the effects of anthropocentric activities on the environment. The intergovernmental conference on Environmental Education convened by UNESCO in cooperation with United Nation Environmental Programme [UNEP] in Tbilisi, in 1977 recommended the development of school curriculum in Environmental Education. (UNESCO, 1978: p. 8)

How far could our students go if teachers explained to them what assumptions they have to bear in mind when have contact with the natural environment? Perhaps if the proposal in class aimed to reflect and to generate interesting questions, new attitudes will arise. The individual perception toward the significance of learning means being aware, while knowledge makes up part of our metacognitive process.

According to the Tbilisi Conference, the goals of environmental education include: i. To foster clear awareness of, and concern about, economic social, political and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas; ii. To provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment and skills needed to protect and improve the environment; and iii. To create new patterns of behavior of individuals, groups and society as a whole towards the environment. (UNESCO, 1978: p. 8)

The idea of perceiving the student as a skilled individual capable of producing, creating and proposing based on the experience in school will entail long-term learning, because teachers

consider a group of students the best place to sowing comprehensive seeds nourished of foreign language and its function in their society, as a consequence values, knowledge, awareness, commitment and skills are considered a powerful unit.

By reading the five target facts of making it real will mean that it is mandatory to reinforce the importance of the English teacher's role because lesson plan design has to be a complete sequence of experiences in which students get motivation while use a foreign language in an appropriate way, taking into account communicative competence, as well thinking skills. In a nutshell, English teachers should read as much as they can about the territory and the methodology that they will use, for instance CLIL , and the context in Ibagué. Once this task is done, teachers revise the steps in order to achieve coherence as well effective objectives.

In support of these goals, the following core objectives of environmental education were proposed: – Awareness: to help social groups and individuals acquire an awareness of and sensitivity to the total environment and its allied problems. – Knowledge: to help social groups and individuals gain a variety of experience in, and acquire a basic understanding of the environment and its associate problems. – Attitudes: to help social groups and individuals acquire a set of values and feelings of concern for the environment, and motivation for actively participating in environmental improvement and protection Skills: to help social groups and individuals acquire the skills for identifying and solving environmental problems. - Participation: to provide social groups and individuals with an opportunity to be actively involved at all levels in working towards resolution of environmental problems. (UNESCO, 1978: pp. 26-27)

Definitely CLIL is the approach that fits perfectly due to its flexible application in any scenery, bearing in mind the core objectives exposed by UNESCO: awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, participation which can be settle in our municipality of Ibagué, based on the experience that English teachers offer in class.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Bearing in mind the importance of teaching for life, it is urgent to revise thoroughly what students are contributing to society, for that reason by studying articles, projects and research about teaching English as a foreign language in different places it is evident how this fact provides the opportunity to understand the impact in the context when teachers adapt their plans. Thus, the municipality of Ibagué becomes a centre of interest, because the community from this city do not know much about this territory. Also, a sense of belonging is not evident, which is why starting projects from school could transform the way in which teachers approach students in real situations, in this case English as a foreign language as mean of communication to provide environmental awareness.

This monograph handles the request of organizing a document in which readers can revise references and research about teaching English as a foreign language according to current challenges specially related to awareness of the environment. In this monograph English teachers can explore different authors as well as learning experiences that could be adapted to the context of Ibagué, Tolima according to CLIL Content Language Integrated Learning, as the right

approach in this study.

Actually working in an isolated manner, with traditional methodology, or only completing books, is not the real purpose of an English class. While it is true that training works, it is necessary to ignite the students' curiosity as well as awareness for their environment, because both will offer meaningful learning and contribute to the municipality's preservation because they make students responsible for their actions.

Bradley J, C Waliczek T.M & Zajicek J. M. (2010) in the *Journal of Environmental Education* Results showed what happened to the students of high school before and after a science course during 10 days of facing that learning experience, they have found that:

Significant differences in both knowledge gain and attitudes of students after exposure. Students' environmental knowledge scores increased by 22% after they completed the environmental science course. In addition, students' environmental attitudes became more environmentally favorable. A statistically significant correlation was found between pretest knowledge scores and pretest attitude scores and between posttest knowledge scores and posttest attitude scores. In both cases, students having higher knowledge scores had more favorable environmental attitudes compared with students with lower knowledge scores. (*Journal of Environmental Education* 30 p.17)

Although the results were in a science course it is evident that being exposed to environmental experiences benefits the students' knowledge as well as their attitudes. For that



reason, English classes linked with CLIL approach will surely obtain results which will affect both how students use a foreign language and what understanding they will have of the context experienced.

With respect to what “Ministry of Education (MEN) in Colombia has shown in its guidelines about how, what, when and why to teach in class, and transversal projects, in this case “PRAE. Proyecto de Educación ambiental escolar.”, is an essential requirement in all schools, for that reason this monograph compiles references based on teaching English and how environmental awareness experiences encourage students to use the English language contributing to Colombia education specifically concerning the closest environmental contexts , so this document could be seen as an academic resource that English teachers can look up when exploring current ways to teach, for example, the effectiveness of CLIL approach because science never will be seen as an isolated subject but as the means of teaching a foreign language.

Currently we found success in following approaches, bearing in mind what Ellis, 2003; Estaire & Zanon, 1990 (cited in Towards Excellence in Bilingual Education Barranco, N.2016) will focus the interest on CLIL; “the meaningful role of both Task-based Language Learning and Teaching (TBLT) and CLIL approach should be stressed. In fact, the integration of these approaches is what truly makes a difference in bilingual education, especially when teaching Natural Sciences in Primary schools through a foreign language”.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective**

To compile information of projects, research articles and studies about how teaching English as a foreign by including environmental experiences that help readers understand the effectiveness of CLIL in the real context in order to foster new learning experiences in Ibagué Tolima schools .

### **Specific Objectives**

To show descriptions, results, pedagogical implications and conclusions of the selected studies about the importance of working with CLIL as an approach in which students can learn a foreign language while increase awareness of the environment .

To define the concepts found in this paper, creating an understanding of how environmental awareness and English can be integrated in the curriculum (CLIL), considering them the strategy that English teachers have to implement.

To invite readers, specifically English teachers, to reflect about their practices so they can contribute to the municipality by adapting their experiences in their context.

## CHAPTER 2

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK LI

#### CLIL

David Marsh visited Colombia and said:

CLIL was born as part from an early and revolutionary look at how we can change education to make it truly appropriate for the century XXI, during his visit to Uninorte in the framework of the sixth Symposium CLIL Biennial, carried out September 9 and 10. Marsh, lecturer and author, explains that what this method does is to give the student a feeling of immersion in the language. When a teacher uses it well, it makes the student not focus on learning of the language as such, but rather as using it as a tool to learn other type of content. For example, if a student is asked to describe the characteristics of an animal during a biology class in English, the student will concentrate on that task instead of thinking "I'm in an English class and I must be careful with what I say because the people can make fun of me if I say something wrong." (Informativo UNINORTE 2016)

Certainly CLIL encourages students to use the language in real sceneries, in which they will focus their interest on a specific issue, so the learning experience buttresses what the students will discover in their context while their affective filter is lower, facilitating the learning

of a foreign language. As mentioned, Laanemets U. Valdmaa, S (2016) In Estonia in language-specialized schools:

Science subjects related to nature, such as biology, chemistry and physics, can create a logical system for understanding the environment and opportunities for ecological and sustainable living that is mindful of available resources. This would help students to understand global natural processes as well as humanity's responsibility to protect the environment both locally and globally. (p,37)

To evolve in classrooms, the CLIL experience implies identifying the student's needs as well their outline of what to do, because the proposal of the teacher must link the skills with the content designed in a coherence style. It is not merely to plan projects for a while, but it is to propose an academic path in which it is possible to analyze, explore, create, communicate and apply the learning. For that reason, English teachers are called on to study the background of the CLIL approach and its effectiveness when learning a foreign language based on environmental awareness.

CLIL can provide a new approach to curriculum development, especially with regard to national curriculum documents for language instruction in general comprehensive schools, and serve as a method of organizing, engaging and learning in wider and more supportive environments. Content learned through a foreign language can provide integrated knowledge and cogent arguments for critically thinking individuals and enable them to communicate their values and opinions and participate actively in different levels of social discourse. Identities and their

hierarchies are in essence values accepted as a result of meaningful and motivating learning that leads to the development of independent and critical thinking skills. Learning languages at school, especially English, can contribute significantly to the development of an autonomous and self-aware personality. Those responsible for writing educational policy and developing curricula for general comprehensive schools are confronted with a serious task: how to use CLIL in the most strategic manner for educational innovation, in order to provide new educational opportunities for all students. The imperative to use the most reliable approach to date has the potential to make education an enduring moral enterprise [Pinar] (p.38)

As this monograph attempts to provide information for English teachers, it is important to revise the implementation of CLIL in Colombia, thereby contextualizing to allow readers to understand how much this approach has impacted our country. McDougald, J. (2015) reveals in his article, "Teachers' attitudes, perceptions and experiences in CLIL: A look at content and language, that: "Almost all of the participants agreed that the CLIL approach can benefit students, helping them develop both language skills and subject knowledge (meaningful communication)". (p,25)

Comparing what Mc Dougald, J expressed with the survey applied during this research, there is a common perception among the respondents because there is a strong answer, in which they have stated total agreement when asked about their perception of teaching a foreign language linking with the environment, in this case being CLIL in which science subjects or social subjects are connected with English. "Nevertheless, there is still considerable uncertainty as to the actual state of the art of CLIL in Colombia; greater clarity here will enable

educators and decision-makers to make sound decisions for the future of general and language education”. (p,25) It is necessary to start the implementation of CLIL in Colombia by supplying documentary evidence in order to revise the impact in our context, again this task becomes the challenge that educators in Ibagué are called to start.

Furthermore CLIL works in every single educative system because the strategy of how it addresses the teacher’s purpose, as well the student’s interest. For that reason, all the scholar stages are pertinent and important during the process; McDougald, J. (2015) “it is clear that a CLIL approach to language teaching caters to all age levels as 100% of the teachers all agreed that CLIL can be used for young learners (YL), intermediate as well as adult learners. These results are evident throughout the different levels and types of education (formal and informal settings). CLIL is an approach to education at all levels—no one is left out” (p.35).

## **AWARENESS**

Revising awareness and its relationship with teaching forces teachers to face the call that our planet makes to everyone and invites teachers to have a posture in which their role might affects the future generations.

Ajayi (2016) said:

The desire of human to continue to subsist on the Earth planet and the very fact that humans have no other planet as habitable and hospitable perhaps led human to start thinking; at first superficially, and in time deeply about the need to protect the earth. It is now well-known fact that the planet earth is losing its biological, physical and chemical capabilities; what is

generally referred to as environmental degradation. The period of environmentalism heightened environmental concern and the emergence of Environmental Education that is aimed at creating awareness. (p.2)

Also authors, such as Blumstein and Saylan (2007), have explained the importance of acting now because it is an emergency to reverse what we have done to Earth with our actions.

According to these authors, this issue involves every human practice, but emphasizes what benefits education can bring when teachers foster awareness. In this case teachers should feel inquisitive regarding their actions as citizens of Ibagué, Tolima, because after all they are part of the Earth and consequently will be affected from the environmental context.

## **CURRICULUM**

There is no place more appropriate than education system for starting and adjusting curriculum models in order to adjust the school PEI, specifically the curricula, a document that shows the processes in the education system. Some facts that help us understand the function of curricula in schools are how subjects are working, if they only include concepts or, on the contrary, if they move knowledge as well real practices outside the schools walls. For this reason it is mandatory to offer students practical opportunities in order to preserve the environment (Brook, 2010). Thereby the curricula design has to include information about what specifically students will do, it could be saving energy, recycling, or turning off lights. (Wolf, 2011).

Environmental Education curricula initiatives are still limited to the development of supplementary materials with a thematic approach. Such materials are good, but many teachers often ignore such topics, especially when emphasis is towards preparing students for external examination. Even where environmental issues are infused into the traditional subjects e.g. mathematics, English, or economics; the real intent and implications are more often not emphasized. In any approach (infusion, thematic, etc.), it is important to develop content within each area that we teach students not only about environment concepts and precepts, but also how to value it, care for it and take actions to protect it. (Blumstein and Saylan ,2007, p. 6)

### **Primary Literature**

Searching in previous research, it is possible to observe how in Colombia teachers are eager to involve students in experiences in which the effort and interest of strengthened students to the environment take an important role in the teaching and learning process. In this way, Rodriguez M. (2011) shows in her article “Findings demonstrate how teachers may enhance science education and language skills when using CLIL. Additionally, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2009) analyzed the effects of CLIL on students’ attitudes towards EFL; results demonstrated CLIL programs help to foster positive attitudes”. (p.8) Bearing in mind this information, it is possible to express that CLIL approach in Ibagué, Tolima is the perfect strategy that links context for starting projects that increase awareness for the environment, also the use of a foreign language, Rodríguez, M. (2011).



As it has been noted, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has gained popularity in recent years throughout the Colombian territory. Nowadays, educators do not talk about teaching in English but teaching through English. Colombian schools have used this approach in order to promote project-based learning. For instance, CLIL gives schools the opportunity to do some cross-curricular work. Schools are engaged in high scale projects that involve more than one content area. Via the use of the target language in other areas, CLIL improves the linguistic proficiency level of students. (Rodríguez, 2011, p.8)

In Tunja, Colombia at Country Bilingual School Mariño, C. M. (2014), explained the experience with CLIL in a case study, reinforcing the importance of the balance between content and language.

Even if classes are taught in English at CBS (Country Bilingual School), they would need to balance integrated content and language so they meet the CLIL criteria. At Country Bilingual School, classes are content-led, which does not allow CLIL to be completely effective as there must be a balance between content and language. In CBS classes, there is teaching of language through content, but both content and language seem to be taught isolated. They need to be integrated in order to implement CLIL. Students are occasionally involved in learning. Students have the opportunity to interact among themselves and with their teachers, using the language for real purpose and in a given context. Students usually feel part of a group and have certain knowledge about the target culture aspects, yet, the concept of self and other awareness need to be reinforced. (p.163)

This experience becomes an opportunity in schools because from the results new English teachers can design future lesson plans taking into account the recommendations when working with CLIL, for example definitely training in CLIL is mandatory if we want well-designed lesson plans, as well a shared vision (community members) of what bilingualism means and a concrete common methodology. (Mariño, 2014)

There is more interesting previous research abroad that shows the effectiveness when teachers introduce a foreign language while developing activities related to environment awareness. The following literature review supports experiences when teachers promote in their projects linking between language and science as an alternative for teaching a foreign language. In Kazan, for example there was an experience in which teachers had an experimental study that led to the following conclusions:

One of the leading methods of Sadykova's experimental work was the method of conversation, which was carried out in lectures, quizzes, or a portion of a class. Senior pupils and teachers received theoretical knowledge on ecology in a foreign language. For carrying out this work, he relied on the principle of openness, which was aimed at giving teachers and pupils as much of up-to-date information as possible about the greening of the environment and conservation activity. For example, he worked out the following lectures:

Educational potential of a foreign language in the education of environmental culture.

Environmental education of pupils: problems and searches.

Media and environmental education of senior pupils.

Our house is nature.

Nature on the canvas of an artist.

Nature in the works of poets.

It is interesting to see what methods were applied in Kazan. For instance, teachers encouraged students to talk about environmental problems. The students thoughts were according to what they have lived in their context and their point of view about the situation, the experience motivated students to express their ideas by means of a foreign language. (Sadykova, 2014)

The experience carried out tried to identify how specific conditions could facilitate the achievement of goals, related to the subject proposal as well the development of communicative skills when using a foreign language, as well as critical thinking. Some of the conclusions were:

The purpose of the control experiment was to test the effectiveness of the pedagogical conditions used in the environmental education of senior pupils by means of a foreign language. At this stage of the experimental work the cross-section test of the level of the environmental education of senior pupils and their level of the language competence was carried out. The obtained results were refined, summarized, analyzed and then the appropriate conclusions were made. The objectives of the outcome of the experiment were as follows: measurement of the dynamics of the level of the environmental education of senior pupils in the experimental classes; overall assessment of the effectiveness of the results obtained in the experiment and the acquisition of general conclusions. Sadikova A. (2014)

This experimental work means that it is possible to find ways to integrate subjects in their classes in order to increase comprehension in real contexts allowing the use of English through

planned pedagogical conditions in which learners will benefit during the experience, so what teachers expect is only the first step for discovering how interesting exploring the Earth can be when students participate in a project that strengthen language skills.

## **Secondary Literature**

According to Harold Hungerford and Trudi L. Volk, Chart of central Education Components;

It appears that we can maximize opportunities to change learner's behavior in the environmental if educational agencies will: provide carefully designed and in depth opportunities for learners to achieve some level of environmental sensitivity that will promote a desire to behave in appropriate ways. Provide an instructional setting that increases learner's expectancy on the reinforcement for acting in responsible way. (p.264)

This asseveration showed how specific conditions and purposes will affect the awareness of the environment in the learner's behavior so this research aims to promote science experiences in earlier stages in which learners are guided to develop actions that make them responsible for the environment while learning English. In a workshop held in Goterbog Sweden, called The Role of early Childhood Education for a Sustainable Society Tricia Herbert (2008), says; "the problems facing the world during the lifetimes of children currently in early childhood programmes have arisen because of the choices, actions and lifestyles of well-meaning people, such as 64 of their teachers and parents.

This means that the state of the world we live in is the result of what we have done to it. On some level, all of us are responsible for our decisions, and teachers have a special role because they are responsible for raising the next generation. Nevertheless it is not a disheartening panorama, it is an opportunity to revise how teachers regard their profession. Perhaps it is the time to focus in what the students need to learn in English, as well how to link that English subject to current challenges.

By revising the interesting points that Herbet T. from United Kingdom, reveal, it is reflection that she gave is meaningful, because our generation has to be aware about what they use or consume. In short, our children need to be in contact with the resources and their origin, they need a vision that generates sensitiveness toward what provides that benefit; going no further and focusing in the classroom. English teachers have to be the bridge between language and the opportunity to explore in the field which is worth it when educating in this century.

As industrialization and urbanization have expanded, people in ‘developed’ countries have become separated from the land, so that it is difficult for many children to even comprehend, for example, that their ice-cream is made from products that come from a cow, or that the source of their cornflakes once grew in a field, and do not simply ‘come from the supermarket’. If young children are to adopt sustainable lifestyles in the future they need to understand how their lives are linked to, and affect nature, and prefer to make wise and responsible choices about what they eat, how they travel, what they wear, how they build, how they spend their leisure and relate to people in their local community and in distant lands. This generation could make or break the Earth’s future. Herbet, T (2008)

The responsibility of current English teachers seems like an enormous task to develop, because teachers have in their hands a group of students who are educated in contexts designed by themselves, so guidance and classroom experiences are very important, thus, the possibility of strengthening English language competence goes hand in hand with awareness for the environment.

If environmental issues are to become an integral part of instruction designed to change behavior instruction must go beyond an “awareness” or “knowledge” of issues. Students must be given the opportunity to develop the sense of ownership and empowerment so that they are fully invested in an environmental sense and prompted to become responsible active citizen. Hungerford (edited 2008).

On this basis, by giving the opportunity to children on how to become good active citizens, English teachers will do vital work including projects to encourage children to care for the environment.

Citizenship behavior can be developed through environmental education. The strategies are known. The tools are available. The challenge lies in a willingness to do things differently than we have in the past. Hungerford (edited 2008). It is evident that we have the scenery, we have the knowledge about teaching English. Consequently, the next step is how to ignite the spark to spread meaningful experiences to achieve the goal.

According to two case-studies acted as an evaluation technique for determining the effectiveness of current community environmental education programmes, allowing for the recognition that both educators and participants are part are part of a collaborative process central to achieving the goals and objectives of environmental education. Blair (2008)

The advantages of research into environmental awareness in a specific group of children allow understand the role of teachers and learners in which all of them are important in the process, because between teachers and students' interaction there is a common context that joins them: nature. Thus nature will be seen as the treasure that surrounds their lives and the target that both teachers and kids are working with and exploring in order to achieve the proposed goal.

There is another experience in which Karia E. shares the following lines that show how policies in countries are the support in many educative projects:

In 2009, the Ontario Ministry of Education released a policy document, Policy framework for environmental education in Ontario Schools which emphasized fostering children's sense of connection to each other and to the natural world through active participation. It holds within its pages the potential to transform schooling in Ontario from an approach that relegates place to the periphery, to one that recognizes both the potential of place to engage children in learning, and the innate, undeniable value of place if we are to live sustainable, healthy lives. (p.84)

The Government action in Ontario considers people as the best richness for cultivate, they invest in education and make real that everybody can be part of this process, this stance is

correct because when the Government includes in its guideline postures about the importance of educating definitely it is investing for the future of its society also of the world. Karia E. (2014) shows “In the document “In this century, increased funding and resources from the government support environmental education efforts in schools. Our present investments in building environmental awareness from an early age will lead to long-term improvements in the future” (p.84).

It is interesting to revise how policies in other countries impact the teaching and learning process through guidelines. Schools are supported by the government in order to develop practices that will provide meaningful experiences in classrooms and at the same time benefit the future of an entire community, by recognizing individuals as responsible of the caring of the planet, so it means that it is not merely to propose policies, but it means going beyond speech, campaign or activism.

Also, Karia E. (2014) in her thesis explains how to connect real life. This experience is worth applying in our municipality of Ibagué. We have a variety of natural material that English preschool teachers can use this project as a pretext in which pupils communicate simple ideas while approaching a foreign language.

Studying habitats of animals and the life cycle of plants, along with discussing local and global environmental concerns or projects will build awareness of the world around us. Through active citizenship and stewardship, from a young age we can promote more awareness and make our students environmentally conscious individuals. Scientific inquiry is a great way to build curiosities, awe, and wonder...Through sit spots, visualization, journaling, observations, group circles and inquiry; children build an appreciation and curiosity about nature in the Kindergarten



years. Schools are not only involved with eco-friendly recycling activities, but like to build in more field trips to marshes, ponds, forests and natural habitats...There is a growing a deeper connection with our earth, nature and the outdoor environment in integrative and comprehensive in the FDK model in Ontario. (p.72)

Definitely teaching English cannot being only seen like a structured class in which kids only develop tasks to foster communicative skills. It is necessary to include science experiences in which they are able to explore both the acquisition of a new language and the opportunity for curiosity about their natural environment to arise.

Furthermore, this kind of projects show how constructivism includes visions in which teachers buttress their practice, so, if previous theory showed why, how and when to develop a teaching learning experience there is the opportunity to propose research about references of nature awareness in current educative contexts. Thus, those theories will guide English teachers' considerations in their practice. To dare is the risk that educators have to follow. Karia E. explains how different methods, in which inquiry is an essential stage of every single experience.

Karia E. in her thesis revised how CLIL approach meets common elements which are based on what researchers have described in their theories. The following paragraph shows how the process buttresses CLIL purpose.

Inquiry-Based learning is primarily a pedagogical method developed during the discovery learning movement of the 1960s. The philosophy of inquiry-based learning finds its antecedents in constructivist learning theories, such as the work of Piaget (1962), Vygotsky (1934-1978),

Bruner (1961), and Dewey (1938). Inquiry based learning emphasizes in constructivist ideas such as knowledge being built from experience and process, especially socially based experiences. Under this premise, learning develops best in group situations, with field group, case studies, and through investigation and research. In the kindergarten years, this can be introduced through nature walks, field trips, indoor or outdoor play situations, individual and group investigations as well through paying attention to what children are curious about their environment. (Karia, E, 2014, p.66)

## CHAPTER 3

### **METHODOLOGY**

The stages of this study were developed taking into the perception of the importance of linking English with subjects, in this case taking into account how CLIL approach works in classroom especially by focusing on real contexts, in this case Ibagué. This monograph consists in two parts, first of all gathering information from academic sources: Scielo, Proquest, Eric, Unad virtual library and Google Scholar, besides didactic of science resources, the second part was the questionnaire used which consisted in ten questions that required answers yes- no and the argument behind each choice. Although it did not mention CLIL, all the questions pointed to this approach. Some of the respondents completed the questionnaire by hand others recorded their voice or completed it using online resources. There were complex factual questions which required interpretation and opinion by the reader. Adams and Cox (2008), defines the types of

questions according to the structure, there are questions of factual information, complex factual questions, attitudinal and opinion questions. By compiling data there was possible to analyze information by revising open-ended interviews which gave a wide panorama about the relevance of teaching English while students learn about their territory.

In addition to revising literature and exploring how other researchers have deepened this approach, it was possible to pick up reliable data which supports the effectiveness of including these kinds of strategies in different learning environments, so that teaching English gains importance when students find its connection with their context. In addition, the aim of the class goes toward the purpose; strengthening the four language skills: listening, writing, speaking, reading.

The core of this phase was collecting information from other CLIL experiences, as well reading about Ministry of Education guidelines more exactly what expectations are about teaching and learning English, likewise to explore in topics that include taking care of the environment.

Finally, in this monograph all the data and information were exposed sequentially in order to provide a description and explanation of working with CLIL being a qualitative study, so readers, mainly teachers, can identify criteria to shape an idea and reflect on their practices.

Although the core of this monograph is to compile organized information about how to teach English including environmental experiences, in which readers can access easily to the references, I have included this survey in order to identify what teachers and educators of my

context think about learning English taking into account Ibagué as place for teaching and learning a foreign language.

### SURVEY DESIGNS

Table 1.

<b>Design</b>	<b>Settings</b>	<b>Questionnaire</b>
In person	Individual	Mostly structured
In person- Interviews	Individual	Structures or unstructured

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS

#### PARTICIPANTS

During this experience I collected information based on the Likert Scale, in which respondents can express agreement or disagreement for a series of statements. The chosen population answered the survey which consisted of open-ended questions. These results include current perceptions about the topic.

#### SURVEY

1. Do you consider it is important to link environmental issues with English classes?
2. How much do you know about your territory, (natural resources,) and is that relevant for you?

3. As a citizen of Ibagué, do you assume any commitment with your actions, for instance, recycling, reuse, reducing?
4. What is your opinion if, in Ibagué schools, English teachers promote the use of language while students learn about Ibagué's natural resources?
5. If you had the opportunity to approve a guideline in which English teachers in Ibagué must include environmental awareness, related to Ibagué context, would you vote for this project? Explain why or why not.
6. Have you ever studied English using material with information about Ibagué?
7. What is the advantage of knowing our territory?
8. Do you think this connection between curriculum and awareness of the environment will impact students' behavior?
9. As an English teacher (principal, as coordinator, as parent) are you ready to face this challenge?
10. Give one reason not to learn –teach English with Ibagué environmental issues.

### **Participants**

Respondents were 19 people, among them English teachers as well as teachers of other subjects and coordinators. All of them work at a private school. Their ages ranged from 25- 55, and they had between 6- 10 years of teaching experience

## **CHAPTER 5**

## DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

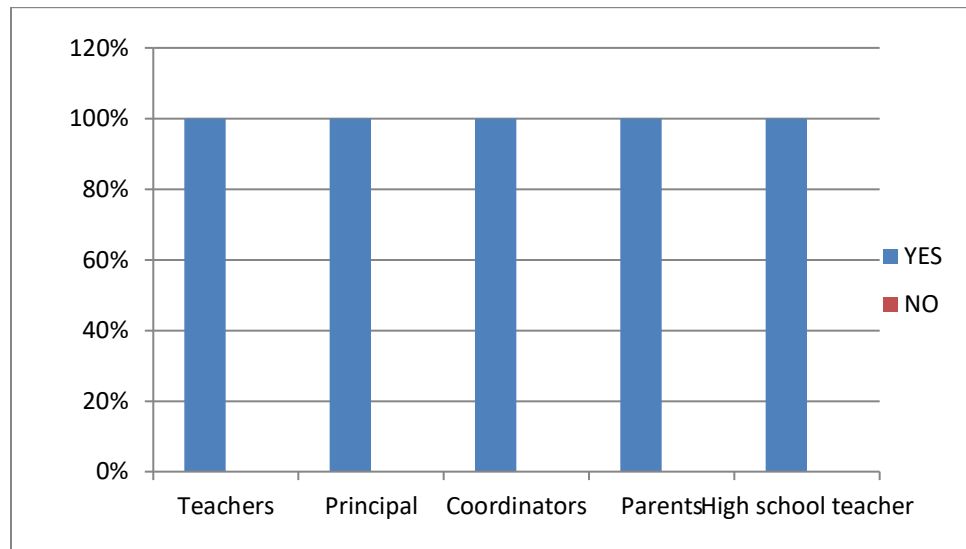
After this study, findings showed that CLIL becomes the right approach in Ibagué environmental context, because every single learning process supports its background on the characteristics of this region. It is evident that teachers are eager to start new experiences that worth on the current context, nevertheless this implementation requires training and the support of the whole educative community.

In reference to the importance of teaching for life, this study provides experiences from schools that have impacted the student's behavior giving the chance to contribute to his-her society, consolidating the premise that "practices in class definitely can go through the school walls".

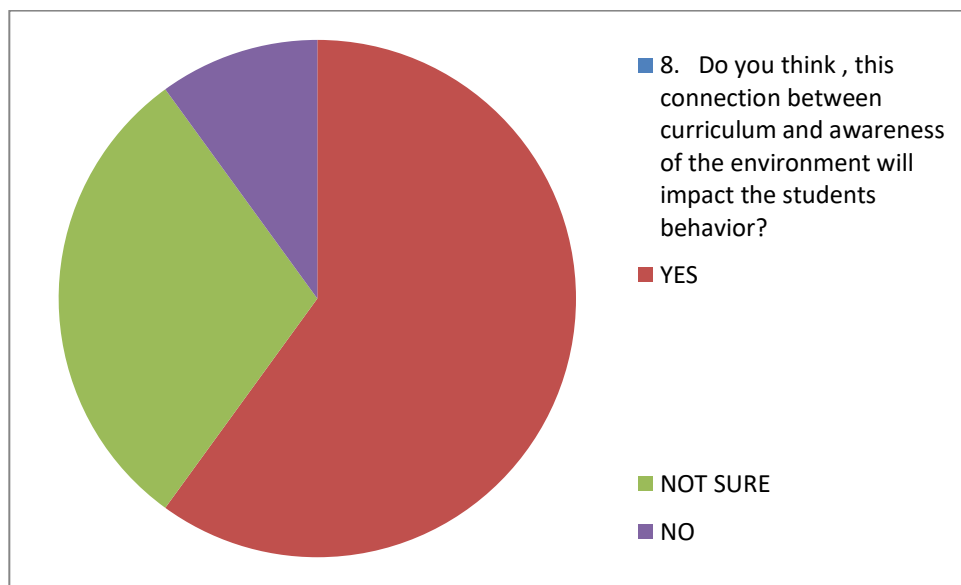
Nowadays English teachers and tutors have to promote caring of the environment, so their classes are an opportunity to foster language linking with the own territory, although we can find projects in many schools there is necessary being convincing in meaningful proposals more than in isolated activities.

For CLIL to be implemented, it is necessary to train because findings showed the necessity of deepen the purpose of this approach as well the monitoring throughout the process, it is not merely developing isolated projects. It includes a rigorous methodology that help learners understand as well develop thinking skills based on the relationship between language, content and context.

Some questions were selected from the survey in order to seek what respondents said; the following figures show the answers of the participants:



*Figure 1.* Do you consider it is important linking environmental issues with English classes? Population supported their answers saying: It is not only for the English area, it is mandatory for all the school staff. It is a universal challenge. It is a meaningful proposal that helps students realize their context situation. It has to be linked with training of international exams. Strongly agree: 5



*Figure 2.* Do you think this connection between curriculum and awareness of the environment will impact the student's behavior?

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you consider it is important to connect environmental issues with English classes?</li> <li>2. How much do you know about your territory. (rural resources) is it relevant for you?</li> <li>3. Actions of English do you assume any commitment with your actions. for instance recycling, saving, reducing?</li> <li>4. What is your opinion if in English teacher's English teachers promote the use of language while students learn about English natural resources?</li> <li>5. If you had the opportunity to approve a guideline in which English teachers in English must include environmental awareness, related to English content, do you vote for this project? Explain why <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or <input type="checkbox"/> not</li> <li>6. Have you ever studied English using material from information about English?</li> <li>7. What is the advantage of knowing our territory?</li> <li>8. Do you think a connection between curriculum and awareness of the environment will impact the students behavior?</li> <li>9. As English teacher (principal, or coordinator, or parent) are you ready to face this challenge?</li> <li>10. <del>Do</del> are reasons not to know much English with English environmental issues.</li> </ol>	<p>① I believe that including real-world situations gives an opportunity for learners to connect with language in a more authentic and meaningful way.</p> <p>② I know only what from due to time I have read or see by myself. It is definitely relevant considering its a topic of debatable issues among all people.</p> <p>③ Of course, the change begins by a single individual, every little bit of environmental awareness.</p> <p>④ I think that the more authentic and down-to-earth strategy would be to teach significant topics for learners we care about.</p> <p>⑤ Yes, definitely giving the instructors the tangible purpose-like situations create meaningful learning.</p> <p>⑥ Yes, as a matter of fact, related to issues of learning through research of the APP (APP in English).</p> <p>⑦ We are in the field and whenever a student comes up with it, I would elaborate on the concept.</p> <p>⑧ Maybe not immediately for myself as a form, but there will definitely be a positive reaction.</p> <p>OCCUPATION: Teacher</p>
<p>NAME: Andres Castorena</p> <p>⑨ Of course as a matter of fact it is something that I've longed for since I learnt about meaningful learning.</p> <p>⑩ There isn't really one, the success of learning also comes from how you connect students with the real life.</p>	

Figure 3. Survey Sample, this belongs to a secondary English Teacher.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS

After collecting material that supports practices when learning a foreign language it is mandatory to express that English teachers are called upon to implement projects that foster the use of language in real sceneries, and so CLIL becomes the suitable approach in which learners can enrich their lives as citizens.



Many studies reveal how much benefit schools, and of course society can get when linking awareness with a subject, in this case English, thus each effort that contributes to the knowledge of the territory will stand for the generation an opportunity to apply what they have learnt in their context.

By revising concepts of CLIL, awareness and curriculum throughout the readings the dynamic relationship among them is evident, which means the simultaneous inner workings in which adjustments in one of them will imply changes in the structure, similar to a unique machine that overcome isolated processes.

For future studies there is a recommendation related to research lines at UNAD in which this study could contribute to management and knowledge innovation, focusing on ethics and social responsibility due to the significance in the educative system in which knowledge empowers society. For that reason by including CLIL in schools in Ibagué ,Tolima, it will be possible to enrich this experience.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

This monograph tried to capture the attention of English teachers in Ibagué. This intention requires starting a rigorous study about how much teachers know about CLIL approach besides their ability to connect resources from this municipality with English curricula in order to create the right material to deepen the context and also the required competences related to the international language standards, because both tasks go hand in hand.

The support that administrators give to teachers is fundamental, because this implementation requires the work of every single actor in the school, so there training is necessary, as well as planning, before starting the proposal, the most important thing is to be linked to community collaborators and to external leaders, who create bridges that broaden the possibilities of real impact as citizens.

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