

**PROMOTING THE PROCESS OF LEARNING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN
STUDENTS FROM AN UNDERPRIVILEGED POPULATION THROUGH
CLASSROOM PROJECTS**

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**A SOCIAL PRACTICUM TO FULLFIL THE REQUIREMENT TO GET THE
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A
FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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RESUMEN

TÍTULO: Promoviendo el proceso de aprendizaje del idioma inglés en estudiantes de una población vulnerable a través de proyectos de clase.*

AUTOR (ES): Diego Alexander Camacho Correa, Laura Patricia Arroyo Pabon y Arcenio Cristancho Aparicio.**

PALABRAS CLAVES: Población Vulnerable, aprendizaje, inglés, motivación, interés, Educación Ambiental, Unidad Temática, actividades, talleres.

DESCRIPCIÓN: El presente proyecto se presenta como una Práctica Social para trabajar con estudiantes de una población vulnerable del barrio Morrorrico en la ciudad de Bucaramanga. Esta condición de vulnerabilidad impide que los estudiantes de este sector tengan un proceso de aprendizaje de una segunda lengua apropiado, ya que no cuentan con los recursos necesarios para hacerlo. Estos estudiantes pertenecen a la Institución Educativa Oriente Miraflores, localizada en el oriente de la ciudad. La comunidad estudiantil esta integrada principalmente por jóvenes pertenecientes al estrato 1 y 2. El inglés ha sido una de las mayores dificultades para los estudiantes del colegio Oriente Miraflores debido a la falta de profesores calificados, materiales apropiados, pocas horas de inglés en el currículo y los impedimentos económicos de los estudiantes para asistir a cursos de inglés adicionales. Por lo tanto, los estudiantes del colegio Oriente Miraflores ven el inglés como una dificultad y un obstáculo para su desarrollo profesional. Todo esto impide que los estudiantes esten motivados a aprender un idioma extranjero y que sean concientes de las oportunidades que esto conlleva. El proyecto tiene como objetivo principal promover el proceso de aprendizaje del idioma inglés a través de proyectos de clase. También se busca incrementar la motivación y el interés de los estudiantes hacia el inglés asociándolo con educación ambiental debido a que estos estudiantes viven en un área de constante riesgo ecológico causado por el invierno y que deja como resultado inundaciones, deslizamientos, deforestación y contaminación. Por esta razón se diseña e implementa una unidad temática que consta de diferentes actividades y talleres teniendo en cuenta los intereses y necesidades socio-afectivas de los estudiantes.

* Proyecto de Grado

** Universidad Industrial de Santander, Facultad de Ciencias humanas, Director: Tatiana Mikhailova.

SUMMARY

TITLE: Promoting the process of learning the English language in students from an underprivileged population through classroom projects.*

AUTHOR (S): Diego Alexander Camacho Correa, Laura Patricia Arroyo Pabon y Arcenio Cristancho Aparicio.**

KEY WORDS: Vulnerable Population, learning, English, motivation, interest, Environmental Education, Thematic Unit, activities, workshops.

DESCRIPTION: This project is presented as a Social Practice to work with students from an underprivileged population from the Morrorrico neighborhood in the city of Bucaramanga. Such a condition of vulnerability impedes that the students of this sector have an adequate process of learning of a second language, since they do not have the necessary resources to do so. These students belong to the Educational Institution "Oriente Miraflores", which is located in the east of the city. The school's educational community is mainly integrated by young men from 1 and 2 socio-economical status. The English subject has been one of the main difficulties for the Oriente Miraflores students, due to the lack of qualified teachers, appropriate materials, few hours of English in the curriculum and the students' economic constraints to attend English additional courses. Therefore, Oriente Miraflores high school students see English as a difficulty and obstacle for their professional development. All of this impedes that the students are motivated to learn a foreign language and are aware of the opportunities that this entails. The main goal of the project is to promote the process of learning the English language through classroom projects. It also aims at increasing the students' motivation and interest towards the English language by associating it with environmental education due to the fact that these students live in an area of permanent ecological danger caused by the winter. All of this leaves floodings, slidings, deforestation and pollution as a result. For this reason, a thematic unit is designed and implemented that comprises different activities and workshops based on the students' socio-affective needs and interests.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental right that should be ensured for everybody. There should not be barriers of social class and the same opportunities to guarantee this right should be provided regardless this condition. It is through giving the same access to education that those underprivileged citizens will be able to integrate with the rest of the society which will help turn it into a more equitable one in the future.

National Governments have the obligation to guarantee the right to education to all children, understanding that the state's authority exists at all levels from the national or federal to the local, and at the same time assuming a fundamental responsibility with regard to policy, funding and provision. It is also a function of the National Governments to bring the efforts of all the actors that play vital roles in delivering high-quality basic education to all children together, from central to local governments, from international agencies to local communities, NGOs and religious groups. (Bellamy, 1999)

It is a direct responsibility of every democratic state to assume the commitment of educating the vulnerable population. Therefore, it is necessary to take the political constitution as a reference to make sure that this state duty is pursued. According to the general law of education¹, article 22nd, it is a specific objective of the basic secondary education that students are able to understand and express themselves in a foreign language. Besides numerals 1

¹ Taken from: <http://menweb.mineducacion.gov.co/normas/concordadas/Decreto115.htm>

and 7 of the 23rd article state that it is mandatory and fundamental to include the study of a foreign language and environmental education in the curriculum of every school in the country. At the same time, the general law of education, states that there will be resources with their specific budgets assigned to cover all the expenses of every public institution in the country.

Taking into account the social reality of the inhabitants of the 'Morrórico' neighborhood, we realize that the students of this sector do not have enough opportunities of access to the English language. For this reason we decided to intervene in their learning process seeking to generate positive attitudes towards English by associating it with environmental education which is of vital importance for them since 'Morrórico' is located in a sector in ecological danger.

2. PLAN OF ACTION

STAGE 1

- RECOGNITION OF THE FACILITY
- RECOGNITION OF THE POPULATION

STAGE II

- APPLYING SURVEYS AND INTERVIEWS (socio-demographic)

STAGE III

- DESIGN OF THE CLASSROOM PROJECT
- SELECTING THE ACTIVITIES TO WORK ON

STAGE IV

SELECTING THE APPROACHES OR METHODS

STAGE V

APPLICATION OF THE PROJECT

STAGE VI

CONCLUSIONS

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Current trends in foreign language learning have demonstrated that learning is a process affected by different aspects related to socio-educational, socio-economic and motivational factors among others. These factors constitute the main basis of this project due to the fact that the focus of the study is working with a certain type of population, which is a vulnerable population. The present study aims at determining the best way to teach English to students from an underprivileged population. It explains multiple factors that shape students' attitudes and achievements in the process of learning a foreign Language, such as the socio-educational, socio-economic, socio-cultural and motivational factors that may hinder vulnerable population students' participation in their process of learning the target language.

The socio-educational factors are all the factors related to the context in which learning takes place. The most important theoretical background that was taken into account has been proposed by Robert C. Gardner and his Socio-educational model (Gardner and Lamgerd, 1972).

When somebody attempts to learn a foreign language, they must take into account that it implies many more aspects than the act of learning itself. That is why Gardner describes some factors that affect the language acquisition process with his Socio-educational model. *External Influences and Language Acquisition Contexts* will be taken into account.

- External influences

The first aspect taken into account is *External Influences* which has to do with the factors from the socio-educational context where students are situated and that may affect language learning. Among the external influences we can find history, which refers to the social and personal variables that characterize a person in terms of their socio-cultural milieu and family background (Gardner and Lamgerd, 1972).

A research from the Institute for Research on Poverty on The Impact of Family Income on Child Achievement showed that children growing up in poor families are likely to have home environments or face other challenges which would affect their educational performance and development (Gordon and Lochner, 2005). The students from the target population are considerably influenced by their family environments since their condition of vulnerability and poverty affects their performance at school negatively. This happens due to the fact that they lack the necessary resources to carry out an appropriate learning process as will be discussed below.

- Language Acquisition Contexts

Another aspect described by Gardner is *Language Acquisition Contexts* which can be formal or informal (Gardner and Lamgerd, 1972). The former refers to any situation where language is learned through explicit instruction, such as language courses or the English subject taken at school. The latter is

related to any situation where the learner can benefit from any language input such as radio, television, internet, music club, without the intervention of a teacher (Gardner and Lamgerd, 1972). As it would be further perceived, the target population lacks the necessary means to have a normal Language Learning environment, due to the fact that they belong to an underprivileged community; therefore, they have an inadequate formal language acquisition context and in other cases they do not even have an informal one. First of all, the school they go to does not have enough resources to provide the teacher with all the necessary implements to develop a lesson. Secondly, most of them come from low-income families, and do not have the opportunity of an informal language acquisition context, because in most of the cases they do not even have a TV, or a radio to benefit from extra learning situations.

Rod Ellis (1994) considers different variables which contribute to expand the concept of socio-educational factors. They are age, gender, ethnic identity and social class. For the purpose of this study, we will only consider social class as relevant for us.

- Social Class

Social class refers to the hierarchical distinctions between individuals or groups in societies or cultures in terms of income, level of education and occupation. Results from different studies suggest that children from lower socio-economic groups are less successful when learning a second language than those from a higher social class (Ellis, 1994). Some students, who come

from low-income families, may have to spend some time getting a part-time job to fulfil their family's economic needs, so they would not have enough time to devote to studies. According to the manual *English as a Second Language: Implementing Effective Education Program*, some learners may be responsible for the sustenance of their family, as well as their own expenses such as transportation, food, tuition, etc. They are obliged to obtain income from part time jobs, which diminish their energy, attendance and the time they might devote to their studies. (Furlong and Forsyth, 2003)

It is clear that learning a language involves certain amount of investment in resources and materials. This may represent an obstacle for these students and their families, whose economy does not allow them to get everything they need. For this reason, these students would lower their chances of academic success.

Furthermore, depending on the learners' social class, they would have different experiences linked to their particular needs. Maslow proposes the Hierarchy of Needs Theory, which states that a human being must satisfy his basic needs in order to achieve his higher needs. If a student does not fulfil his basic needs such as food, health, sense of belonging, etc, he will develop anxiety and emotional blocking that will lower his achievement in the learning process (Benson). A research in Pakistan pointed out that upper-class students who have met their basic needs and have had exposure to resources like English books, schools, satellite TV and internet, are more likely to have a greater English proficiency. Meanwhile, lower-class students only count on

their school subject; this produces lack of exposure to the L2, and therefore, lowers English Competence (Schofield and Mamuna, 2003)

As it was mentioned before, learners' social aspects have an impact on their learning process. They are a major cause of success or frustration in learners, and influence their decision to remain or not in a second language learning process. These factors play a determinant role in student's engagement in language learning programs and in the achievement of a good performance.

The previous works on the aspects related to social class and their effect on language learning provide some insight to the purpose of this project, since they reflect similar contexts in which this social practicum will take place, due to the fact that the target population belongs to a public school with students from lower socio-economical backgrounds.

- Motivation

Student motivation is influenced by both internal and external factors that can start, sustain, intensify, or discourage behavior (Richard-Amato, 1997).

Internal factors include the individual characteristics or dispositions that students bring to their learning, such as their interests, responsibility for learning, effort, values and perceived ability (Richard-Amato, 1997). For example, in this case are students from Oriente Miraflores confident or fearful when they approach new learning tasks? Do they attribute success to luck, or do they appreciate the effort required? Do they feel in control of the factors that lead to success?

It is also important to understand the external factors, which schools can affect the variables in learning conditions and environment that trigger, support, or change student motivation. Certain types of schooling practices may promote or hinder motivation, such as features of the classrooms, peer groups, tasks, and instructional practices (Richard-Amato, 1997). For example, challenging, relevant instruction helps to engage students. Another way to increase motivation is through positive connections to others, such as mentors and role models.

Students' beliefs about their ability to learn are shaped by messages and experiences at home, at school, and in the larger society. Low expectations can be subtly communicated by parents and teachers, and through school practices such as tracking, ability grouping, or curriculum that is not challenging. Conversely, high but achievable expectations convey the message that all students are capable of achieving (Dörnyei, 2001).

Learners need quality instruction, input, interaction, and opportunities for meaningful output, not only to make progress, but also to maintain motivation for language learning. What a good teacher must do, then, is not only tap into the sources of intrinsic motivation, but also find ways to connect intrinsic motivation with external motivational factors which can be brought to a classroom setting (Dörnyei, 2001). This is especially significant when English is not seen as important to the students' immediate needs, further from passing exams.

Since learners have different purposes to study a language, it is important for instructors to identify the purposes and the needs of the students and develop proper motivational strategies. Students should understand why they need to make an effort, how long they must sustain an activity, how hard they should pursue it, and how motivated they feel towards their pursuits. Motivation fluctuates. It is very challenging to keep language learners' motivation at a high level all the time. While designing a language course teachers must take into consideration that each learner's interests and expectations are different.

To summarize this theoretical framework, this study attempts to point out that social factors are really influential at the time of learning a second language, Gardner and Ellis and the other works cited provide some variables that are helpful for carrying out this project because they deal with social issues that affect all types of learners in different contexts.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Educational Institution "Oriente Miraflores" is a public school that bases their education on forming ecological leaders who are able to improve the culture they live in through the recognition and internalization of the human being's dimensions. The school's educational community is mainly integrated by young men from 1 and 2 socio-economical status which is a condition that affects their process of learning a second language since they lack the minimal resources to succeed in such a process. Besides this, these young men belong to a community that is in constant risk of natural disasters due to environmental issues.

The English subject has been one of the main difficulties for the Oriente Miraflores students, due to the lack of teachers, appropriate materials, few hours of English in the curriculum and the students' economic constraints to attend English additional courses. Therefore, Oriente Miraflores high school students see English as a difficulty and obstacle for their professional development. All of this impedes that the students are motivated to learn a foreign language and are aware of the opportunities that this entails.

5. JUSTIFICATION

Students at Institución Educativa Oriente Miraflores belong to a vulnerable population in a low socio-economical status. In this school although they have access to the English language subject, it is not as stated in the general law of education because they lack the resources to be in contact with this foreign language out of the English class. For this reason, when compared to students who belong to a higher social status who have easy access to the English language through cable TV, internet and music, a difference is noticeable not only in the English level but also in motivation, interest and positive attitudes towards the learning of the English language.

The students of this school live in the Morrórico neighborhood and its surroundings which is an area at risk of natural disasters caused by erosion, deforestation and water pollution that make them live in permanent danger. For this reason, it was decided to intervene in the learning process of the students attempting to reinforce and improve their English language level, the motivation, the interest and the attitudes towards it through associating this foreign language with knowledge about the environment and its protection which is something of vital importance for them because of the environmental situation they face every day.

For these reasons, a Thematic Unit was designed and implemented as a means to encourage students, who are in a vulnerable situation, to learn English through different activities and workshops that would contribute to strengthen their process of learning a second language, based on their interests and socio-affective needs.

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

6.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- The present project aims at determining the best way to teach English to students from a determined population.
- This Social Practicum aims at improving students' knowledge about the environment and its protection while reinforcing their English language level.

6.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To design and implement a thematic unit taking into account the students' needs and interests.
- To raise Students' awareness about the environmental issues.
- To improve Students English language level.
- To change students' negative attitudes towards the English language.

7. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION

7.1. TARGET POPULATION

- **SCHOOL DESCRIPTION:**

The 'Instituto Oriente Miraflores' is located in Morrorricondo which is a low social status neighborhood of Bucaramanga. It offers high school education from sixth to eleventh grade with agricultural emphasis. Its mission is "*to develop ecological leaders capable of improving the culture through the potential of the human dimensions*". The school building has three floors with 12 classrooms; it also has a terrace and extra rooms with resources as a lab, a computer classroom, an audiovisual room and a small library. However, the access of the students to these rooms is restricted by the directive personnel due to the student's misbehavior and misuse of these resources. The classrooms are designed for groups of 40 or 45 students with their corresponding desks and a board to write with erasing markers. There are not any extra resources such as TV sets, DVD players, and posters, among others.

- **TEACHERS:**

The School counts with two graduated teachers for the English area who work for the public education. One teacher is in charge of sixth and seventh grades and the other is in charge of eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh grades.

- **STUDENTS:**

All of them are pre-teenagers about 12 years old and they belong to low-income families.

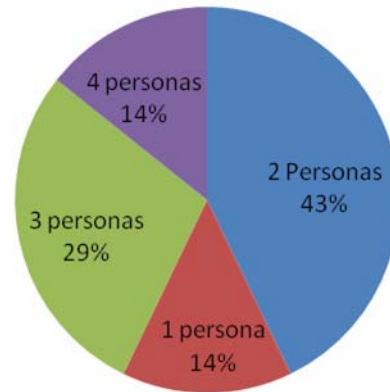
The students' main interests are the TV programs, electronic games and internet as the questionnaires show. Some of the students like working independently so they can have some money they need. A big part of the students go through the primary necessity problems, such as malnutrition and

hygiene. Many of them do not live with their parents because of socio-economic issues. The average of students per group is 40 students and they frequently treat each other very aggressively.

The results of the socio-demographic survey were the following:



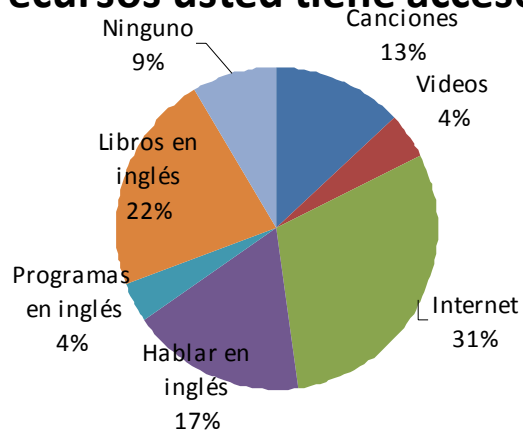
¿Cuántas personas de su núcleo familiar tienen trabajo?



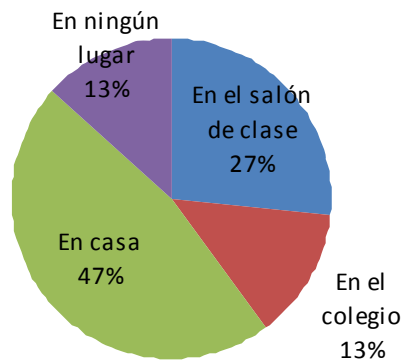
¿Qué porcentaje de la gente encuestada trabaja?



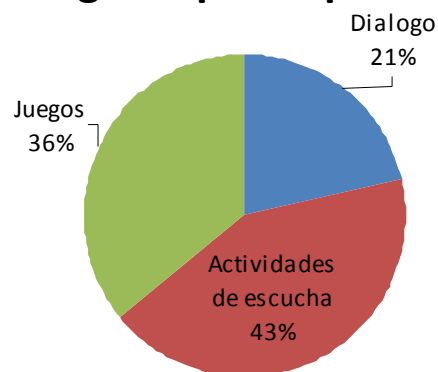
¿A cuales de los siguientes recursos usted tiene acceso?



¿En donde tiene acceso a esos recursos?



¿En que tipo de actividades le gusta participar?



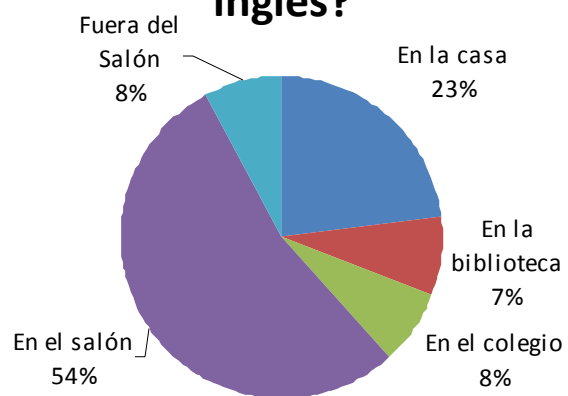
¿Cómo esta en contacto con el inglés?



¿Cómo aprende mejor?



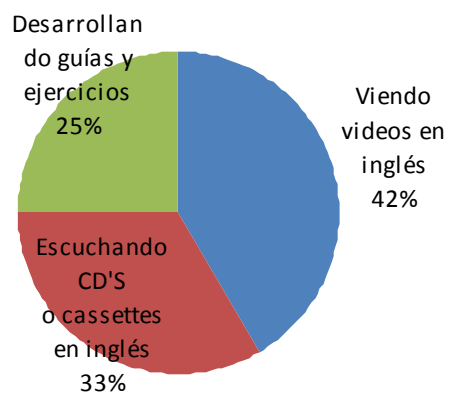
¿En donde prefiere estudiar inglés?



La mejor forma de demostrar que usted ha aprendido inglés es a través de...



¿Cómo aprende mejor inglés?



7.2 CONTENT

Lesson	Subject matter to be taught	Language to be taught	Skills	Date
1. Nature	<p>Language arts Word search puzzle about ecology. Reading about nature.</p> <p>Science Vocabulary about ecology.</p>	<p>Language: Simple present</p> <p>Patterns: Affirmative</p> <p>Activities: Guessing meaning from the context. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate information according to the piece of reading.</p> <p>Vocabulary: Animals and nature.</p>	Listening Reading Writing	May the 5 th , 6 th , 12 th and 13 th
2. The enviroment.	<p>Language arts Articles about the seasons</p> <p>Science The weather.</p>	<p>Language: Simple present</p> <p>Patterns: Interrogative and negative form.</p> <p>Activities: Sharing experiences. Matching images with definitions. Making sentences.</p> <p>Vocabulary: The weather.</p>	Reading Writing Speaking	May the 19 th , 20 th , 26 th and 27 th
3. Culminating activity.	<p>Arts Mural painting</p> <p>Science Ecology day.</p>	<p>Language: Learnt through the unit</p> <p>Patterns: Affirmative, interrogative and negative sentences.</p> <p>Activities: Making a collage or drawing. Oral report.</p> <p>Vocabulary: Learnt through the unit</p>	Listening Speaking	June the 16 th and 17 th

7.3 METHODOLOGY

To undertake this project the needs and interests of the students in terms of learning a foreign language and learning about the environment were taken into account as well as the reality of the educational system. Thus, the needs and interests were aimed to be satisfied by using some communicative teaching methods such as Content Based Instruction (CBI), the Natural Approach, Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) and Task Based Language Teaching.

The activities that were proposed for the students to work on according to the method are summarized in the chart below.

METHOD	ACTIVITY
COOPERATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING	<p>Reading articles about the environment for students to work cooperatively in groups in order to write sentences based on the articles.</p> <p>Presenting an oral report in groups.</p>
TASK BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING	<p>Encouraging students to talk about their personal experiences related to the environment.</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to guess the title of an article and fill in the blanks with information about it.</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to look up for equivalent words in the native language.</p> <p>Students will be encouraged to propose solutions to the environmental problems; this will become the final project.</p>
CONTENT BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING	<p>Readings in which new vocabulary will be presented to the students in order to be practiced in writing.</p>

NATURAL APPROACH	Students will be presented realia and pictures for them to associate the meaning of the words.
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NATURAL APPROACH

One of the methods this project is based on is the Natural approach since it takes communication as the primary function of language and it stresses the importance of vocabulary by prioritizing meaning over structure. Thus, this method considers the acquisition of a second language as a process of stages based on meaning in which grammar will be acquired implicitly (Richards and Rogers). Based on this and due to the low English level of the students a wide range of vocabulary and simple commands were given to them at the beginning and as the process advanced the complexity of the vocabulary, the lectures and the rest of input gradually increased.

The input was related to environmental education which is something of interest to the students due to the risky area in which they live. It was introduced to the students by speaking at a slower rate, repeating, restating and using yes / no questions as stated in the input hypothesis (Richards and Rogers).

The affective filter hypothesis was also taken into account since it states that students best acquire the target language when their emotions and attitudes towards it are positive. Research has shown that there are three variables that affect the already mentioned attitudes and emotions and lower the affective filter, these are: high motivation, high self confidence and low anxiety (Richards and Rogers). To keep students' affective filter low a relaxed

environment was set by letting students focus on the meaning rather than on the form while communicating, by allowing them to express and share their experiences confidently, and by treating them respectfully.

COOPERATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING

This project is based on CLL because this method is also derived from Communicative language teaching (CLT). Cooperative language learning emphasizes the role of social interaction in learning and promotes communicative interaction in the classroom; this interaction seeks to build learning through cooperation instead of competition and is to be included in the classrooms on a regular basis.

This method aims to increase the academic performance of all the students no matter if they are high achievement students or academically handicapped students. Moreover CLL helps the teacher build positive relationship among students and give them the experience they need for their social, psychological and cognitive development. It also replaces the traditional competitive structure of the classrooms with a cooperative structure. CLL states that when learners converse in socially or pedagogically structured situations they develop communicative competence in a language. It also takes critical thinking skills and cooperation as central aspects for learning to take place in the classroom.

One of the key elements in which the success of CLL depends on is the group work. This is achieved by designing a well structured learning program in

which students interact with each other and feel motivated to increase each other's learning. Thus for succeeding in the group work some factors are to be taken into account, these are: First, Positive Interdependence that refers to the mutual support within a group. Second, Group Formation that refers to the assignation of students and their role in a group as well as to the size of such group. Third, Individual accountability, that involves group and individual performance. Fourth, Social skills that determine the way students interact with each other. Fifth, Structuring and Structures that refers to ways of organizing students' interaction. (Richards and Rogers)

For these reasons group work was taken as a priority. Students were asked to work with their classmates in groups chosen by them, chosen by the teacher arbitrarily or formed at random. Students were encouraged to interact with all their teammates especially with those they do not normally share with and they were asked to do it respectfully. Each of the students took responsibility for his or her individual product; it was done by assigning each student a grade for the part of the work that belonged to him or her. Though, students also took responsibility for the product of the whole group; it was encouraged by choosing one student to share the work of his or her group with the whole class or with another group and by telling the group the grade was to be averaged. Students were given tasks in which they had to give their point of view. Students were also allowed to express themselves and give their opinions freely; it was done in order to help them develop their critical thinking skills.

CONTENT BASED INSTRUCTION (CBI)

CBI is an approach to language teaching that takes content as the core of teaching instead of linguistic or other syllabus. It is based on two main principles: First, "People learn a second language more successfully when they use the language as a means of acquiring information, rather than as an end in itself". Second, "Content Based Instruction better reflects learners' needs for learning a second language". There are some assumptions that underlie (CBI) these are: First, language is text and discourse based. Second, language use draws on integrated skills. Third, language is purposeful. One of the aims of CBI is that learners become autonomous by making them "understand their own learning process and take charge of their own learning from the very start" (Richards and Rogers).

Taking this into account, environmental education content was chosen as the basis of the project since it is a current need of the students to know about the dangers of living in an area at risk of natural disasters. This gave them a purpose to use the target language. Students were exposed to authentic input related to environmental education such as readings and lectures and they were guided to develop the four skills (Reading, Listening, Speaking and writing) in an integrated way. Students were encouraged to take an active part in the class and they were motivated to take charge for their own learning process by making them aware of the importance of English nowadays in society.

TASK BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING

Task Based Language Teaching is an approach that takes tasks as the central component of planning and instruction in language teaching. (TBLT) principles include activities that involve real communication, use of language for meaningful tasks and use of meaningful language to support the learning process. One of the characteristics of (TBLT) is the notion of “task as central unit of planning and teaching” that is carried out using language. Although (TBLT) is derived from Communicative Language Teaching it has some additional learning principles which are: First “tasks provide both the input and output necessary for language acquisition”. Second “task activity and achievement are motivational”. Third “learning difficulty can be negotiated and fine-tuned for particular pedagogical purposes”. It implies learner roles as group participant, monitor, risk taker and innovator, and teacher roles as selector and sequencer of tasks, preparer of learners for tasks and consciousness - raiser. TBLT also takes into account the role of instructional materials as pedagogic materials and realia such as newspapers, television and internet (Richards and Rogers).

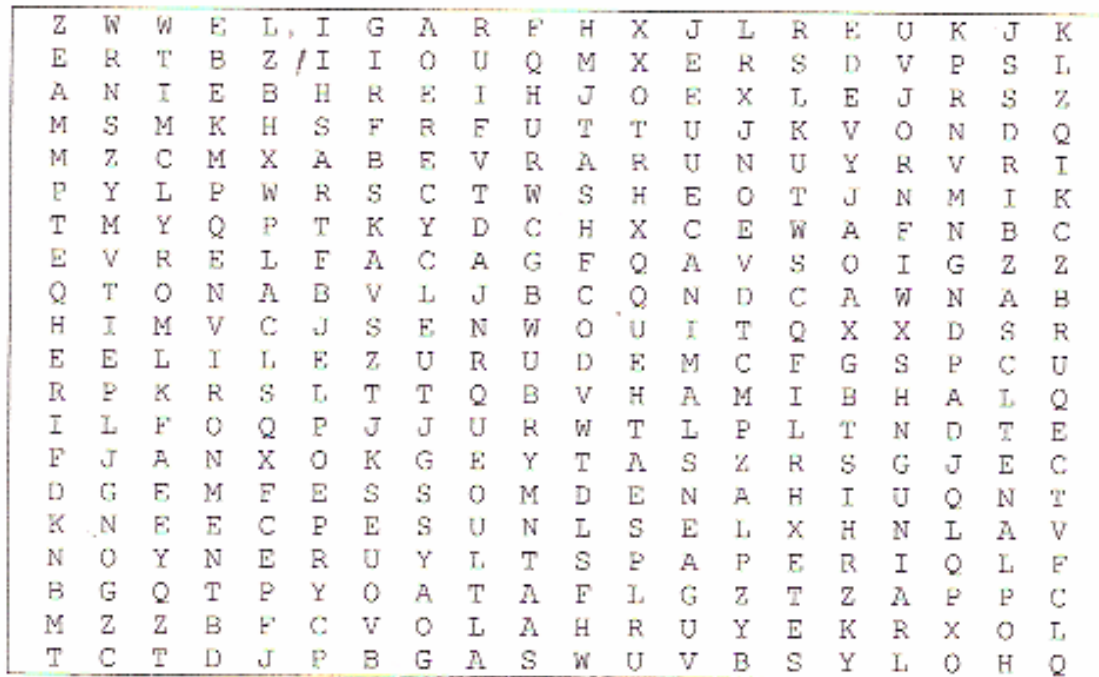
For these reasons, the students were given realia about environmental education in order to have them involved in real communication and meaningful tasks that led them to use the target language meaningfully. These tasks gave them the input and output they needed and encouraged them to participate, monitor and take risks. Besides, they were designed to raise students consciousness of the environmental issues they face everyday.

Taking into account that education plays a key role in preparing people to deal with natural disasters; the activities of the thematic unit were designed to raise students' awareness of the environmental issues that directly affect them due to the fact that they live in an area or permanent risk of landslides and floodings. To contextualize this problem to students some of the activities were designed to teach some vocabulary related to environmental issues and their effect on the students' lives including images and exercises about the topics (Cañete).

7.4 MATERIALS

WORKSHEET 1

Ecology



BOTTLES
CANS
ENVIRONMENT
GLASS
FRAGILE
RAIN
FIRE

PLANET
PRESERVE
RECYCLE
TRASH
ANIMALS
BIRDS
TREES

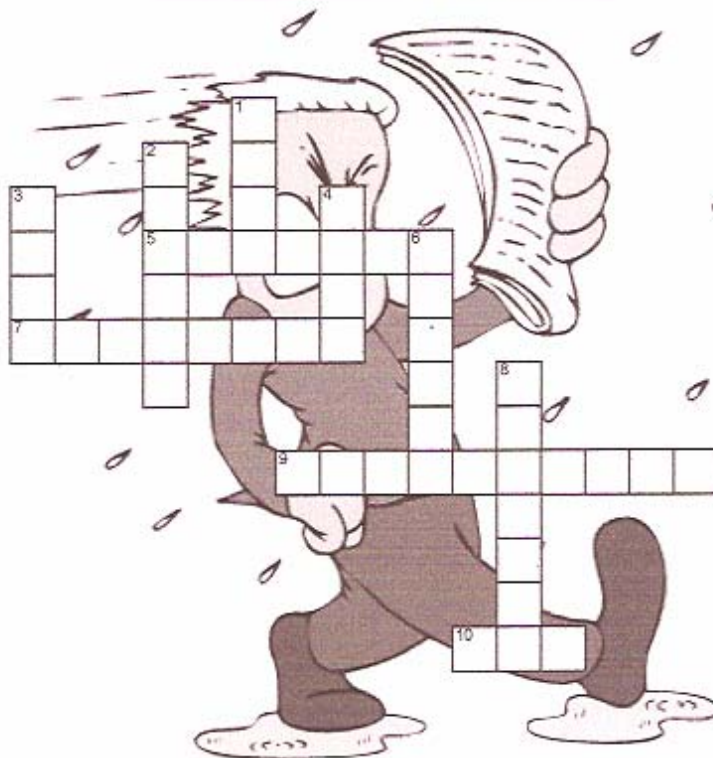
SUN
PAPER
WATER
EARTH
MOUNTAINS
PEOPLE
BUGS



WORKSHEET 2

Weather and Seasons

What's the weather like in spring?



SUMMER COLD WEAR SUNGLASSES MITTENS COAT DECEMBER
 SPRING WEATHER DRY

Across

5. We wear _____ to keep the hands warm in the winter.
7. In China, the winter is usually in _____, January and February.
9. We wear _____ and shorts in the summer.
10. What's the opposite of wet?

Down

1. I usually wear my orange _____ in the winter.
2. It's usually hot and sunny in _____.
3. In winter the weather is snowy and _____.
4. What do you _____ in the summer?
6. It's usually rainy and wet in _____.
8. What's the _____ like in Fall?

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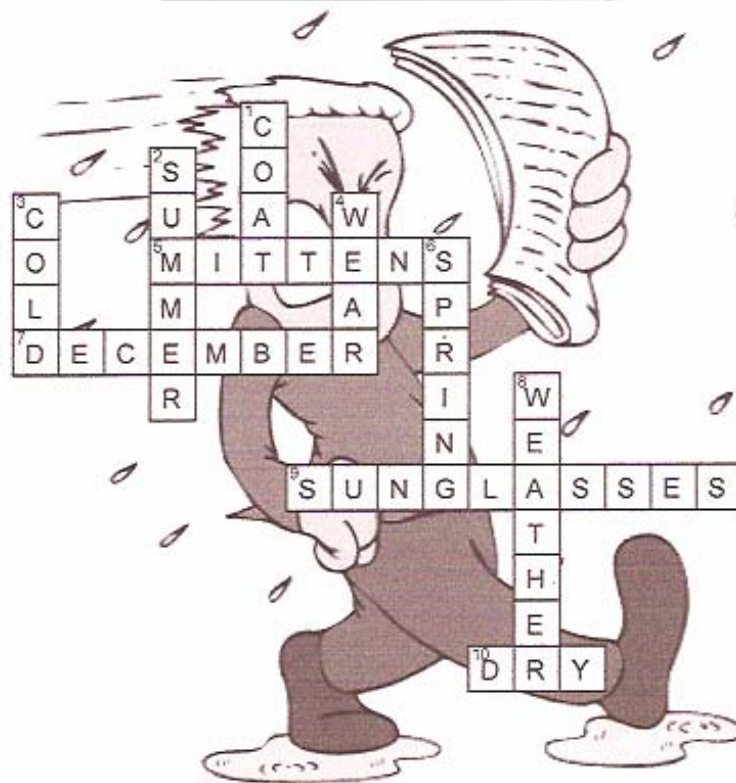
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www.english-4kids.com

Weather and Seasons

What's the weather like in spring?



SUMMER COLD WEAR SUNGLASSES MITTENS COAT DECEMBER
SPRING WEATHER DRY

Across

5. We wear _____ to keep the hands warm in the winter. [MITTENS]
7. In China, the winter is usually in _____, January and February. [DECEMBER]
9. We wear _____ and shorts in the summer. [SUNGLASSES]
10. What's the opposite of wet? [DRY]

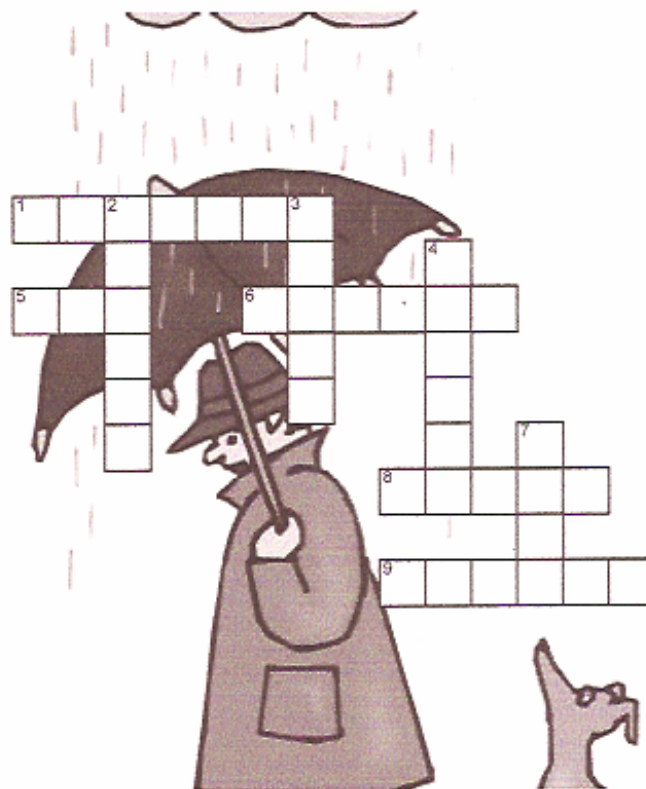
Down

1. I usually wear a my orange _____ in the winter. [COAT]
2. It's usually hot and sunny in _____. [SUMMER]
3. In winter the weather is snowy and _____. [COLD]
4. What do you _____ in the summer? [WEAR]
6. It's usually rainy and wet in _____. [SPRING]
8. What's the _____ like in Fall? [WEATHER]

WORKSHEET 3

Weather and Seasons Puzzle

What's the weather like in summer?



SNOWS AUTUMN SWIM SUMMER WINTER RAINS SEASON
HOT WEATHER

Across

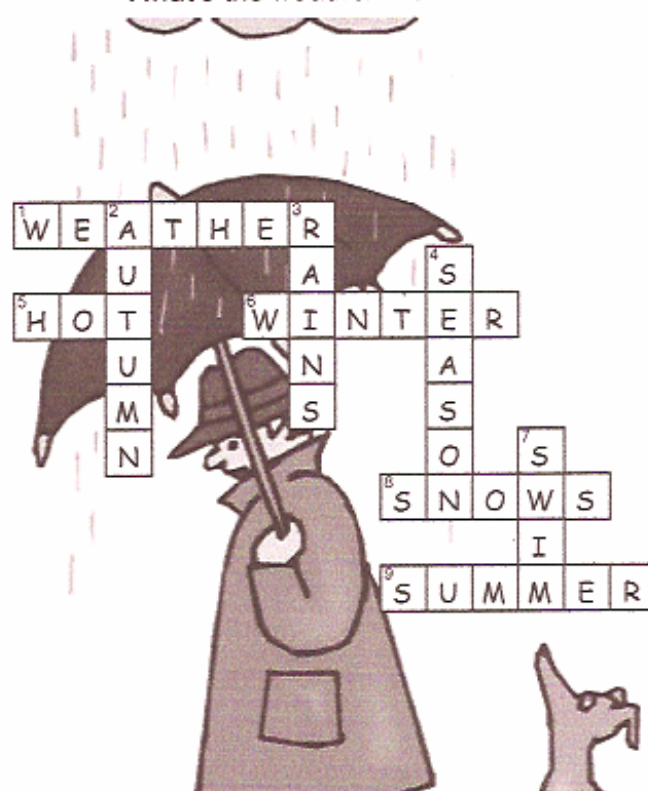
1. What's the _____ like in your city?
5. I don't like summer. The weather is too _____.
6. We can make a snowman in _____.
8. It usually _____ in the winter.
9. The weather is usually hot in _____.

Down

2. The weather is usually cool and dry in _____.
3. It often _____ in spring.
4. What's your favourite _____?
7. In summer, we can _____ at the beach.

Weather and Seasons Puzzle

What's the weather like in summer?



SNOWS AUTUMN SWIM SUMMER WINTER RAINS SEASON
HOT WEATHER

Across

1. What's the _____ like in your city?
[WEATHER]
5. I don't like summer. The weather is too _____ . [HOT]
6. We can make a snowman in _____ .
[WINTER]
8. It usually _____ in the winter.
[SNOWS]
9. The weather is usually hot in _____ .
[SUMMER]

Down

2. The weather is usually cool and dry in _____ . [AUTUMN]
3. It often _____ in spring. [RAINS]
4. What's your favourite _____ ?
[SEASON]
7. In summer, we can _____ at the beach.
[SWIM]

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WORKSHEET 4

<u>Name:</u> _____ <u>Class:</u> _____

When is the best time to make a snowman?

Match the words in the first column to the best available answer in the second column.

_____	 Autumn	
_____	 Winter	1) we can make a snowman
_____	 Spring	2) you can swim
_____	 Summer	3) we can ride bikes
_____		4) we can fly kites

What's the weather like in winter?

Match the words in the first column to the best available answer in the second column.

_____	winter 	
_____	Spring 	 1) cold and snowy
_____	summer 	 2) cool and dry
_____	Autumn 	 3) rainy and wet
		 4) hot and sunny

Answers for Teachers

When is the best time to make a snowman?

Answer key

- 4 - Autumn
- 1 - Winter
- 3 - Spring
- 2 - Summer

What's the weather like in winter?

Answer key

- 1 - winter
- 3 - Spring
- 4 - summer
- 2 - Autumn

WORKSHEET 5

The Frog and the Fly

A NORTHERN LEOPARD FROG sat on the bank of a pond. He was very hungry. Water and air pollution were killing many insects, which made it difficult for him to find enough food to eat.

A bright green fly landed on a rusty woodsia fern beside the frog.

"You are a handsome fly," the frog croaked. "What kind of fly are you?"

"I am a blowfly and I am quite clever," it buzzed. "I know all about water pollution. It hurts some living things but it does not hurt me, so it is not harmful. It is the same with air pollution. It hurts some things but it does not hurt me, so it is not harmful."

"I know all about frogs, too. Your tongue is not long enough to reach me, so you are not harmful."

The frog took a long jump, caught the fly with his tongue, and ate it.

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The frog took a long jump, caught the fly with his tongue, and ate it.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Students at Oriente Miraflores School live in a low income community located in an area of the city at risk of natural disasters. They do not have an adequate formal acquisition context in English as stated in the Colombian law due to the lack of resources of the institution and they do not have an informal one due to the lack of resources of their families. For these reasons this project was an attempt to give students environmental education while reinforcing their English learning process. It was done by raising students' consciousness about the environmental issues they face every day as well as by improving their attitudes and motivation for acquiring the target language. Moreover, students were encouraged to acquire the target language naturally, and they were grouped in order to help them develop not only cognitive but also social skills that will help them integrate with the rest of the society, this was achieved by associating the target language with content about the environmental issues that make part of their everyday life.

As a conclusion, this social project that intervened in the students' learning process has intended to make them more conscious of the environmental issues they have to face everyday, giving them keys on how to prevent and solve the aforementioned issues. Besides, this project has helped students' lower their anxiety and raise their self esteem and motivation towards learning the target language. At the same time it has attempted to raise students' awareness of their own learning process which is expected to help them not only in the area of English but also in all the other academic fields and later in life as productive members of the society. As a result, students improved their knowledge in the field of environmental education, and at the same time

they were provided with an instructional basis that will be useful for their process of learning a foreign language.

Although this social project has been very successful in achieving the above mentioned, it will be insufficient by itself to guarantee students' academic success not only in the English or Environmental education subject, but also in education as a whole. For these reasons much more needs to be done, especially by the government which duty is to give equal opportunities to access education to all the citizens of this country as well as the rest of the society which should not remain indifferent towards this vulnerable population.

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10. APPENDIXES**APPENDIX 1****NEEDS ANALYSIS**

Edad: _____

Sexo: Masculino ____ Femenino ____

1. ¿En donde habla inglés? Marque con una X

- En el salón.
- En la casa.
- Con los amigos.
- En ningún lugar.

2. ¿Qué tan seguido usa el inglés? Marque solo una opción con una X

- Siempre.
- Algunas veces.
- Raramente.
- Nunca.

3. ¿Cuáles de las siguientes habilidades se practican en la clase de inglés?
Marque con una X

- Lectura.
- Escritura.
- Escucha.
- Habla.
- Ninguna.

4. A usted le gusta aprender inglés a través de (Marque con una X):

- Lectura.
- Escritura.
- Escucha.
- Habla.

5. ¿Cuál habilidad le gusta más? Marque solo una opción con una X

- Lectura.
 Escritura.
 Escucha.
 Habla.

6. ¿Cuál de las anteriores habilidades es para usted la mas importante para aprender ingles? Marque solo una opción con una X

- Lectura.
 Escritura.
 Escucha.
 Habla.

7. ¿Cuál de las siguientes habilidades necesita practicar más? Marque solo una opción con una X

- Lectura.
 Escritura.
 Escucha.
 Habla.

8. ¿Le gusta aprender nuevas palabras en inglés? Marque con una X y responda.

Si _____ No _____

¿Por qué? _____

9. ¿Le gusta practicar sonidos y pronunciación? Marque con una X y responda.

Si _____ No _____

¿Por qué? _____

10. ¿Le gusta leer en inglés? Marque con una X y responda.

Si _____ No _____

¿Por qué? _____

11. ¿Le gusta hacer ejercicios de escritura en inglés? Marque con una X y responda.

Si _____ No _____

¿Por qué? _____

12. ¿Le gusta estudiar las reglas para formar oraciones en inglés? Marque con una X y responda.

Si ____ No ____

¿Por qué? _____

13. ¿Cuáles cree que son los mejores materiales y/o actividades para aprender inglés? Marque con una X

- CD rom
- Canciones
- Videos
- Juegos
- Obras de teatro
- Internet
- Hablar en inglés
- Ver programas en inglés
- Leer libros en inglés
- Otros. ¿Cuales? _____

14. ¿Qué otros materiales quiere usar en su clase de inglés?

15. ¿A cuales de los siguientes recursos usted tiene acceso? Marque con una X

- CD rom
- Canciones
- Videos
- Juegos
- Obras de teatro
- Internet
- Hablar en inglés
- Programas en inglés
- Libros en inglés
- Ninguno de los anteriores.

16. ¿En donde tiene acceso a esos recursos? Marque con una X

- Salón de clase
- Colegio
- Casa
- Biblioteca pública
- En ningún lugar.

17. ¿En que tipo de actividades le gusta participar? Marque con una X

- Obras de teatro
- Diálogos
- Lectura de textos
- Actividades de escucha
- Juegos
- Otros. ¿Cuales? _____

18. ¿Cómo esta en contacto con el inglés? Marque con una X

- Viendo programas de televisión en inglés
- Escuchando canciones en inglés
- Escuchando a la profesora de inglés
- Ninguna de las anteriores

19. ¿Cómo aprende mejor? Marque solo una opción con una X

- Solo
- En pareja
- En pequeños grupos

20. ¿En donde prefiere estudiar inglés? Marque con una X

- En la casa
- En la biblioteca
- En el colegio
- En el salón
- Fuera del salón

21. La mejor forma de demostrar que usted ha aprendido inglés es a través de:
(Marque con una X)

- Exposiciones en inglés
- Realizando las actividades en inglés
- Actuando en obras de teatro en inglés
- Exámenes escritos
- Exámenes orales

22. ¿Cómo aprende mejor inglés? Marque con una X

- Viendo videos en inglés
- Viendo gráficos e imágenes
- Escuchando CD's o cassettes en inglés
- Usando elementos de la vida real
- Usando gesto y movimientos corporales
- Desarrollando guías y ejercicios

7. ¿Ha visto o experimentado desastres generados por el cambio climático en su barrio?

8. ¿Que tipo de medidas o acciones ha tomado la comunidad para prevenir o solucionar los desastres ecológicos?

9. ¿Ha recibido ayuda por parte de las entidades gubernamentales para prevenir o solucionar los desastres ecológicos, de ser así en que ha consistido dicha ayuda?

10. ¿Como es el manejo que se le da en su comunidad a las basuras y a las aguas residuales?

11. ¿Como piensa usted que podría mejorarse en su comunidad el manejo de las basuras y de las aguas residuales?