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### ABSTRACT

This research study focuses on the development of activities to teach grammar in context to students of Eighth Year of Basic Education at Fray Vicente Solano High School.

The theories on which this study is based give a clear understanding of how learning grammar in context helps learners improve English grammar. This study also considers some theories related to the development of strategies and techniques to improve the teaching-learning grammar process.

The instruments of the research study are questionnaires, a pre-test, and a post-test. After finishing the application of grammar activities in context, the results obtained from this research prove that learners do learn grammar better when it is presented in context, not in isolation.

Therefore, grammar activities based on meaningful contexts give learners the opportunity to improve the learning of grammar and also lead them to authentic interaction inside and outside the classroom setting.

### KEY WORDS:

Focus on form, Task vs. exercise, Grammar, Strategies, Techniques, Teaching materials, Contextualized activities.



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**Titulo de la Tesis:**

**ENGLISH GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT: SELECTED MATERIAL FOR STUDENTS IN  
THE EIGHTH YEAR OF BASIC EDUCATION AT FRAY VICENTE SOLANO HIGH  
SCHOOL**

Tesis previa a la obtención del Grado de  
Magister en Lengua Inglesa y Lingüística  
Aplicada

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*Al presentar esta tesis como uno de los requisitos previos para la obtención del título de Maestría en Estudios Latinoamericanos, por la Universidad de Cuenca, autorizo al Centro de Información Juan Bautista Vásquez para que haga de esta tesis un documento disponible para su lectura, según las normas de la universidad.*

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Martha Yolanda Campoverde Campoverde

Cuenca, julio 04 de 2011



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### DEDICATION

To God, the light that guides my life,  
To my husband, Gerardo and my children,  
Priscila and Nicolás who have been my  
constant support especially in those moments  
in which it was not possible to be with them.

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### INTRODUCTION

I have been an English teacher at Fray Vicente Solano High School for many years and I have had the opportunity to deal with learners who come from elementary school without basic knowledge of grammar structures. I think it is due to the fact that grammar is sometimes taught in isolation and learners are forced to memorize long lists of rules. This consideration awoke in me the interest to develop grammar activities in context for helping learners from Eighth Year of Basic Education to learn grammar in a different way.

The main objective of this research study is to select teaching material in order to improve the teaching-learning process of English grammar. To achieve this goal the study is based on the application of different theories related to grammar learning for the development of teaching material, on the analysis and interpretation of results obtained from the research and on the development of grammar activities that lead students to an effective communication.

The learning of boring grammar rules does not lead learners to effective interaction; what encourages them to use language for communication is to use grammar in meaningful contexts. Based on this concept, I have divided my study into three chapters.

Chapter I focuses on some theories about grammar in the Communicative Approach. This approach emphasizes the development of communicative activities to promote real communication in the classroom and make learners develop communicative competence to be able to use the language utterances to communicate appropriately. This chapter also considers some theories to teach grammar in context, as well as the integration of Task-Based Teaching Approach in grammar teaching since well developed grammar tasks make learners communicate and interact with others.

Some techniques and strategies for the teaching of grammar, the ways of analyzing learning activities, and considerations to be taken into account to assess the use of grammar are also considered in this chapter.



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Then the chapter moves on to reflect on the important role teaching materials play in the teaching-learning process and also some considerations about authentic and created materials.

Chapter II includes the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the first questionnaire, the pre-test, the post-test and the second questionnaire.

Chapter III considers the activities that were developed to teach grammar in context. This chapter is very important, since this is the proposal of the research study.

The analysis of the research process serves me to state some conclusions and recommendations that will help me continue working for the learners' benefit.



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### CHAPTER I

#### 1. PERSPECTIVES ON GRAMMAR

##### 1.1. GRAMMAR IN THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

The communicative approach was created as a response to those methodologies which produced learners with a considerable knowledge of grammar rules, but not able to use the target language communicatively. As Richards and Rogers state “in this approach learning activities are selected according to how well they engage the learner in meaningful and authentic language use (rather than mechanical practice of language patterns) ” (72). This approach emphasizes meaningful interaction and authenticity in learning activities for communication rather than in learning grammar rules only. Language is not only a system of rules; it is seen as a resource for the creation of meaning and communication.

The Communicative approach gives priority to the semantic content of language learning, that is to say, learners learn the grammatical form through meaning. The main aim of this approach is to prepare learners for meaningful communication through activities based on interaction. The Communicative Approach prioritizes communicative competence over accurate grammar. Grammar is highlighted and focused upon once the context has been set; that is to say, students first try to communicate and in doing so, they learn.

The Communicative Approach is a learner-centered approach to language learning. However, it does not mean that teachers do not have a role within this approach; on the contrary, teachers do play an important role in motivating students through meaningful activities in order to lead them to effective and successful communication. It is therefore the teachers’ responsibility to create situations which can promote communication, and provide authentic background for language learning.

Before the rise of the Communicative Approach, it was thought that learners would learn the target language better if they put attention on grammar rules only,



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that is, focus on forms, rather than using grammar for communicative purposes.

Focus on form refers to grammar and other aspects of language such as: spelling, vocabulary, etc.

It is important to establish the difference between the terms, focus on form and focus on forms because sometimes English learners get confused over them. It was Long who drew the attention of language teaching to the distinction between focus on forms and focus on form. According to him, " focus on forms is nothing but the traditional structural syllabus. Focus on form, on the other hand, is the term that refers to instruction that draws the learner's attention to form in the context of meaningful communication " (45-46). Focus on forms is related to the traditional teaching of points of grammar in separate lessons. It is based on explicit instruction on grammar forms. Based on Long's definition about focus on forms, we can say that focus on form attempts to teach grammar forms communicatively rather than in an isolated way. Focus on form takes place within a meaningful, communicative context, making students' attention to linguistic form an extension of communicative language teaching, not a departure from it.

### 1.1.1 Reactive versus Preemptive Focus on Form

In Amber Gallup Rodriguez's article, "Teaching Grammar to Adult English Language Learners: Focus on Form" (122), Ellis distinguishes two kinds of focus on form: **Reactive focus on form** occurs when a learner has said something erroneous and the teacher or another learner reacts to this error by correcting him. **Preemptive focus on form** is an attempt by the teacher or a learner to initiate explicit attention to a linguistic form to prevent the occurrence of an erroneous form. A very clear example of preemptive focus on form taken from Ellis et al. (414), occurs when teachers or learners ask questions like "How do you spell...? or How do you pronounce...? to preempt probable errors. As Ellis states "reactive focus on form addresses errors which have emerged in the context of meaningful communication. Preemptive focus on form addresses problems which are predicted to occur and thus block communication. (414). In Amber Gallup Rodriguez's article, Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen state that "learners who engage in communicative focus on form



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activities improve their grammatical accuracy and their use of new forms " (2).

Teachers should consider learners' needs and interests in identifying the best way to draw their attention to a form and practice using it in a meaningful context. Focus on form instruction within a meaningful context helps learners to learn difficult forms in a better way.

The differences between focus on form and focus on forms are summarized by Xiaotang Chang in the following power point presentation slide.

<b>DIFFERENCES BETWEEN <i>FOCUS ON FORM</i> AND <i>FOCUS ON FORMS</i></b>	
<b>FOCUS ON FORM</b>	<b>FOCUS ON FORMS</b>
The word form refers to language form in general	Forms refer to discrete, isolated, specific language forms.
Learners first engage in meaning, and then explore some linguistic features.	Primary attention to forms.
Occasional shift of attention to form.	Most attention to forms.
Try to perceive problems in comprehension or production	Pre-selected in the syllabus
Linguistic features are explored in context	Forms are taught in isolation

[www.google.com.ec/#hl=es&source=hp&blw=&bih=&q=communicative+approach%3A+focus+on+form+and+focus+on+forms&aq](http://www.google.com.ec/#hl=es&source=hp&blw=&bih=&q=communicative+approach%3A+focus+on+form+and+focus+on+forms&aq)

## 1.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

The term communicative competence was coined by Dell Hymes, a sociolinguist who referred to communicative competence as: " the aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts " (1972). Communicative competence refers to the ability to form correct utterances, and know how to use these utterances appropriately for particular purposes in order to be able to communicate effectively in a language.

The term communicative competence has been used by many linguists in justifications and explications of communicative language teaching. Marianne Celce-



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Murcia summarizes the evolution of the term communicative competence starting with Hymes through the contributions of Canale and Swain, and Celce-Murcia. (Rethinking the Role of Communicative Competence in Language Teaching, 41).

As mentioned before, the term communicative competence was coined by Dely Hymes in response to the theory of Noam Chomsky, who claimed that an innate language mechanism was sufficient to account for first language acquisition. Hymes stated that in addition to linguistic competence (the rules for describing sound systems and for combining sounds into morphemes and morphemes into sentences), people also need notions of sociolinguistic competence: that is to say, an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction. (qtd. in Celce-Murcia, 42). Hyme's notion of communicative competence became part of communicative approach and new teaching materials that were compatible with communication as the goal of second language teaching. In 1980 two linguists, Canale and Swain, added strategic competence, which is the ability to compensate for problems or deficits in communication and do various types of planning in order to meet communicative goals. (qtd. in Celce-Murcia, 42). Celce-Murcia states that clear examples of strategic competence can be seen when a salesman uses some strategies of communication to make a product seem irresistible or when somebody tries to persuade another person to do something extraordinary because he or she has mustered communicative strategies for the occasion.

In 1983, Canale added the term discourse competence. He defines it as: " the ability people have to connect sentences in stretches of discourse and to form a meaningful whole out of a series of utterance" (qtd. in Celce-Murcia 43). Discourse means everything from simple spoken conversation to lengthy written texts such as: articles, books, etc. A few years later, that is, in 1995, Celce-Murcia proposed that actional competence which is defined as the ability to comprehend and produce all significant speech acts and speech act sets, should also be part of communicative competence. (Celce-Murcia et al. 1995). According to Austin, speech acts refers to



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"the actions performed in saying something or to the action performed when an utterance is produced" (qtd. in Cutting, 13).

Regarding sociolinguistic competence and grammatical competence, Canale and Swain made two changes in terminology. They proposed that sociolinguistic competence be modified to sociocultural competence, the cultural background knowledge needed to interpret and use a language effectively; and that grammatical competence be re-labeled as linguistic competence to explicitly include the sound system and the lexicon as well as the grammar. (qtd. in Celce-Murcia 46).

One of the important contributions of Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) was to specify that the various components of communicative competence were interrelated and that it was important to describe the nature of these interrelationships in order to understand the construct of communicative competence. The following model was offered by Celce-Murcia in order to clearly explain these interrelationships.

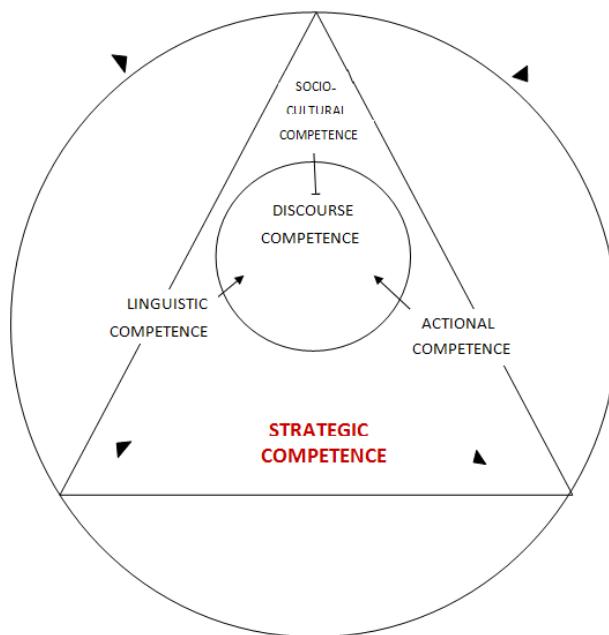


Figure 3.2 Schematic representation of communicative competence in Celce-Murcia et al. (1995:10)



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This model offered by Celce-Murcia (10) is a pyramid enclosing a circle, surrounded by another circle. The circle inside the pyramid is discourse competence, the core or central competence. The three points of the triangle are the top-down sociocultural competence and the bottom-up linguistic competence and actional competence. The arrows indicate that the various components are constantly interacting with each other and the discourse component. This construct thus placed the discourse component in a central position where thelexico-grammatical resources, the actional organizing skills, and the sociocultural context all come together and shape the discourse. The circle surrounding the pyramid is strategic competence, an available inventory of communicative, cognitive and metacognitive strategies that allow a skilled interlocutor to negotiate meanings, resolve ambiguities, and to compensate for deficiencies in any of the other competencies.

According to Celce-Murcia the interrelationship of the various components of communicative competence shown in the pyramid play a very important place when trying to help students develop communicative competence because the learning of a second language is interrelated with the interactions that students have with other people, with the strategies they use to communicate their ideas, the role of the participants, the setting in which learning takes place, the sociocultural aspect and the speech acts they use to communicate with others in a more polite way. Besides, the presentation of grammatical structures, new words or new sounds should be done through meaningful context. Teaching materials must be learner-centered and allow for communication while learning tasks need to be interactive whenever possible (pair work, group work, role play, etc) Therefore, if teachers take into account the mentioned considerations, they will help students develop communicative competence in a more effective way.

In my specific case, I can apply the interrelationship of the different components of communicative competence by considering my students' weaknesses and strengths to give them the opportunity to learn from others and to be taught by others, because according to my experience as a teacher I do think that the classroom setting is the place to help students interact with classmates of different



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ages, different backgrounds, different ideas and experiences. Besides, if real interaction with others takes place, students will develop and improve communication greatly.

### 1.3. TEACHING GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT

Acquiring a new language is always difficult for learners and many times they think that it is grammar that makes the learning of the language hard. The learning of boring grammar rules is not too tempting for students because it makes them not feel motivated to learn them or pay attention to them. Any grammar element teachers want to deal with will only be meaningful if it is put into context, into something real, relevant and motivating. What really matters is that students get to see how a point of grammar works in context, not just in disconnected sentences.

Regarding teaching grammar through context, two important points of view can be taken into account: that of Jeremy Harmer and that of the linguist David Nunan.

Jeremy Harmer states that "students need to get an idea of how the new language is used by native speakers and the best way of doing this is to present language in context" (57). If teachers base the learning of English on grammar rules or isolated structures only, students will not have the opportunity to practice the language in the way it is presented; that is, through real situations based on what really happens in life, based on the way native speakers use the language as a means of communication. Besides, teaching grammar in an isolated way does not make students feel eager to learn the language; they lose motivation and soon the learning of the language will become a hard and tedious task for them.

According to Harmer, another important aspect when learning English through context is that of considering students' interests and hobbies as a starting point. With regard to this aspect he states: "the student's world can be a major source of context for language presentation" (57). I agree with what Harmer says; it is a good thing to take advantage of students' context. Teachers can create discussions on



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topics that are of interest for students, on topics based on the outside world and also on their surroundings, such as friends, family, school, spare time activities, experiences and real life situations. Different points of grammar require different situations or contexts. That is why teachers should choose the context in which they are going to present the grammar point in a careful way.

Teaching grammar in a contextual way does not mean that teachers avoid teaching grammar rules, but to have students themselves discover how new grammar structures are formed, how they work and how they are used. The only time when grammar rules should be presented to the students is when they themselves ask for an explanation. Explanations must be not too difficult for students to understand and they should be done in the foreign language. As Harmer points out: "teaching grammar in context is motivating, interesting and provides the students with an opportunity to be creative and use their imagination while acquiring a new grammar structure, rather than teaching them dry, boring and artificial sentences" (71). What really matters is to teach them grammar in a way so that they are not completely aware of the actual process of being taught something, but to provide them with a fun and exciting way to learn grammar structures. If teachers allow students to discover language themselves, they will provide them with an opportunity to learn the language in a way that makes them feel grateful for their experiences.

Regarding Nunan, he states that "from a grammatical perspective, many teaching materials are based on a linear model of language acquisition" (101). This process is based on the premise that learners acquire one target language item at a time, in a sequential, step-by-step fashion. Before moving on to the next step, students should demonstrate their mastery of one thing. In his opinion, such a process is inconsistent. I think he is right when he says that this process is inconsistent. Learners do have the capacity to learn some things at the time. It all depends on his or her capacity and concentration on doing things.

According to Nunan, learning another language by the linear model is like constructing a wall. To erect the wall one needs to lay one brick at a time, the easiest



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grammatical bricks at the bottom and the most difficult ones at the top. The task for the learners is to get the linguistic bricks in the correct order, first the word bricks and then the sentence bricks. If the bricks are not in the correct order, the wall will collapse. Nunan says: "Learning grammar is not like constructing a wall, students should not be provided with isolated bricks, but with various elements of language that interact with one another in a functional and meaningful sense" (101).

Instead of adopting the linear model to teach language, Nunan (102) proposes the adoption of the organic model, which is based on the fact that learners do not learn one thing perfectly one at a time, but learn numerous things simultaneously and imperfectly. He says: " learning language by the organic model is like growing a garden" (102). The linguistic flowers will not appear at the same time, and will not grow at the same rate, but will appear once they have renewed their growth. Besides the renewal of the linguistic flowers will be determined by factors related to speech, pedagogical interventions, and the influence of the discoursal environment in which linguistic items occur. (102).

### 1.3.1. Language in Context

In Nunan's opinion: "some textbooks present grammar out of context. Learners are given isolated sentences which they have to internalize through exercises involving repetition, manipulation and grammatical transformation" (102). He says that some textbook exercises deny students the opportunity to explore grammatical structures in context without establishing systematic relationships that exist between form, meaning and use. Teachers should lead learners to effective communication and it can be done by giving them tasks that dramatize the relationship between grammatical items and the discoursal context in which they occur. In genuine communication beyond the classroom, grammar and context are often so closely related that appropriate grammatical choices can only be made with reference to the context and purpose of the communication. As Nunan points out: " if learners are not given opportunities to explore grammar in context, it will be difficult for them to see how and why alternative forms exist to express different communicative meanings" (102). Teachers need to give students tasks that give



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them the opportunity to express their attitude towards the things or events that surround them and also towards the things that call their attention. That is to say, to create discussions on topics that are of interest for students such as: movies, trendy clothes, famous people, etc. Teachers can also hand on activities to do in class or out of class, such as conducting short interviews on the topic and reporting back to the class, or writing a short, personal narrative on the topic and reading it to classmates. What is important is to let students use grammar as a tool to accomplish clear and meaningful communication and to force them to use other grammar points they have learned as well and build on their previous knowledge of grammar.

According to Nunan (103), the organic model has some practical implications to language teaching. There are many ways of activating traditional exercises and bringing them into harmony with this model. He suggests that in teaching grammar teachers can be guided by the following pedagogical principles:

### **1.3.1.1. Teaching language as a set of choices**

Nunan points out that “to give students hard-and-fast grammatical rules is difficult because in many cases when grammar points are put into communicative situations, decision about which forms to use will be determined by the meanings learners themselves wish to make” (104). In order to help students see that alternative grammatical realizations exist, it is a good idea to have them decide exactly what message they wish to convey. Nunan (104) suggests that tasks such as the following can be used.

#### **EXAMPLE 1**

In groups of 3 – 4, study the following pair of sentences and decide whether there is any difference in meaning between the two pairs of sentences. When would you use one form, and when would you use the other?

1. A: Alice saw a white rabbit.
- B: Alice saw the white rabbit.

In this pair of sentences the difference in meaning is the use of articles **a** or **an** (indefinite article) and the definite article **the**. In the first sentence the indefinite article **a** means that Alice saw any rabbit, not specifically one that she knows. In the second



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sentence, the definite article **the** means that she saw a rabbit that she knows, that is to say, it is not the first time she saw the rabbit.

Therefore, it is important for students to know that certain words can be used according to the context in which the word is used.

### **1.3.1.2. Providing opportunities for learners to explore grammatical and discoursal relationships in authentic data.**

According to Nunan (104), non-authentic texts sometimes present inauthentic language because dialogues and other aspects of content tend to be specially written to incorporate teaching points and are often not representative of real language use. On the other hand, authentic texts show how grammar forms operate in the real world, they provide exposure to real language and also they allow learners to encounter target language items in interaction with other closely related grammatical and discoursal elements. What learners need is a balanced diet of both types of text. Regarding this aspect, Nunan (105) presents the following example:

#### **EXAMPLE 2**

Study the following extracts. One is a piece of genuine conversation; the other is taken from a language teaching textbook. What is the difference between the two extracts? What grammar would you need in order to take part in the authentic conversation?

#### **Text A**

A: Excuse me, please. Do you know where the Chinese restaurant is?

B: Well, it is not far from here. Do you know where the police station is?

A: No, not really. I'm just passing through.

B: Well, first go down this street to the traffic light. Then turn right and go straight ahead for about two blocks. The restaurant is on your left.

A: OK. Thanks a lot.

B: You're welcome.

#### **Text B**

A: How do I get to Rolleston Street?

B: Well, you go down Fullerton Road...



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A: ...what, down Old Belair and around...?  
B: Yeah. And then you go straight ...  
A: ... past the hospital?  
B: Yeah, keep going straight, past the racecourse to the roundabout?  
A: Yeah  
B: And Kensington Road' off to the right.  
A: What, off the roundabout?  
B: Yeah.  
A: Right

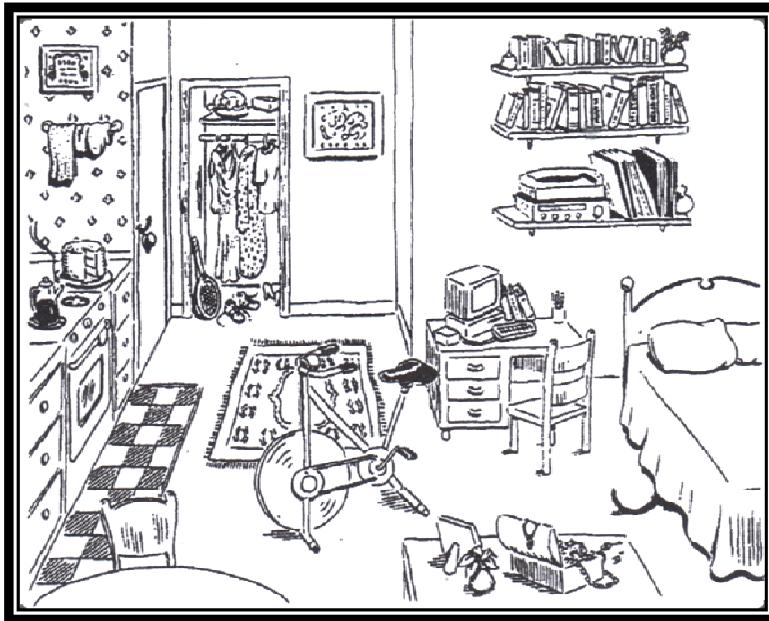
To expose students to real life situations, help them use the language in a real way. For example, when teaching students directions it is helpful for them to ask for and give directions related to the place where they live.

### **1.3.1.3. Teaching language in ways that make form/function relationships transparent**

Nunan (106) writes that teachers can create tasks that help students to structure and restructure their understanding of form/function relationships through inductive and deductive tasks of various kinds. The following example presented by Nunan (106) is useful for exploring a big range of structures, including 'there + be', articles, yes/no questions and conjunctions. The teacher can determine which form/function relationships are focused on by giving the learners certain types of prompts and asking them questions like: Whose apartment is this? How much can you tell about the person who lives here? Is the person poor?

### **EXAMPLE 3**

Look at the picture. Whose apartment is this? Make guesses about the person who lives here. Circle the guesses and then explain them by circling the clues in the picture.



(Nunan 1998)

1. The person is a man / a woman
2. The person has a pet / doesn't have a pet
3. The person is a smoker / not a smoker
4. The person is athletic / not athletic
5. The person is a music lover / not a music lover
6. The person is middle class / poor

Teachers can offer learners tasks that combine some grammatical structures in order to make them review those that have been taught and those that are being taught.

#### **1.3.1.4. Encouraging learners to become active explorers of language**

Nunan (107) says that to activate this principle, teachers should make students feel responsible for their learning. Students can bring samples of language into class and work together to hypothesize about language structures and functions, or teachers can ask students to take photographs of public notices they believe are ungrammatical or maybe pieces of information they consider interesting in order to work together in class trying to explore learning by themselves. The goal of this principle is to make learners work things out for themselves instead of simply being



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given rules. That is to say, students can apply what they learned in class and explore situations that happen outside the classroom using ideas and examples on their own.

### **1.3.1.5. Encouraging learners to explore relationships between grammar and discourse**

Nunan states: " grammar and discourse are inextricably interlinked " (107).He says that tasks which encourage learners to explore relationships between grammar and discourse help them explore the functioning of grammar in context and give them the opportunity to develop their grammatical competence through the creation of coherent discourse. He suggests teachers can give students a topic sentence and ask them to write a paragraph by using some scramble information. Students have to arrange given information and produce a coherent text. Once students have finished writing the text, they compare it with others produced by their classmates and then they can compare it with the original text which is supplied separately to them. (107).

In making a case for a more organic model for grammar teaching, teachers help learners use grammatical forms through tasks that let them explore those forms to communicate effectively and also make the teaching of grammar meaningful and motivating because grammar points are left out and put into context. Furthermore, teaching grammar in context gives learners the opportunity to develop the ability to use the language as a whole, and not only the manipulation of the separate components of it.

## **1.4. TASK-BASED APPROACH IN THE LEARNING OF GRAMMAR**

The idea of getting learners to acquire English through tasks was developed in India by N.S. Prabhu in the 1980s. Prabhu made a strong Communicative Approach Project in Bangalore, South India. He designed the learning contents into all kinds of communicative tasks. He thinks learners may learn more effectively when their minds are focused on tasks. Prabhu's Bangalore Project can be regarded as a first try that tasks can be designed into a unit in classroom design. (qtd. In Li. 2004)



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Teachers have always been looking for ways of changing the traditional forms of instruction in which students were considered as passive learners into a more motivating and interesting way and help them acquire language for communicative needs becoming in this way active participants of the teaching-learning process. Task-based approach is a method of teaching English language that provides teachers with the opportunity of promoting learners' competence and developing their skills in an effective way.

### **1.4.1. Integration of the Task-based Teaching Approach into Grammar Teaching**

Sometimes teachers spend a lot of time explaining grammar points and analyzing sentences that make the learning of grammar difficult and boring for learners. This way of teaching grammar is focused on form and it does not let learners put in practice their knowledge of grammar into communicative tasks. Nunan considers communicative tasks as, " a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than forms" (10). I agree with his point of view because I think that when learners are given the opportunity to practice grammar through communicative tasks, they understand grammar points better.

In order to know whether the task-based teaching approach is useful in grammar teaching, Nunan (1989) made an experiment based on Willis' model of task-based learning approach – the pre-task phase, the task cycle and the post-task phase. He took the subjunctive mood as an example to illustrate the design of the classroom activities.

**Pre-task:** The teacher asks students to talk about what they would do if they had a lot of money. At first the teacher gives students examples on the board, such as:  
If I had a lot of money, I would buy my parents a beautiful house.  
If I had a lot of money, I would travel with my parents around the world.

**Task-cycle:** Then the teacher asks students to talk about the topic freely. The students work in pairs to discuss their own wishes using the structures the teacher



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presented. To write about their wishes students use their imagination. In this phase, the teacher acts as a monitor giving students help whenever they need it. After that, students prepare a short written report to be given to the whole class.

**Post-task:** In this phase, the teacher checks the sentences students wrote making sure that the students understand the meaning. By using the examples given by students, the teacher illustrates the rules of the subjunctive mood. After that, the teacher gives students some exercises which relate to the grammar point that has been presented. Finally, the teacher gives the students an assignment, asking them to make a survey about their family members' wishes and make a report for the next class.

In my opinion, taking into account Nunan's example of combining task-based teaching approach with the teaching of grammar structures, we can clearly realize that presenting students grammar into communicative tasks, they are not only given the opportunity to have real interaction with their classmates, but also the opportunity to use their imagination and their own point of view, which creates learning interest and motivation when learning grammar. Moreover, task- based teaching approach makes the learning of grammar less boring and difficult because communicative tasks lead students to authentic communication.

### 1.4.2. Task versus exercise

Nunan establishes an essential difference between a task and an exercise " a task will have non language related outcomes. Exercises will have purely language related outcomes." (qtd. in Celce-Murcia 62).

To clarify the distinction between a task and an exercise we can take a look at the following examples given by Nunan (qtd. in Celce-Murcia 62)

#### Exercise

- Listen to the dialogue and answer the following true/false questions.

#### Task

- Listen to a weather forecast and decide what to wear.

According to Nunan, in the example given for exercise the outcome will be a set of structures. Success will be decided in linguistic terms. In contrast, in the example



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given for task the outcome will be the selection of appropriate clothing given a weather forecast. This is a nonlinguistic outcome, and success for the task will be measured in nonlinguistic terms.

This useful distinction that Nunan makes between an exercise and a task makes clear the understanding of when to ask students to apply grammatical structures and when to apply what they really know about the use of language for different circumstances.

This difference between an exercise and a task that Nunan makes will help me a lot when I present grammar structures to my students. I will try to base my teaching of grammar on communicative tasks by giving them different situations related to their life, related to real world. I will avoid giving them isolated exercises that do not relate grammar with communication.

### **1.4.3. The background of teaching grammar through tasks**

In my opinion, teaching grammar in a traditional way, that is to say, by giving students isolated grammatical structures and asking them to analyze these structures does not arouse students' interest and it is not an effective way of presenting grammar points.

Task-based approach is intrinsically connected to communicative teaching for which communication is the most important element of language. Communicative teaching considers the learning process as a set of communicative tasks which facilitates in learners the learning process. Moreover, communicative teaching combines the teaching of grammar points with teaching of language skills. Therefore, this important consideration could be very useful for grammar teaching.

As we can see, task-based approach gives learners the opportunity to use their creativity and own ideas, to be active participants of the learning process and to feel encouraged to use the language for communicative purposes inside and out of the classroom. In fact, encouraging learners to engage in task-based grammar



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activities can help them develop the skills and strategies necessary to negotiate meaning in the discourse process. Tasks provide learners the chance to communicate in a more effective way.

Nunan states "language is now generally seen as a dynamic resource for the creation of meaning. In terms of language, it is generally accepted that we need to distinguish between 'learning that' and 'knowing how'" (12). Teaching grammar through tasks provides learners with a language-rich environment and opportunities to use grammar structures in real life language use. Teaching grammar through tasks encourages learners to take risks and use grammar meaningfully.

Taking into account Nunan's point of view, students do not have to master the use of grammar structures, but to know how to use them to communicate with others in real life situations. Therefore, the use of tasks in the classroom can help them apply grammar structures for language use.

To conclude this chapter, I think that the use of tasks for teaching grammar can benefit students a lot because they are expected to use their creativity and imagination in a more motivating way. Besides, activities in the classroom become much more attractive and interesting and grammar teaching occurs in a more natural and meaningful way.

### 1.5. GRAMMAR IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Grammar is one of the most important aspects of the English language. It is also the most difficult part to teach as well. Some English teachers think that the teaching of grammar is based on grammatical structures that learners have to learn by heart. The result of this misconception is that students are not able to apply grammar in a contextual way.

To overcome this problem, English teachers can use different strategies that can help learners not only to learn grammar in a fun way, but also to improve English grammar learning and develop communicative competence.



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### 1.5.1. STRATEGIES TO TEACH GRAMMAR

Language learning strategies give language teachers valuable clues about how their students assess the situation, learn or remember new input presented into the classroom. It is important to take into consideration the way learners learn in order to facilitate in them the learning process. Teachers should also keep in mind that not all students learn in the same way, some learn faster and others learn slower, so what teachers should do is to look for ways to help them to learn the language better.

Oxford defines strategies as " steps taken by students to enhance their own learning. Strategies are especially important in language learning because they are tools for active, self directed involvement which is essential for developing communicative competence" (1). I think strategies are planned actions that teachers and learners use to make the learning of language more meaningful. When students use learning strategies, they look for ways of enhancing their learning. Strategies are useful tools that provide learners with an easy and fun way to learn

A given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is neutral until the context of its use is thoroughly considered. Oxford points out that: " a strategy is useful if it has the following conditions: (a) the strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand; (b) the strategy fits the particular student's learning style preferences to one degree or another; and (c) the students employ the strategy effectively and links it with other strategies"(8). Therefore, it is the teacher's obligation to look for and provide students with useful strategies which are connected to the students' way of learning.

Oxford also states that: "connection between knowing the rules of grammar and being able to apply those rules in listening, speaking, reading and writing is very important. What students should be taught is to transfer their knowledge of grammatical structures to the four main skills" (8). I agree with what Oxford says, the four skills of the language should be integrated in a meaningful way in order to provide learners with an enjoyable way to learn English. A useful way to help them achieve it is using these strategies:



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### 1.5.1.1. Provide plentiful, appropriate language input

Teachers should consider the fact that learners develop language learning depending on the input they receive in the classroom. For example, a combination of activities that make learners put in practice what they already know, and activities where language is above their productive level, makes them develop learning in an effective way.

In the specific case of grammar, I think that the more input learners receive when they learn grammar, the more they learn it. That is to say, if teachers present grammar in a variety of contexts and situations or through different and interesting tasks, learners will practice grammar structures in a different way. That is to say, the learning of grammar will be based in contextualized tasks and will give learners a wide variety of meaningful contexts.

### 1.5.1.2. Use predicting skills

Verb tense and aspect, sentence length and structure, and larger discourse patterns all may contribute to the distinctive profile of a given communication type. For example, a history textbook and a newspaper article in English both use past tense verbs. However, the newspaper article will use short sentences and a discourse pattern that alternates between subjects or perspectives. The history textbook will use complex sentences and will follow a timeline in its discourse structure. So being aware of these features allows students to anticipate the forms of structures they will find in a given communication task found whether in textbooks or newspaper articles.

In my case, to help my students make predictions before developing any activity, could be for example a reading or listening activity, will help them better understand what I expect from them or how they have to do the activity. If I present them a reading which contains an illustration, it will be a good idea first to ask them as many questions related to the illustration and then have them develop the activity.



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### 1.5.1.3. Limit expectations for drills

The use of mechanical drills does not develop the ability to use grammar correctly in oral and written interactions because these drills separate form from meaning and use. Communicative drills encourage students to connect form, meaning, and use because multiple correct responses are possible. In communicative drills students are given the opportunity to respond to prompts using the grammar point being studied. For example, to practice the past tense instead of asking my students to replace the correct grammatical form, I ask my students the things they did the last night. In this way, they have the opportunity to practice the past tense by communicating their own ideas. So it becomes a communicative drill instead of a mechanical one.

### 1.5.1.4. Sentence combining

Sentence combining is the strategy of joining short sentences into longer, more complex sentences. As students engage in sentence combining activities, they learn how to vary sentence structure in order to change meaning and style. The use of sentence combining is an effective strategy for improving students' writing. Hillocks states that "sentence combining practice provides writers with systematic knowledge of syntactic possibilities, the access to which allows them to sort through alternatives in their heads as well as on paper and to choose those which are most apt" (150). Sentence combining is an effective strategy to help students develop fluency and variety in their own writing style because they can explore length, parallelism and other syntactic devices. For example, if I notice that my students use too many short sentences when writing about any topic, I teach them connectors in order to connect sentences and avoid in this way too much repetition of the same ideas. In this way, they improve the use of grammar and their writing style as well.

### 1.5.1.5. Expose students to listening activities

To use listening activities in the classroom gives learners the possibility to develop the listening skill, listen to different accents, practice grammar structures that are being studied and also makes them develop an ear. For example, presenting students with the dialogue that comes on the tape can make them focus attention on grammar structures and syntax points as well.



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In my specific case, to teach my students grammar through songs really helps them develop the use of grammar. They practice adjectives, nouns, articles, adverbs, verb tenses, clauses, etc. After listening to a song, I ask them questions about it in order to check comprehension, I encourage my students' participation in class, I teach them idioms, I make them fill in the blanks, etc. That is, listening activities can be used for a variety of purposes; it only depends on the teachers and the way they like to teach students.

### 1.5.1.6. Integrating skills in the classroom

Rebecca Oxford (1990) compares second or foreign language to that of a tapestry. A tapestry is woven from many strands, and these strands are characteristics of the teacher, the learner, the setting and the relevant languages; that is, English and the native languages of both of them. To get a colorful, strong and beautiful loom all the strands must be interwoven; that is, the teacher's teaching style must address the learner's learning style, the learners must be motivated and the setting must provide the necessary tools to improve the learning of the language.

Added to the strands mentioned previously, there are other strands in the tapestry; they are the four skills of the language: speaking, listening, reading and writing. These strands also include some sub-skills which are vocabulary, pronunciation, syntax (grammar), and spelling. Therefore, if all the strands that make the tapestry are not interwoven in a positive way, the tapestry will look like something weak and not colorful.

What Rebecca Oxford points out is very interesting. What happens with the tapestry could be compared to what happens in the classroom. If teachers do not develop teaching strategies which integrate the four skills of the language, students will not be given opportunities to use it for communication; they will only learn isolated sentences that will make them unable to communicate in a meaningful way. Contextualized grammar activities presented through listening, speaking, reading and writing help students build the bridge between grammar structures and the use of them. Students can practice grammar by listening to grammar structures in short



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conversations. Presenting students with short stories that include verb tenses, adjectives, prepositions, clauses, or the grammar point that is being learned, also helps students better understand grammar. If teachers want to review the past tense, for example, to ask students to write about a past event in their lives helps them greatly. Dialogues, conversations, dramatizations, and role plays are useful to learn and practice grammar rules. In my opinion, everything that teachers do in the classroom should be based on the English language skills to lead students to effective communication.

### 1.5.2. TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING GRAMMAR

Engaging students in active learning is a challenge that all language teachers should take because not only does it help learners become more efficient in their effort to learn a second language, but it also provides a meaningful way to focus on teachers' efforts. Teachers should take into consideration that students benefit a lot if grammar instruction enables them to carry out their communicative purposes, and a positive way to achieve it is to apply effective teaching techniques in the classroom.

Before explaining some useful techniques for the teaching of grammar, it would be helpful to define what a technique is. The American Heritage Dictionary defines a technique as "the systematic procedure by which a task is accomplished" ("technique"). I think that such a systematic procedure relates to established forms that teachers use for conducting the teaching and learning of different topics in the classroom.

Hubbard, Jones, Thornton and Wheeler state that: "a technique is a procedure used in the classroom" (31). According to this definition a technique relates to the ways of performing something in the classroom.

According to Douglas Brown (395), appropriate grammar – focusing techniques:

- Are embedded in meaningful, communicative contexts.
- Promote accuracy between fluent, communicative language.



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- Do not overwhelm students with linguistic terminology.
- Are as lively and intrinsically motivating as possible.

I do agree with Douglas because grammar techniques that teachers apply in the classroom should provide students with the opportunity to use grammar in context not in an isolated way, and in this way to use them for communicative purposes inside and outside the classroom; that is, for real life situations. Likewise, teachers should give special importance to form-focused instruction within the communicative framework and use techniques that structure input to learners.

According to Michael Lewis and Jimmie Hill there are some practical techniques that English teachers can use to teach grammar. (76, 77, 78). I will summarize them.

### 1.5.2.1 Elicitation

Using elicitation leads learners to infer grammar rules by themselves. Elicitation helps them to discover meaning, form and use because through leading questions teachers can draw information out of the learners. An example of using elicitation could be; for example, to make students elicit the difference between a gerund and an infinitive, the teacher can write these two sentences on the board: *Steve stopped to smoke.* *Steve stopped smoking.* Then to make learners elicit the meaning between the two sentences they can be asked the following questions: which sentence relates to a smoker? and which sentence relates to an ex-smoker? By doing this teachers help learners make inferences about meaning.

### 1.5.2.2. Grouping students

Group work is a valuable part of language learning. Group work gives learners the opportunity to work together and rely on each other for language acquisition. If there are some students who do not understand how a grammar structure works, a useful way to apply this technique can be by pairing up higher-level students with a lower-level ones and have the first help the others by explaining in his/her own words how the grammar point works. The advantage of this technique is that higher-level students can manage the group, can be attentive to the activity being



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developed, and can also be ready to offer feedback. Besides, learners feel confident and happy to work with their classmates.

### 1.5.2.3. Use "gimmicks" to combat common mistakes

Some mistakes are very common; for example, the third person s-form, the past tense of irregular verbs; the use of the auxiliaries "does" or "do", etc. A useful way of combating such mistakes can be using some kind of "gimmicks"; that is, an attention-getting inducement, rather than constantly explaining or taking a rude attitude toward learners. For example, if learners constantly make mistakes related to the use of the third person, teachers can apply this technique by preparing a large card containing a very large letter **S**. Whenever learners forget to add an s to the third person, the teacher can simply raise the card so that learners understand what the mistake is. If the mistakes are related to the past tense of irregular verbs, the teacher can show learners a card containing the word "**IRREGULAR**" and remind them in this way about irregular forms. This technique can help learners not to get depressed or feel uncomfortable whenever the teacher corrects them.

### 1.5.2.4. More language games are structure practices

Using games to make students understand grammar structures is a very useful teaching tool for teachers. Games like hangman, who am I? allow students to practice grammar with enjoyment and fun. Teachers should keep in mind that very often learners would rather play a game than do a grammar practice. The teacher should also take into consideration that if learners are learning better and enjoying what they are doing, and it has a language purpose, a game is more effective than a conventional practice.

### 1.5.2.5. Correcting errors

At any level, students produce language mistakes, so teachers should be very careful in not having learners lose confidence and feel embarrassed when being corrected. Teachers need to let learners gain confidence in their ability to use the language by focusing on the content of their communication rather than on the grammatical form. Therefore, if students are engaged in communicative activities,



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teachers should correct them only if they interfere with comprehensibility. A good way of correcting learners' common mistakes about the past tense of irregular verbs is this one:

Students: I go to the cinema last night.

Teacher: You went to the cinema? Was the movie interesting?

These helpful techniques not only help learners to present grammatical structures in a motivating way for their students, but also benefit students in their learning process because they are being motivated and feeling comfortable with the way grammar is being taught. Besides, using techniques to present grammar makes students be active participants of their learning acquisition.

### 1.5.3. ANALYZING AND SELECTING GRAMMAR ACTIVITIES

In order to make a grammar lesson effective, beneficial, and interesting English teachers should develop motivating activities for their students. These activities should be developed in such a way that they lead learners to real communication; that is to say, activities should be communicative. Using communicative activities to teach grammar can offer variety to learners and help them develop their ability to use English. Communicative activities also provide opportunities for teachers to give systematic feedback on students' errors. I think that communicative activities allow learners to share experiences and ideas, exchange information, and learn about others. Grammar taught through communicative activities seems to be much more effective and relevant for acquiring knowledge.

Nunan points out that, " activities specify what learners will actually do with the input which forms the point of departure for the learning task" (59). Activities let learners perform what they know with the language they have acquired. In Nunan's opinion, there are three ways of analyzing learning activities: authenticity, skill getting and skill using, and accuracy and fluency.



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### 1.5.3.1. Authenticity

Activities used in the classroom should resemble the real world to give learners the opportunity to deal with situations that really happen in real life. Classroom activities should be based on learners' life situations and should give them the opportunity to learn the language in a real way. It is important for teachers to take into consideration that the classroom is the place where learners get prepared to face life outside the learning setting. For example, it is very helpful to present learners with activities based on a video, a short conversation between native speakers, or a postcard written by a native speaker. I think these kinds of activities help students practice the English language in an authentic way.

Grammar activities should be presented in real contexts, related to students' lives. For example, if the grammar point to be learned is the future tense, teachers could begin the lesson first talking about his or her future plans, and then students could be asked about their future plans. If the past tense is going to be presented, students could talk about past events in their life. In this way, grammar structures will be taught taking into account students' own contexts.

### 1.5.3.2. Skill getting and skill using

Activities should be focused on the four skills in order to have learners practice the language in a variety of ways and also give them the chance to interact in a meaningful way. Activities based on integrated skills offer learners the possibility to improve language acquisition.

Teaching students grammar through listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, open the doors towards effective and interesting learning of grammar structures. Nowadays, with the advance of technology, teachers have in their hands a variety of teaching material that can be used to teach grammar and develop the language skills at the same time.



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### 1.5.3.3. Accuracy and fluency

Regarding this point, Brumfit states that, "...language use requires fluency, expression rules, a reliance on implicit knowledge and automatic performance" (qtd. in Nunan 63). He states that accuracy and learning are not opposite, but are complementary. Therefore, learning activities should be designed to help learners improve the use of language and communicate with others in a better way.

To take into consideration this important aspect of combining grammar activities with communicative ones, will help me a lot at the time of preparing activities for my students. When I teach them verb tenses, adjectives, adverbs, clauses, prepositions, etc. I will try to include communicative activities that I am sure will provide my students with real interaction and focus on the target grammar points to be learned in class.

### 1.5.3.4. Characteristics of grammar activities

Grammar activities presented in isolation do not lead learners to use the language to communicate; on the contrary, they make learners lose interest and motivation toward the learning process. According to Celce-Murcia (3-4), some of the characteristics of grammar activities are:

- a.** They should be meaningful, contextualized, and reasonably authentic in terms of use. I do agree with this consideration because I think learners learn better if activities are based on interaction and real life situations and better if they are presented in context. For example, to ask students things related to their life and experiences, really gives them the opportunity to interact not only with the teacher but with their classmates because they love talking about themselves and the things that surround them.
  
- b.** Teachers should be sure to provide enough contexts, so that grammatical forms are clear to learners. Grammar points should be presented in different contexts in order to help learners in the understanding and use of them, and in this way apply these grammar forms in different situations. For example, to practice the present tense, teachers can design activities related to students' weekdays, weekends, the



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things they do in their free time, on vacation, on holidays, etc. In this way, students practice grammar structures in different situations related to their reality.

**c.** Find authentic texts that provide salient tokens of the grammatical form that teachers want to present to learners. For example, she says that the use of e-mail messages is a helpful tool to make learners review and practice verb tenses, adjectives, adverbs, etc. If teachers want to teach the past tense, to ask students to bring to class a newspaper article can help them review regular and irregular verbs by paying attention to the context in which they are found.

**d.** Grammar instruction can be integrated with tasks designed to prepare learners to read and write academic discourse. To give an example Celce-Murcia suggests the use of surveys that can help learners use grammar points that are not easy to use if they are presented in simple sentences. For example, to talk about likes and preferences, teachers can ask students to walk around the classroom asking different classmates the things they prefer to do, they want to do, and they like to do on weekends. In this way, students communicate with each other and practice these grammar points as well. For more practice, students can make an oral report about classmates' preferences.

I consider that English teachers should keep in mind these important characteristics in order to make grammar activities more enjoyable and as communicative as possible so that learners get prepared for real life situations.

In Daniela Peter's article, "Analyzing grammar activities" (6), Newby states some important constituents for grammar design.

- Grammar always derives from a certain context. For example, if students talk about past experiences, wishes, daily routines, and plans, they are given the opportunity to include grammar structures in situations in which events occur.
- Grammar is regarded as communication (realistic use/processing of language). For example, to practice grammar points through surveys,



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dialogues, or information gaps, provides opportunities for learners to use the language for communication.

- It is used to express ideas. For example, grammar activities in which learners are asked to give their points of view make them use the language with one another by expressing what they feel and think.
- It is a means of encoding experience. For example, activities which combine learners' own knowledge and experiences help them better understand grammar structures.
- It is seen as constituent of a creative process. For example, role plays make students develop imagination and knowledge as well. Role plays are useful tools to practice grammar structures in context.
- It is only one aspect of language. For example, to practice grammar points by listening to a song, reading a short text, dramatizing a situation or writing about learners' lives provides them with the opportunity to learn grammar in a fun way.
- It is enjoyable. For example, to ask students to dramatize situations in a restaurant, in a hotel, at school, in an office, in a hospital, makes them develop communication and practice grammar in a fun and motivating way.

I think these considerations can help teachers select grammar activities based on students' interests and needs and also encourage them to use the language in a meaningful way. Besides, grammar activities should be presented through different situations of usage allowing learners to become active and creative participants of their learning.

### 1.5.4. ASSESSING GRAMMAR

Assessment plays a key role in language learning because it helps teachers know what their students have learned and how well they have learned certain language items. Assessment also helps teachers plan and adjust instruction in order to meet students' needs.



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It is important to define what assessment means. According to Huba and Freed: "Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences" (2000). This definition relates to the means that teachers use to measure students' proficiency in a language; and in this way to determine how well they are learning the contents given in a course.

Assessment also plays a very important place in grammar because teachers have to take into consideration that the design of good tests will give them a clear understanding of the way students are learning grammar structures. Larsen-Freeman (252), points out that in order to design good tests for assessing learners' grammar skills, teachers need to understand the "Three-Dimensional Grammar Framework" which consists of Form/Structure, Meaning/Semantics, and Use/Pragmatics.

- a. Form/Structure:** Deals with " how well a sentence is formed"
- b. Meaning/Semantics:** Deals with " what the sentence means literally or by the meanings of the words used."
- c. Use/Pragmatics:** Deals with the way sentences are used according to social conventions.

To explain these "Three-Dimensional Grammar Framework", Larsen-Freeman uses the following examples:

1. Can you pass me the salt? Form/Structure (inverted order is used to make a question)
2. Can you send over the salt bottle that is out of my reach? Meaning/Semantics (the meaning of each word strung together by rules)
3. Are you willing to carry out the action of passing me the salt? Use/Pragmatics (speech act: deeper meaning involved by social conventions) (252).

Understanding these three interrelated parts of grammar will help teachers to design test items with a clearer purpose and with a more extended scope and make clear for learners the procedures that teachers are using to measure learning.



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Teachers should also consider the kind of tests they use to evaluate learners. From Hart's point of view (1994), mechanical test questions do not assess students' ability to use the language in authentic ways. He states that to provide authentic assessment of students' grammar proficiency, test items should reflect real life uses of grammar in context. The tests should include communicative tasks.

I agree with this consideration. Grammar assessment should be based on what students have learned and it should provide teachers with the basis for further teaching in order to help learners improve their understanding and learning of grammar. Grammar assessment tools, that is to say, tests, quizzes or homework, should be designed in such a way that they reflect students' use of grammar, not in an isolated way, but appropriately in a meaningful context that leads learners to real communication. Grammar assessment is a process that takes time since it should reflect what students have learned at the end of a course and are able to do with their knowledge in real life. That is why teachers should be very careful when planning the steps or the procedures to be used for assessing learners.

To conclude this chapter, I think teachers have their own way of teaching, and to be conscious that we have an enormous part in the learning process will help us greatly at the moment of helping students develop their knowledge. The more teaching strategies, techniques, communicative activities, and activities in context teachers use in the classroom, the more learners will acquire knowledge in a motivating and meaningful way.

### 1.6. MATERIALS IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

Teaching a language not only implies helping learners to develop language skills, but the means or instruments that teachers use to help learners improve the use of skills. Teaching materials are considered to be the supporting element for much of the input and language practice that occurs in the classroom.

According to Tomlinson, teaching materials are defined as:



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Anything which is used by teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language, Materials could obviously be cassettes, videos, CD-ROMs, dictionaries, grammar books, readers, workbooks or photocopied exercises. They could also be newspapers, food packages, photographs,, live talks by invited native speakers, instructions given by a teacher, tasks written on cards or discussions between learners. In other words, they can be anything which is deliberately used to increase the learners' knowledge and/or experience of the language (2).

To take into account this definition given by Tomlinson helps materials developers and teachers to really understand that they are responsible for the materials that learners use to develop and improve the learning of a language. The teaching of a language not only implies materials developed by teachers, but also the use of commercial materials, such as books, workbooks, worksheets, audio materials, videos or computer-based materials.

### 1.6.1. The role of teaching materials

Teaching materials are considered to be the key component of the teaching-learning process. They play a very important role at the moment of helping learners acquire learning. Hutchinson and Waters, identify some principles of teaching materials:

- a) "Materials provide a stimulus for learning" (107). If teaching materials contain interesting topics for learners, they will feel motivated.
- b) " Materials help to organize the teaching learning process" (107). They are supportive tools for teachers and help them organize the learning material effectively.
- c) " Materials embody a view of the nature of language and learning" (107). Good materials help learners develop critical thinking and give them the opportunity to improve the way of learning.
- c) "Materials reflect the nature of the language task" (108). Materials should be clear enough for students to understand. That is to say, the tasks should contain clear instructions.

Keeping in mind these principles will help teachers select in a better way the teaching materials that will serve as the means or instruments for learners' effective



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learning acquisition since teaching materials provide learners with the major contact they have with the language apart from the teacher.

### 1.6.2. Authentic versus created materials

When selecting teaching materials that will reinforce learners' learning, teachers should think that both authentic and created materials can help them provide learners with a better understanding of the language. In my opinion, a combination of authentic and created materials can give the teaching process an effective impact on learners. As Tomlinson states, " Impact is achieved when materials have a noticeable effect on learners, that is when the learners' curiosity, interest and attention are attracted" (7). I agree with what Tomlinson says; teachers can attract learners' interests easily; it only depends on how interesting and well prepared teaching materials are, no matter if they are authentic or created materials.

Peacock gives definitions for authentic and created materials. " Authentic materials are teaching resources that were not specially prepared for pedagogical purposes. Created materials refer to textbooks and other specially developed instructional resources" (qtd. in Richards, 252)

I think that both authentic and created materials have advantages. For example, authentic materials expose learners to real language; they present language in a variety of contexts, they help teachers to develop activities and tasks that relate to students' needs and interests. Created materials, on the other hand, are also useful tools for teachers because they present language in a variety of ways making students practice the different skills of the language, they contain attractive illustrations and pictures for students, they contain topics that are of interest of students, and they present activities that encourage students to interact with other classmates. I think that no matter what kind of teaching materials teachers decide to choose or develop to help learners develop the language skills, the only thing they have to keep in mind is that it is their responsibility to provide learners with the best tools or instruments for an effective acquisition and development of the English language.



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### CHAPTER II

#### 2. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Before making a research, we have to take into consideration some essential steps that research involves in order to plan the process that is going to be carried out. After a research has taken place, results have to be analyzed and interpreted to see if the research goals have been achieved or not.

As an English teacher I have always wondered if students would learn grammar better if it is presented through activities in context .That is why I decided to do research based on this interest. This research took place in the high school where I work, Fray Vicente Solano. The courses I chose were Octavo "C" and Octavo "D."

To begin this research I considered that my students' parents had to know what was going to be applied to their children, so I sent them an informed consent asking them to read it carefully and give me permission to apply the different activities that I have prepared for the students. The only thing I asked them was for their children's collaboration in the activities and their help in not missing the English classes. They all signed the informed consent and agreed to it. I also talked to the high school's principal about what I was going to do.

In this chapter, all the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the research study is presented. That is to say, data collected from the first questionnaire applied to my students, data collected from the pre-test, data collected from the post-test, and data collected from the second questionnaire.



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### 2.1. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED FROM THE FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE (Annex 1)

To begin the research study, a first questionnaire for students of both courses was applied. This questionnaire was applied at the beginning of the third term. The purpose of the questionnaire was to know what students think of English, to know if they like it or not when the teacher speaks English, the kind of activities they like to do in class, how they like to work, why it is difficult for them to speak English, what they like to talk about, what is easy for them, what is difficult, and suggestions about how they would like the classes to be. This questionnaire consisted of nine questions. Because of the students' level and to facilitate comprehension; Spanish was used. To present data collection the questions were written in English.

#### 1. What is the importance of English for you?

OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 1

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Not important	0	0,00%
A Little important	2	7,14%
Important	6	21,43%
Very important	20	71,43%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"

OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 2

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Not important	0	0,00%
A little important	0	0,00%
Important	11	39,29%
Very important	17	60,71%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

As the figures show in both courses a high percentage of students think English is very important, that is 71, 43% in Octavo "C" and 60, 71% in Octavo "D".

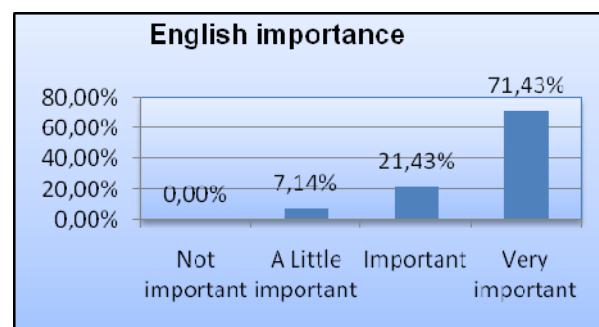


Fig. 1. Students' opinion about the importance of English

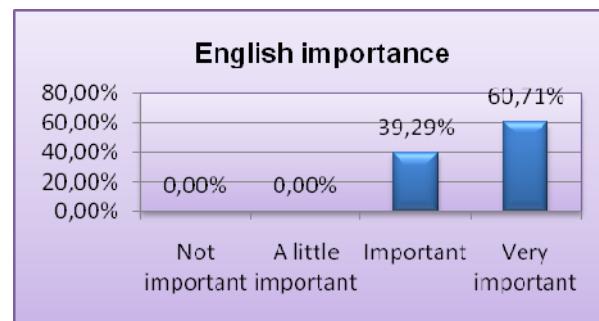


Fig. 2. Students' opinion about the importance of English



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The students' point of view motivated me and also made me think that I could take advantage of this interest to help students in the learning process by presenting them with a variety of activities in the classroom. These activities could be focused on grammar structures presented in context. Grammar could be presented through different topics based on real life situations and students' interests.

### Question 2: Do you like the teacher to speak English?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 3

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	21	75,00%
No	7	25,00%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"

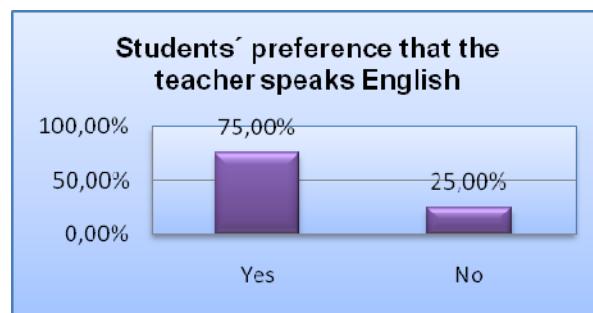


Fig. 3. Students' opinion that the teacher speaks English

#### OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 4

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	27	96,43%
No	1	3,57%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to Octavo "D"

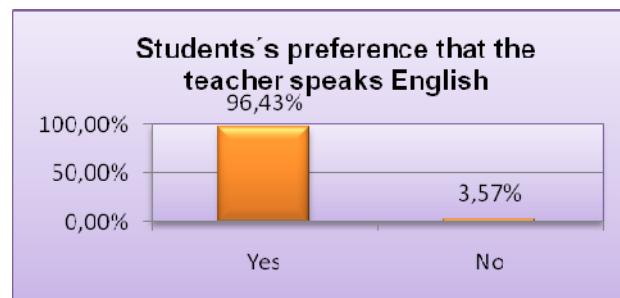


Fig. 4. Students' opinion that the teacher speaks English

Regarding this question, in both courses a high percentage of students like the teacher to speak English; that is 75% in Octavo "C" and 96, 43% in Octavo "D". This consideration helped me motivate the students to use English in class and also helped them improve pronunciation. Besides, I could take advantage of the students' points of view and integrate grammar with the speaking skill and in this way practice the use of grammar in different contexts using topics that include articles, nouns, verb tenses, pronouns, adjectives, etc.



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### Question 3: What kind of activities do you like to do?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 5

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Games	11	39,29%
Dramatizations	5	17,86%
Other activities	3	10,71%
Songs	6	21,43%
Readings	3	10,71%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"

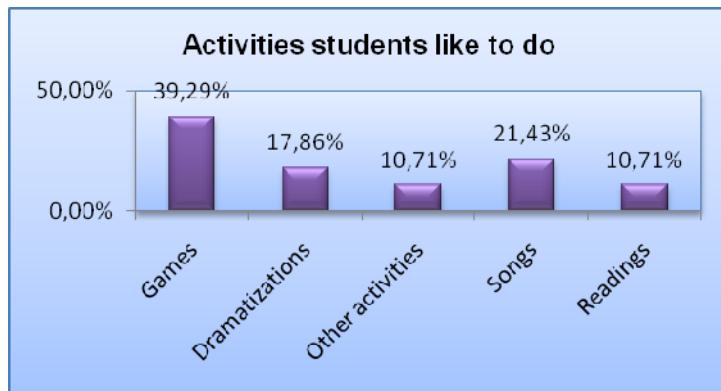


Fig. 5. Activities students like

#### OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 6

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Games	9	32,14%
Dramatizations	9	32,14%
Other activities	0	0,00%
Songs	0	0,00%
Readings	10	35,71%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"



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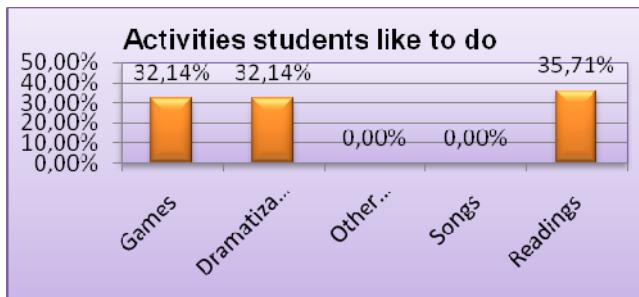


Fig. 6. Activities students like

In regard to this question, in Octavo "C" 39, 29% of students prefer games, in Octavo "D" 35, 71% of students prefer reading. The students' opinions made me think I could plan activities through games in order to help them learn grammar in a more fun way. They could also dramatize situations and use grammar in context.

### Question 4: How do you like to work in class?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 7

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Individually	4	14,29%
In pairs	10	35,71%
In groups	14	50,00%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"

#### How students like to work in class



Fig.7. Students' opinion about the way to work in class

#### OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 8

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Individually	3	10,71%
In pairs	7	25,00%
In groups	18	64,29%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

#### How students like to work

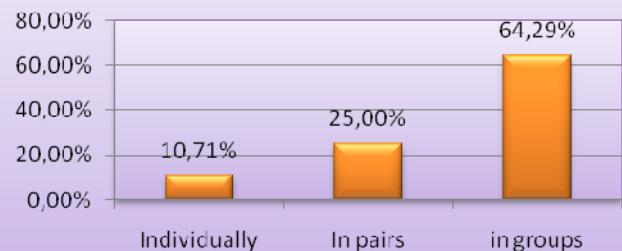


Fig. 8. Students' opinion about the way to work in class



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In both courses most students like to work in groups; that is, 50% in Octavo "C" and 64, 29 % in Octavo "D". Taking into account the students' appreciation, I think it would be very helpful for them to work in groups in order to practice specific grammar points. Besides, good students who understand the use of grammar rules can better help those students who have problems in using grammar correctly.

### Question 5: Why is it difficult for you to speak English?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 9

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Not to make mistakes	17	60,71%
To avoid classmates making fun	9	32,14%
Are not interested	0	0,00%
Other reasons	2	7,14%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"



Fig. 9. Why students avoid speaking English



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### OCTAVO “D” – TABLE 10

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Not to make mistakes	17	60,71%
To avoid classmates making fun	10	35,71%
Are not interested	1	3,57%
Other reasons	0	0,00%
Total	8	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo “D”



Fig. 10. Why students avoid speaking English

As we can see in the figures, in both courses 60,71% of students think it is difficult for them to speak English because they are afraid of making mistakes. I think it is common for many students not to use English in class in order to avoid mistakes. But I think I can motivate students by telling them that it does not matter if they make mistakes because they are learning the language and what is really important is to communicate, not to use the language they are learning in a perfect way. If students are afraid their classmates can make fun of them when they use English, teachers should talk to the whole class and ask students to be patient with those who have problems with English and try to help them. Regarding grammar, I think it could be



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useful for students to work on different activities which contain grammar in context and topics based on grammar tenses or any other grammar point. Besides, I think that to use grammar correctly is a process that needs practice; therefore, I can help my students by making them develop many activities in order to practice grammar structures based on different contexts and situations.

### Question 6: What kind of topics do you like to talk about?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 11

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Friends	7	25,00%
Family	3	10,71%
Music	12	42,86%
School	4	14,29%
Other topics	2	7,14%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"

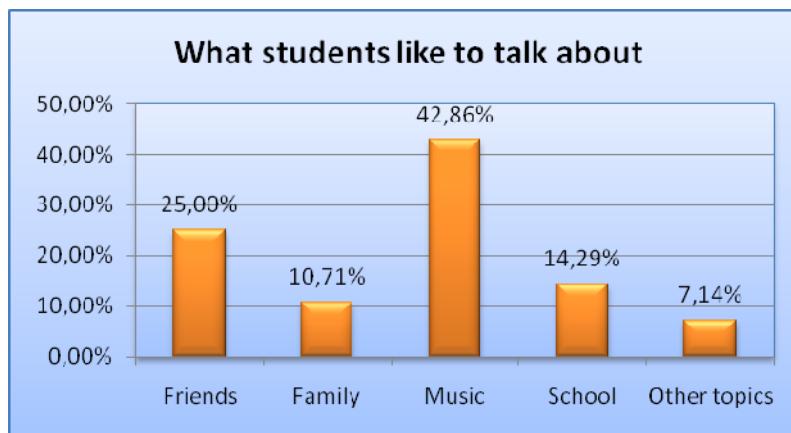


Fig. 11. Topics students like to talk about



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### OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 12

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Friends	9	32,14%
Family	2	7,14%
Music	11	39,29%
School	1	3,57%
Other topics	5	17,86%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

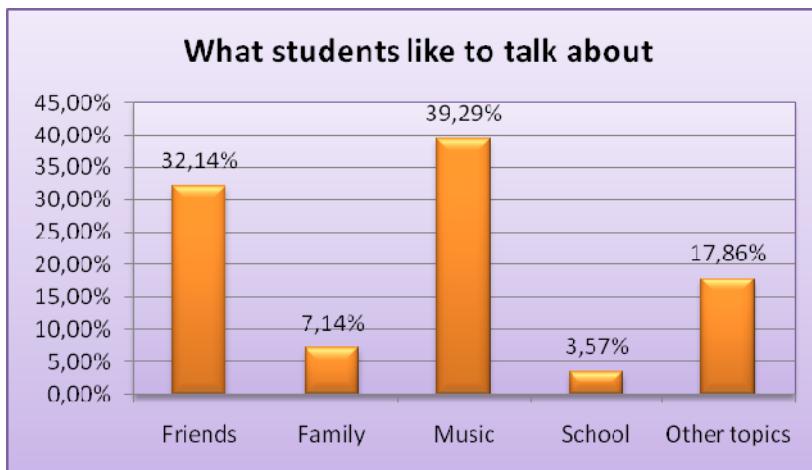


Fig. 12. Topics students like to talk about

As the figures show, in both courses the highest percentage corresponds to music, that is 42, 86% in Octavo "C" and 39, 29% in Octavo "D". Considering students' appreciation, the activities presented in both courses could be based on favorite singers, favorite kinds of music, favorite bands, fans. I think that through exposure to many examples of *to be*, *the simple present tense*, *adjectives*, *Wh-questions*, *etc.* students could learn grammar better if it is presented in a variety of contexts.



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### Question 7: What is the easiest skill or sub-skill?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 13

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Speaking	8	28,57%
Listening	7	25,00%
Writing	9	32,14%
Reading	2	7,14%
The use of vocabulary	1	3,57%
The use of grammar	1	3,57%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"

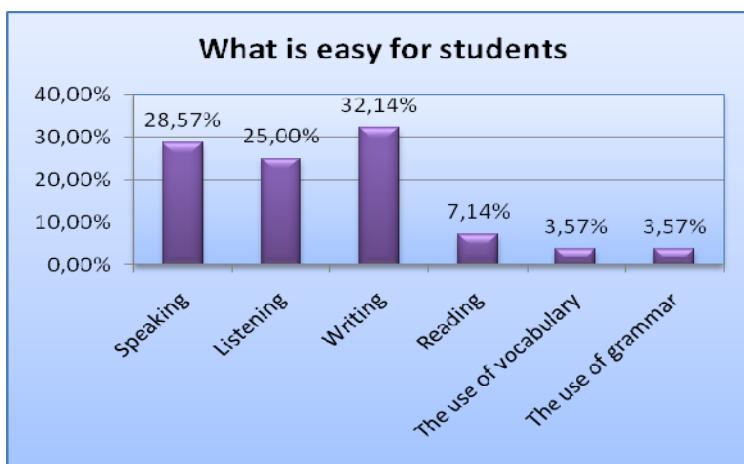


Fig. 13. What students consider easy

#### OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 14

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Speaking	4	14,29%
Listening	9	32,14%
Writing	7	25,00%
Reading	3	10,71%
The use of vocabulary	4	14,29%
The use of grammar	1	3,57%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

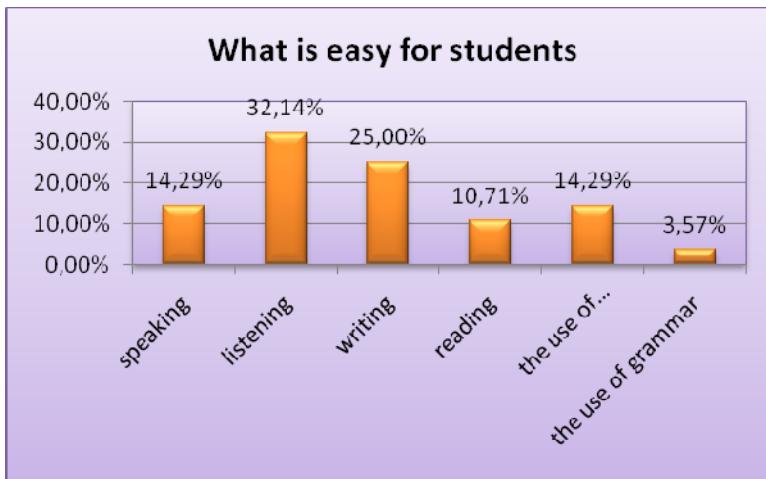


Fig.14 What students consider easy

Taking into consideration that in both courses grammar is not easy for students, I think it could be very useful to make them develop activities based on the four skills of the English language, that is listening, speaking, reading and writing. In my opinion, developing activities which integrate a grammar focus with other language skills gives learners the opportunity to have real interaction with one and another and learn grammar points in a different way.

**Question 8: What is the most difficult skill or sub-skill?**

**OCTAVO “C” – TABLE 15**

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Speaking	4	14,29%
Listening	1	3,57%
Writing	9	32,14%
Reading	1	3,57%
The use of vocabulary	0	0,00%
The use of grammar	13	46,43%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo “C”

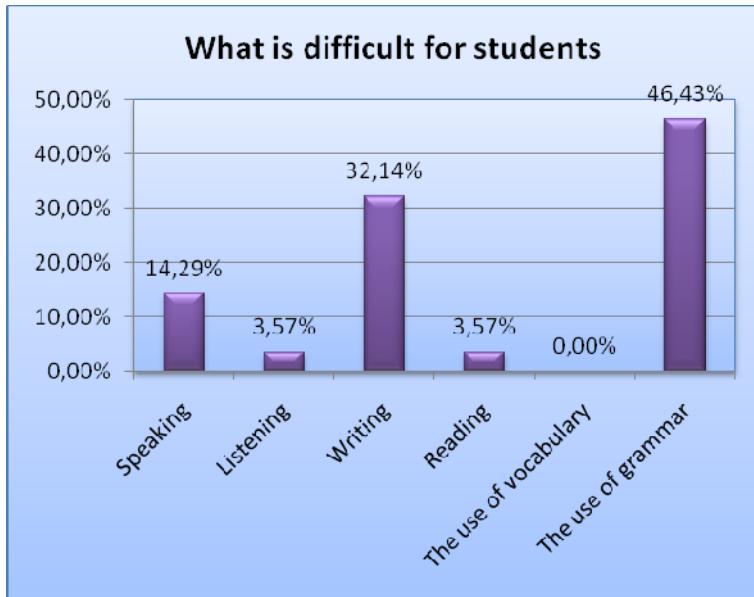


Fig. 15. What students consider difficult

**OCTAVO “D” – TABLE 16**

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Speaking	7	25,00%
Listening	1	3,57%
Writing	4	14,29%
Reading	3	10,71%
The use of vocabulary	0	0,00%
The use of grammar	13	46,43%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo “D”

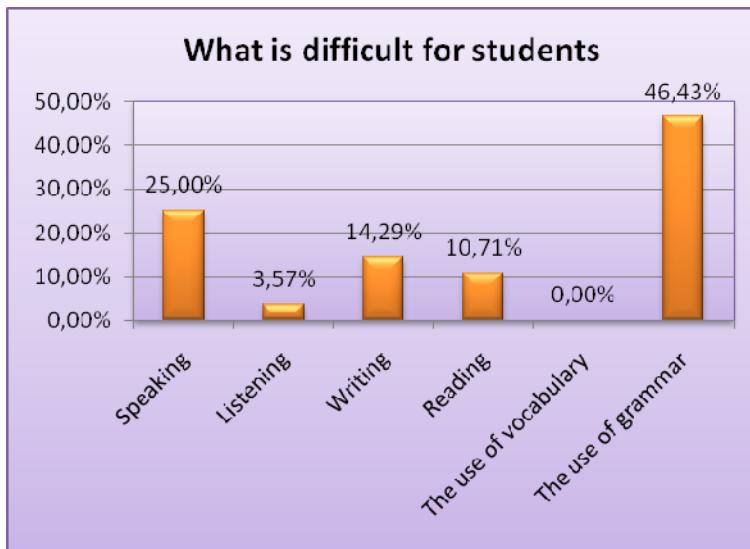


Fig. 16. What students consider difficult

As the figures show, in both courses the highest percentage, that is 46, 43% represents those students who think that the use of grammar is the most difficult sub-skill. I think that integrating the English language skills in different activities can be very helpful for students in order to have them use and develop the use of skills. I also think it would be helpful for my students that grammar structures be presented in context, not in an isolated way, and also have students infer grammar rules whenever possible.

#### Question 9: Students' suggestions for the English classes

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 17

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Give them more tasks and exercises	13	46,43%
More fun	8	28,57%
Work with readings	1	3,57%
Give them more projects	1	3,57%
Work more in class	1	3,57%
Not to shout too much	1	3,57%
No suggestions	3	10,71%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"

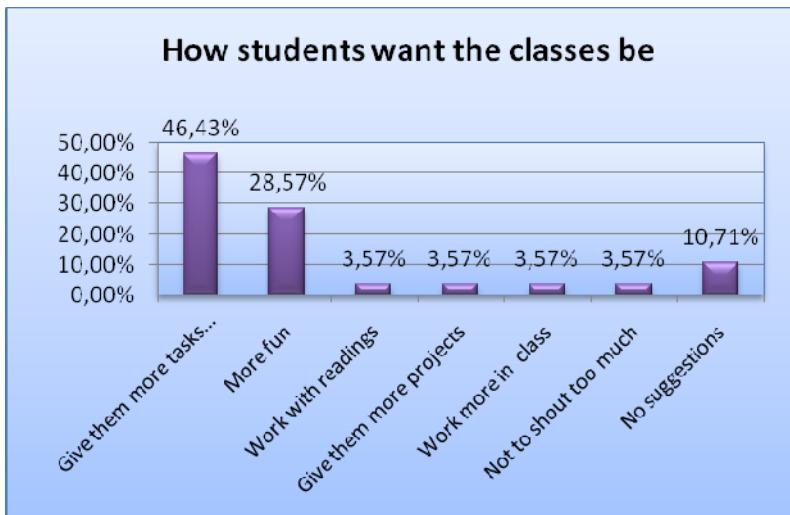


Fig. 17. Students' suggestions for the English classes

**OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 18**

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Give them more tasks and exercises	5	17,86%
More activities	5	17,86%
More fun	6	21,43%
With drawings and pictures	1	3,57%
More vocabulary	2	7,14%
Repeat the classes	2	7,14%
With games	1	3,57%
In an organized way	1	3,57%
The classes be easier	1	3,57%
Everybody participates	1	3,57%
No suggestions	3	10,71%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: First questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

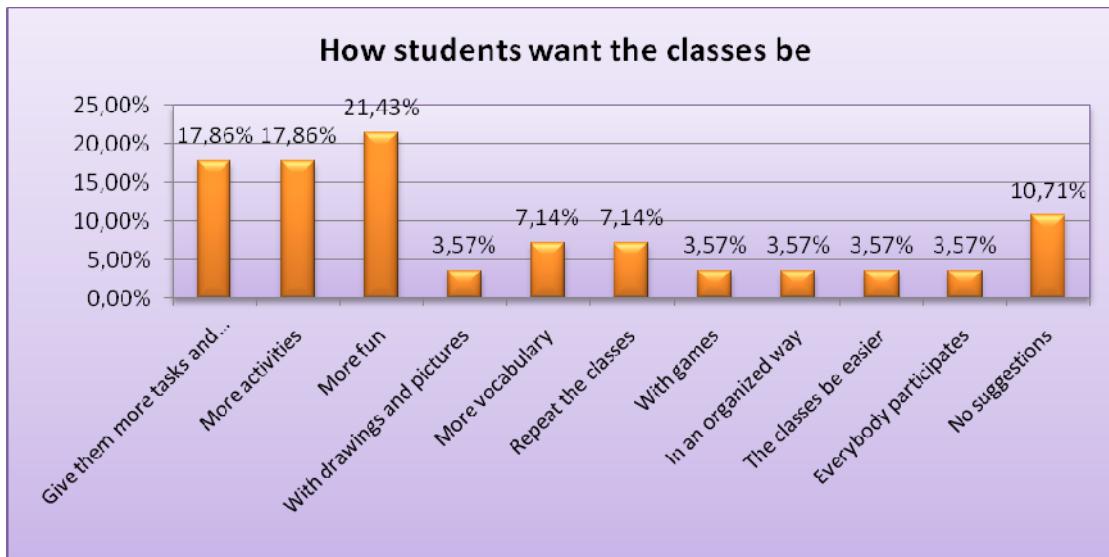


Fig. 18. Students 'suggestions for the English classes

As the figures show, in Octavo "C" the highest percentage corresponds to those students who suggest that I give them more exercises and tasks, while in Octavo "D" the highest percentage corresponds to those who suggest the classes be more fun. To take into account these suggestions will help me greatly at the moment of planning the lessons. I could help them learn English in a more interesting way by presenting them with a variety of activities, by making all the students participate in class, by giving them more practice of the language, by presenting grammar based on real life situations, by making them infer grammar structures through enjoyable activities; that is to say activities that may be used as a bases for grammar learning and which expose them to effective communication.

As a conclusion, the different answers and suggestions given by the students motivate me to prepare a variety of activities in order to help them learn and practice grammar points with interest. Their suggestions give me a clear understanding of the way I should work with them, the techniques and strategies I should use to encourage them to learn English grammar in a meaningful way, making them use the language to communicate ideas, experiences and opinions.



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### **2.2. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED FROM THE PRETEST AND POST-TEST (Annex 2)**

The pre-test was applied at the end of March, 2011; it was based on listening, reading, and writing skills and vocabulary sub-skill. In the pre-test grammar was presented in isolation because I wanted to see how students apply grammar structures. Grammar and writing had a value of 5 marks. Vocabulary and listening had a value of 3 marks and reading skill had a value of 4 marks. The total value of the test was 20 marks.

The post-test was applied on May 13, 2011; the total value of the post-test was also 20 marks. In the post-test grammar was presented in context because I wanted to see if students improved the use of grammar after developing the activities I prepared for them. Regarding speaking, it was evaluated neither in the pre-test, nor in the post-test because I noticed that in spite of the students' effort, it was not easy for them to speak English because they did not have enough vocabulary and structures to express complete ideas only in English.

In order to compare the results of the pre-test and the post-test for both of the courses, Octavo "C" and Octavo "D", they are presented simultaneously in the following tables.



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TABLE 19. Grades obtained by the students of Octavo "C" in the pre-test and post-test

Number of students	LANGUAGE SKILLS AND SUB-SKILLS												VARIATION	
	GRAMMAR		VOCABULARY		READING		WRITING		LISTENING					
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST		
	Value over 5	Value over 5	Value over 3	Value over 3	Value over 4	Value over 4	Value over 5	Value over 5	Value over 3	Value over 3	Total Value	Total Value		
1	2	5	1	3	3	4	5	5	3	3	14,00	20,00	6,00	
2	2	5	1	3	3	3	3	2	1	2	10,00	15,00	5,00	
3	3	5	0	2	0	3	3	5	1	2	7,00	17,00	10,00	
4	1	4	1	2	2	3	1	3	2	3	7,00	15,00	8,00	
5	0	4	1	3	3	4	1	5	1	2	6,00	18,00	12,00	
6	2	5	1	3	2	4	2	5	1	3	8,00	20,00	12,00	
7	1	4	1	2	2	4	2	5	1	2	7,00	17,00	10,00	
8	1	4	1	3	1	4	2	4	1	2	6,00	17,00	11,00	
9	0	3	1	2	1	3	3	2	1	3	6,00	13,00	7,00	
10	2	4	1	2	2	4	3	4	1	3	9,00	17,00	8,00	
11	2	4	1	3	1	3	1	0	2	3	7,00	13,00	6,00	
12	1	4	0	1	2	3	1	3	2	3	6,00	14,00	8,00	
13	1	4	0	2	0	2	3	5	2	3	6,00	16,00	10,00	
14	2	4	1	2	1	3	1	3	0	1	5,00	13,00	8,00	
15	1	4	2	3	2	4	2	3	1	2	8,00	16,00	8,00	
16	2	4	1	3	1	3	0	2	1	2	5,00	14,00	9,00	
17	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	0	2	2	3,00	6,00	3,00	
18	1	4	1	3	2	4	1	3	2	3	7,00	17,00	10,00	
19	2	4	1	3	2	4	1	4	2	3	8,00	18,00	10,00	
20	2	4	1	3	2	3	1	2	1	3	7,00	15,00	8,00	



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Number of students	LANGUAGE SKILLS AND SUB-SKILLS											
	GRAMMAR		VOCABULARY		READING		WRITING		LISTENING			
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
	Value over 5	Value over 5	Value over 3	Value over 3	Value over 4	Value over 4	Value over 5	Value over 5	Value over 3	Value over 3	Total Value	Total Value
21	3	5	2	2	2	4	3	3	1	2	11,00	16,00
22	5	5	2	3	3	4	4	5	3	3	17,00	20,00
23	1	4	1	3	1	3	2	5	2	3	7,00	18,00
24	2	5	0	2	1	2	3	5	1	1	7,00	15,00
25	1	4	1	2	1	3	0	2	2	3	5,00	14,00
26	1	4	1	2	2	4	2	2	2	3	8,00	15,00
27	1	4	2	3	2	3	3	2	1	2	9,00	14,00
28	1	4	1	2	3	4	2	3	2	3	9,00	16,00

Average	1,54	4,11	0,96	2,43	1,71	3,36	1,96	3,29	1,50	2,50		
Percentage	30,71%	82,14%	32,14%	80,95%	42,86%	83,93%	39,29%	65,71%	50,00%	83,33%		
Percentage of increasing		51,43%		48,81%		41,07%		26,43%		33,33%		



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TABLE 20. Grades obtained by the students of Octavo "D" in the pre-test and post-test

Number of students	LANGUAGE SKILLS AND SUB-SKILLS												VARIATION	
	GRAMMAR		VOCABULARY		READING		WRITING		LISTENING					
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST		
	Value over 5	Value over 5	Value over 3	Value over 3	Value over 4	Value over 4	Value over 5	Value over 5	Value over 3	Value over 3	Total Value	Total Value		
1	2	5	1	2	2	3	2	4	2	2	9,00	16,00	7,00	
2	2	5	1	3	3	4	2	2	1	2	9,00	16,00	7,00	
3	2	5	1	3	3	4	2	2	2	3	10,00	17,00	7,00	
4	2	5	1	0	2	3	1	3	0	2	6,00	13,00	7,00	
5	2	4	0	2	0	2	1	2	2	3	5,00	13,00	8,00	
6	5	5	2	3	4	4	5	5	3	3	19,00	20,00	1,00	
7	2	4	0	2	1	3	0	2	2	3	5,00	14,00	9,00	
8	2	4	1	3	2	3	1	3	2	1	8,00	14,00	6,00	
9	2	5	0	3	3	3	4	5	1	2	10,00	18,00	8,00	
10	2	5	1	3	3	4	1	3	2	3	9,00	18,00	9,00	
11	1	3	1	1	3	4	0	2	2	3	7,00	13,00	6,00	
12	0	3	1	3	2	4	1	1	2	3	6,00	14,00	8,00	
13	0	4	2	2	2	4	1	3	1	2	6,00	15,00	9,00	
14	4	4	1	3	2	4	0	1	1	3	8,00	15,00	7,00	
15	1	4	1	3	3	4	0	2	2	3	7,00	16,00	9,00	
16	2	4	0	3	3	4	3	2	2	2	10,00	15,00	5,00	
17	1	5	2	3	3	4	2	2	1	3	9,00	17,00	8,00	
18	2	5	1	3	0	3	5	4	0	2	8,00	17,00	9,00	
19	2	4	1	3	3	4	1	1	1	3	8,00	15,00	7,00	
20	2	5	1	2	3	4	2	4	3	2	11,00	17,00	6,00	



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Number of students	LANGUAGE SKILLS AND SUB-SKILLS													
	GRAMMAR		VOCABULARY		READING		WRITING		LISTENING					
	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
	Value over 5	Value over 5	Value over 3	Value over 3	Value over 4	Value over 4	Value over 5	Value over 5	Value over 3	Value over 3	Total Value	Total Value		
21	2	3	0	2	3	3	1	1	2	1	8,00	10,00	2,00	
22	1	4	1	3	3	4	2	4	2	3	9,00	18,00	9,00	
23	2	5	0	3	3	4	3	2	1	3	9,00	17,00	8,00	
24	2	4	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	8,00	14,00	6,00	
25	1	4	1	2	2	3	2	4	2	3	8,00	16,00	8,00	
26	1	4	2	2	3	4	1	2	2	2	9,00	14,00	5,00	
27	1	4	1	2	3	4	2	1	2	3	9,00	14,00	5,00	
28	1	4	1	1	2	4	1	2	2	3	7,00	14,00	7,00	

Average	1,75	4,29	0,93	2,39	2,43	3,61	1,71	2,54	1,64	2,54				
Percentage	35,00%	85,71%	30,95%	79,76%	60,71%	90,18%	34,29%	50,71%	54,76%	84,52%				
Percentage of increasing		50,71%		48,81%		29,46%		16,43%		29,76%				



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In these tables, the number of difficulties solved correctly by the students of Octavo "C" and Octavo "D" in each skill and sub-skill are presented. The average row presents the grades each student obtained in the pre-test and the post-test. The variation row presents the difference between the grades obtained in the pre-test and those ones obtained in the post-test by each one of the students.

At the bottom of the tables, the average, percentage and percentage of increasing rows are also presented. The average row corresponds to the sum of difficulties solved correctly in the pre-test and the post-test divided by the total of students. The percentage row corresponds to the percentage of performance in each one of the skills, and the increasing row represents the percentage of improvement between the pre-test and the post-test.

In the following tables, a summary of the percentage of performance that students of Octavo "C" and Octavo "D" had in the pre-test and the post-test is presented.

**TABLE 21. Summary of the percentage of performance that students of Octavo "C" and Octavo "D" had in the pre-test and the post-test**

Skills and sub-skills	OCTAVO "C"			OCTAVO "D"		
	Pre-test Percentage	Post-test Percentage	Variation in the percentage of performance	Pre-test Percentage	Post-test Percentage	Variation in the percentage of performance
Grammar	30,71%	82,14%	51,43%	35,00%	85,71%	50,71%
Vocabulary	32,14%	80,95%	48,81%	30,95%	79,76%	48,81%
Reading	42,86%	83,93%	41,07%	60,71%	90,18%	29,46%
Writing	39,29%	65,71%	26,43%	34,29%	50,71%	16,43%
Listening	50,00%	83,33%	33,33%	54,76%	84,52%	29,76%



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As the table shows, in all the skills and sub-skills there was a considerable increasing in both of the courses. In Octavo "C" the variation in the percentage of students' performance in grammar is 51, 43%. This variation is similar to that of Octavo "D" that is 50, 71%. The difference is considerable. It means that presenting grammar in context and based on real life situations, gives students the opportunity to understand and apply grammar in a better way. These results are satisfactory because one of the main goals of the proposal has been accomplished; that is to help students improve the learning of grammar.

The developing of vocabulary has also improved in both of the courses. The variation in the percentage of performance in Octavo "C" is the same as that of Octavo "D". It represents 48, 81%. These results mean that the activities planned for all the students were helpful for them.

Regarding reading, writing and listening skills the variation in the percentages of performance in Octavo "C" was higher from those of Octavo "D". It is due to the fact that in Octavo "C" most of the students felt a little more interested when developing the different activities. The results in both of the courses are really satisfactory and make me feel that I have achieved the goals of the research study.

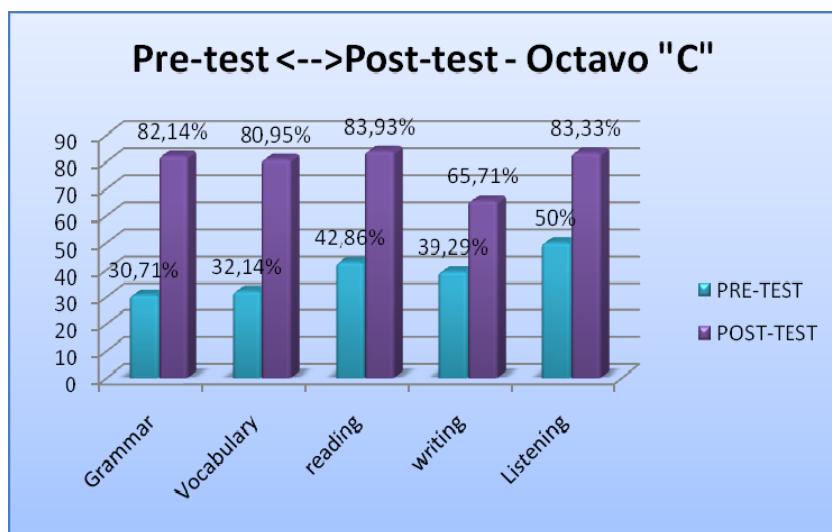


Fig. 19. Comparison of the pre-test and the post-test in Octavo "C"

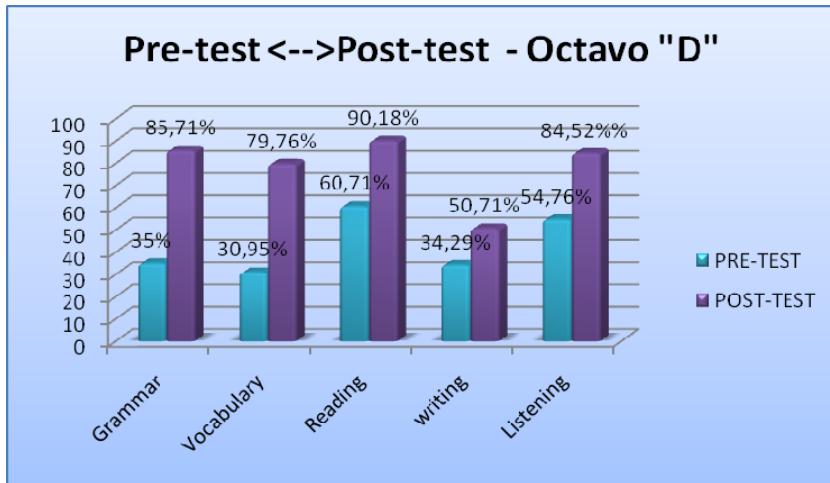


Fig. 20. Comparison of the pre-test and the post-test in Octavo "D"

**TABLE 22. DISTRIBUION OF THE STUDENTS ACCORDING TO THE RANK OF VARIATION**

Rank of variation	OCTAVO "C"		OCTAVO "D"	
	Number of Ss	Percentage	Number of Ss	Percentage
0-5	5	17,86%	5	17,86%
6-10	19	67,86%	23	82,14%
11-15	4	14,29%	0	0,00%
16-20	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
	28		28	

Taking into consideration the total of students in each course, which is 28, this table shows clearly that in Octavo "C" and Octavo "D" the percentage that corresponds to the rank of variation in the grades obtained by the students of both courses is high. It can be deduced that the improvement that students had in the post-test is really considerable. This enhancement in the language skills and especially in grammar, benefits not only the students of Octavo "C" and Octavo "D", but also Fray Vicente Solano High School because I think students will try to apply what they have learned about grammar in higher courses. These results make me feel that I have accomplished



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the goals of this research. I have worked hard with the students, but they have demonstrated that they liked working in the way they did, because the improvement they showed made me conscious that the more motivation students receive in the learning of grammar, the more successful the learning process is.

### **2.3. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED FROM THE SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE (Annex 3)**

After applying the post test to students of Octavo “C” and Octavo “D”, I applied to them a second questionnaire in order to collect information about their appreciation of the way they worked in class, the way grammar was presented, the activities they developed, the topics and the English classes. This questionnaire consisted of seven questions. I asked them to give only one answer. Because of the students’ level, this questionnaire was also made in Spanish, but to present the data collection it has been written in English. The tables and the figures contain data collected from students’ appreciation in both courses, Octavo “C” and Octavo “D”.

#### **Question 1: What do you think of the activities developed in class?**

#### **OCTAVO “C” – TABLE 23**

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Interesting	26	92,86
A little interesting	1	3,57
Not interesting	1	3,57
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo “C”



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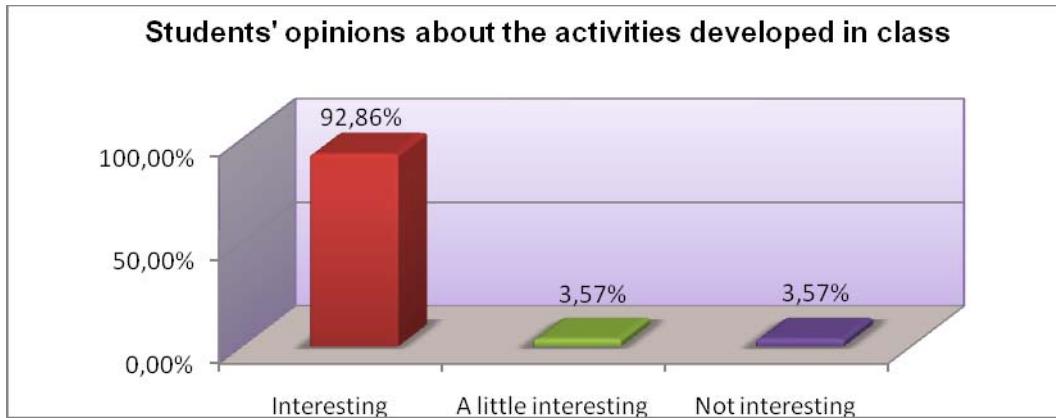


Fig. 21. Students' opinion about the activities they developed in class

### OCTAVO "D"- TABLE 24

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Interesting	28	100,00%
A little interesting	0	0,00%
Not interesting	0	0,00%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

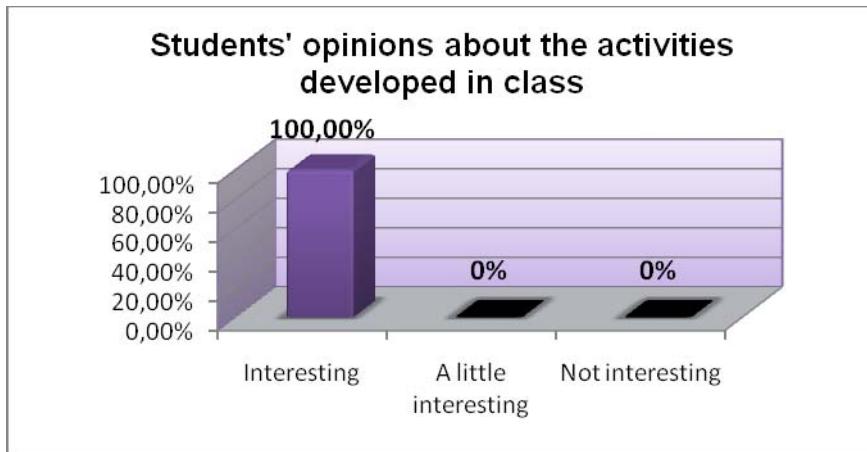


Fig. 22. Students' opinion about the activities they developed in class

As the figures show, in Octavo "C" 92, 86% of the students liked the activities prepared for them, only 1 student thought the activities were only a little interesting and 1 student thought the activities were not interesting. In Octavo "D" one hundred percent of the students liked the activities. I felt happy with the results because I observed the



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way students worked on the activities in class. They practiced grammar structures in context and based on real life situations. Besides, the use of grammar through the different skills of the English language gave them the opportunity to interact with the teacher and their classmates as well.

### Question 2: Was it easier for you to learn grammar presented in context?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 25

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	25	89,29%
No	3	10,71%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"

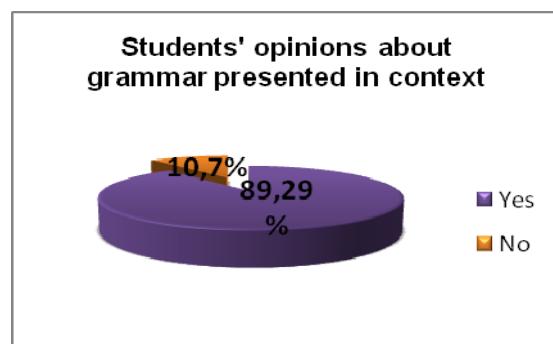


Fig. 23. Students' 'opinion about grammar in context

#### OCTAVO "D" - TABLE 26

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	28	100.00%
No	0	0,00%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

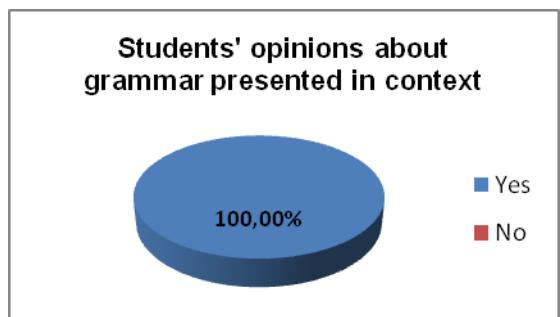


Fig. 24. Students 'opinion about grammar in context

Regarding this question, in Octavo "C" a high percentage of students, that is 89,29% of them, thought it was easier for them to learn grammar presented in context, while in Octavo "D" one hundred percent thought it was easier to learn grammar in context. When I planned the activities, I decided not to give the students complete explanation about the use of certain grammar structures, but have them infer the rules as much as possible. To do it, they developed activities presented in different contexts



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and based on the language skills. It gave me better results because the majority of students remembered to add an –s or –es to the third person of the simple present tense because they related the grammar rules to the context in which they were presented. There were a few students that sometimes forgot to apply grammar rules, but with more practice and working with those students who understood the rules better than the others, they could improve grammar use.

### Question 3: What do you think of the topics presented in class?

#### OCTAVO “C”- TABLE 27

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Interesting	26	92,86%
Not interesting	0	0,00%
Boring	2	7,14%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo “C”

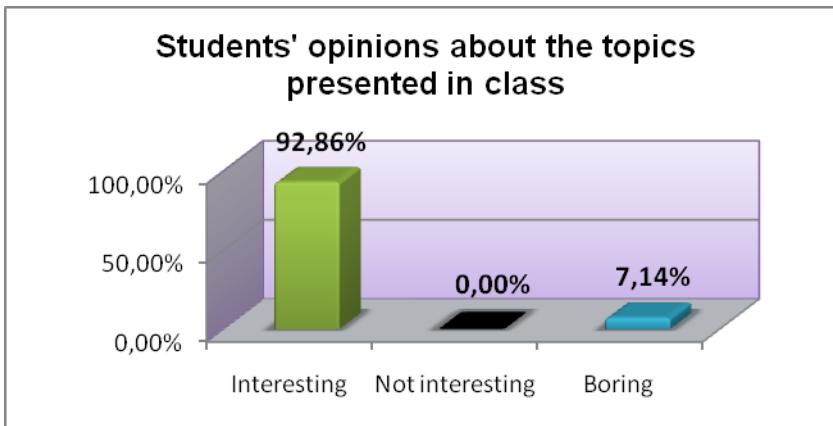


Fig. 25. Students' opinion about the topics presented to them

#### OCTAVO “D” – TABLE 28

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Interesting	28	100,00%
Not interesting	0	0,00%
Boring	0	0,00%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo “D”

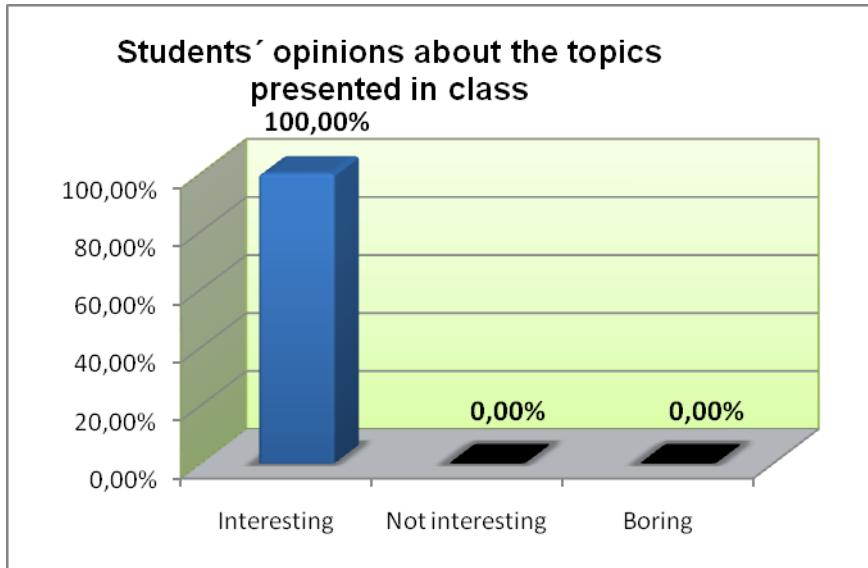


Fig. 26. Students' opinions about the topics presented to them

In Octavo "C", most of the students considered that the topics were interesting. Only 7, 14% of students thought they were boring. In Octavo "D", one hundred percent of students thought the topics were interesting. I think that students liked the topics, because they were related to their lives and the things and people that surround them, such as family, friends, and things they do every day and on weekends. Besides, they liked to talk about themselves and their classmates. That is why I think that these topics arouse the interest and curiosity of most of the students.

#### Question 4: How did you feel working in groups?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 29

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Motivated	22	78,58%
A little motivated	5	17,86%
Not motivated	1	3,57%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"



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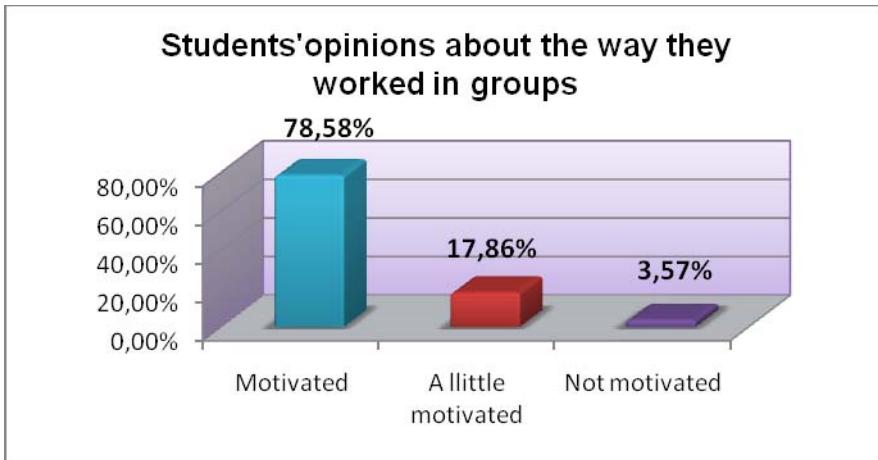


Fig. 27. Students' opinions about the way they worked in groups

### OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 30

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Motivated	27	96,43%
A little motivated	0	0,00%
Not motivated	1	3,75%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

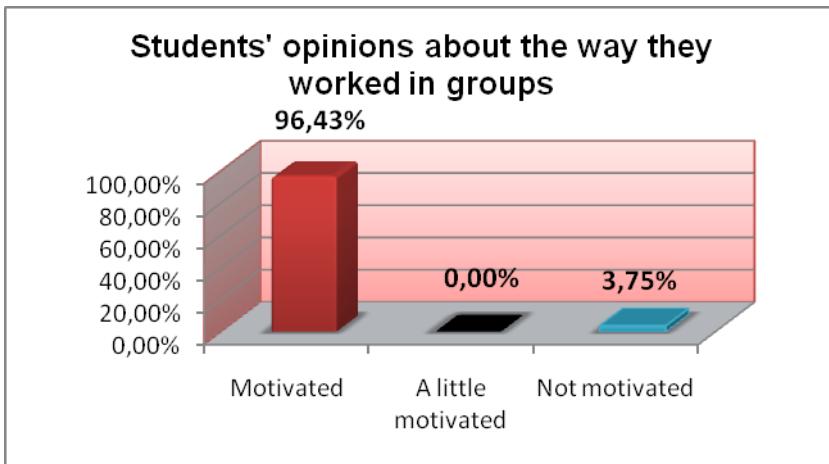


Fig. 28. Students' opinions about the way they worked in groups

As the figures show, in Octavo "C" a high percentage of students, that is 78, 58 %, of them felt motivated when working in groups. A low percentage of students felt a



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little motivated and only one student did not feel motivated working in groups. In Octavo "D", most of the students, that is 96, 43%, felt motivated when they worked in groups. A low percentage of students did not feel motivated. As I could observe in class most of the students in both courses enjoyed working in groups because they shared ideas and could ask others in the group when they did not understand the use of grammar structures. Students who sometimes had problems with the use of grammar took advantage of those students who understood it better. Besides, the different groups concentrated on the activities and tried to finish them as soon as possible.

Regarding those students who felt a little motivated or did not feel motivated I think they answered that way because they did not like the activities I prepared for them. But I feel satisfied because I made an effort in trying to help the majority of students who wanted to improve the learning of grammar.

### Question 5: How did you feel working in pairs?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 31

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Motivated	23	82,14%
A little motivated	4	14,29%
Not motivated	1	3,57%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"



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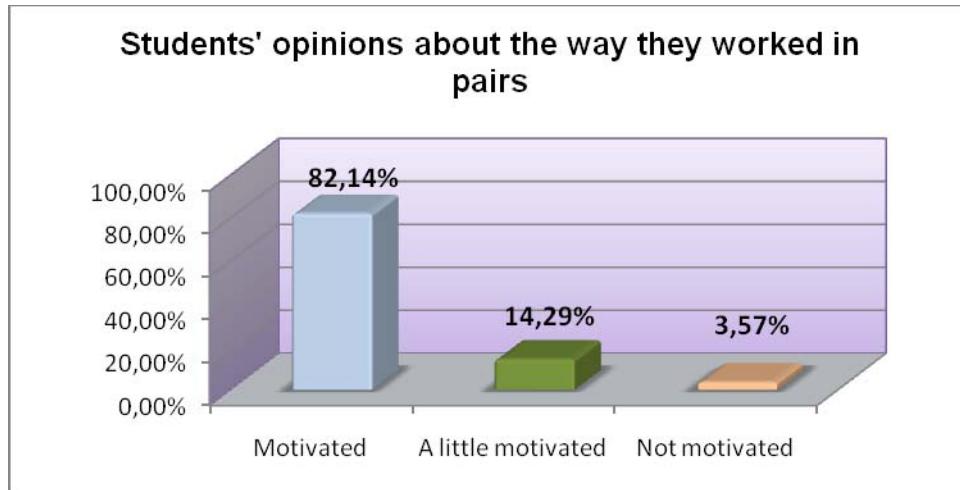


Fig. 29. Students' opinions about the way they worked in pairs

### OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 32

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Motivated	24	85,71%
A little motivated	4	14,29%
Not motivated	0	0,00%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

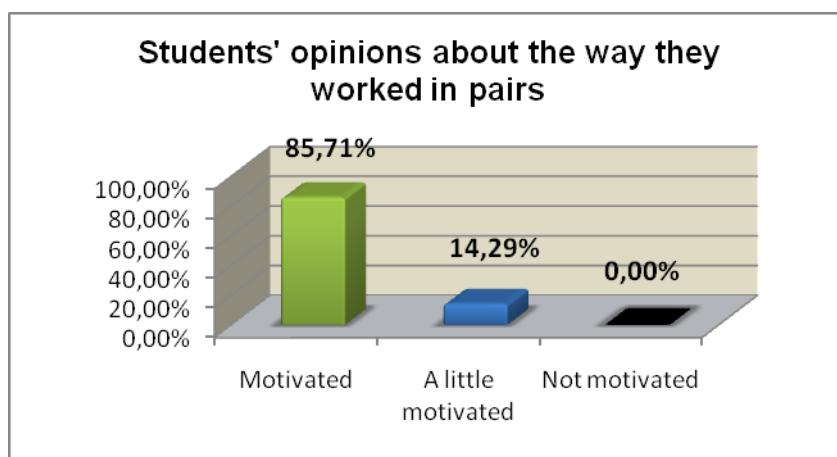


Fig. 30. Students' opinions about the way they worked in pairs



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In Octavo "C", a high percentage of students, that is 82, 14% of them, felt motivated working in pairs. A low percentage felt a little motivated and only one student did not feel motivated. In Octavo "D", most of the students, that is 85, 71% of them, felt motivated and a minority of students felt a little motivated. As I mentioned before, I could observe the way they worked with their classmates. They preferred to make pairs with best friends or sometimes I asked good students to work with those ones who needed help for developing the activities. Besides, I monitored the work students did in each one of the activities and tried to help them when they had problems with grammar or sometimes did not understand the given instructions.

### Question 6: Did you like the English classes?

#### OCTAVO "C" – TABLE 33

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Interesting	27	96,43%
A little interesting	1	3,57%
Boring	0	0,00%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "C"

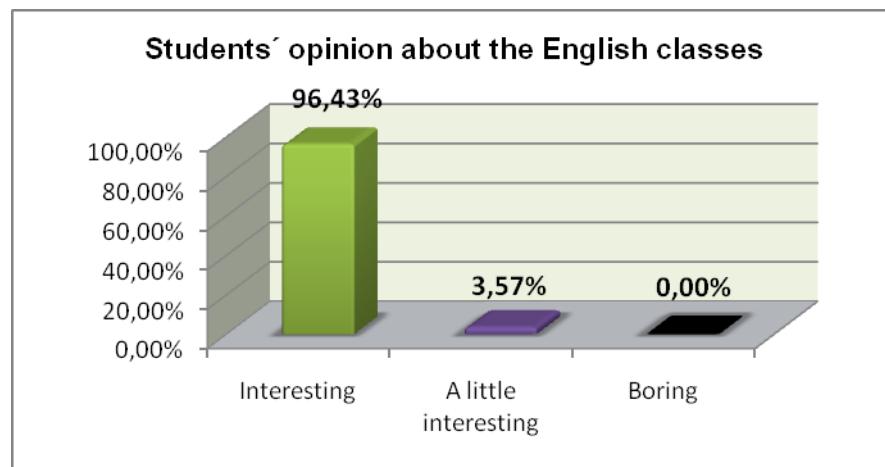


Fig. 31. Students' opinions about the English classes



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### OCTAVO “D” – TABLE 34

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Interesting	28	100,00%
A little interesting	0	0,00%
Boring	0	0,00%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo “D”

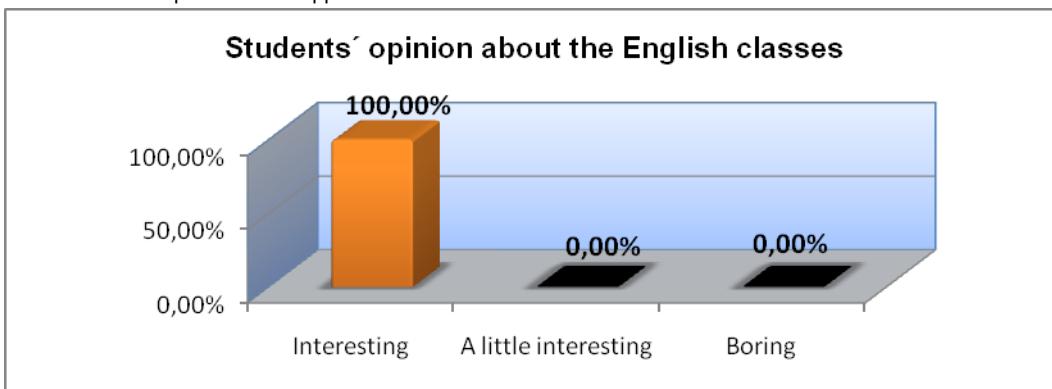


Fig. 32. Students' opinions about the English classes

As the figures show, in both courses most of the students think the English classes have been interesting. I have tried to make the activities fun by not giving them boring lists of grammar structures, but by making them infer grammar rules, by planning activities with topics related to their life and interests, by making them interact with their classmates and the teacher, and finally by presenting grammar in context through activities based on the four skills of the English language.

### Question 7: What do you think of the way grammar was presented?

### OCTAVO “C” – TABLE 35

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Easy	26	92,86%
Difficult	2	7,14%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde.

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo “C”



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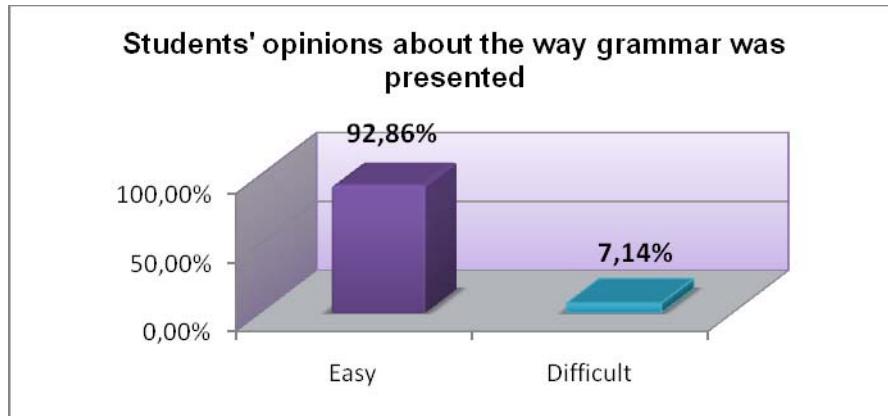


Fig. 33. Students' opinions about the way grammar was presented

### OCTAVO "D" – TABLE 36

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Easy	26	92,86%
Difficult	2	7,14%
Total	28	100,00%

Made by: Martha Campoverde

Source: Second questionnaire applied to students of Octavo "D"

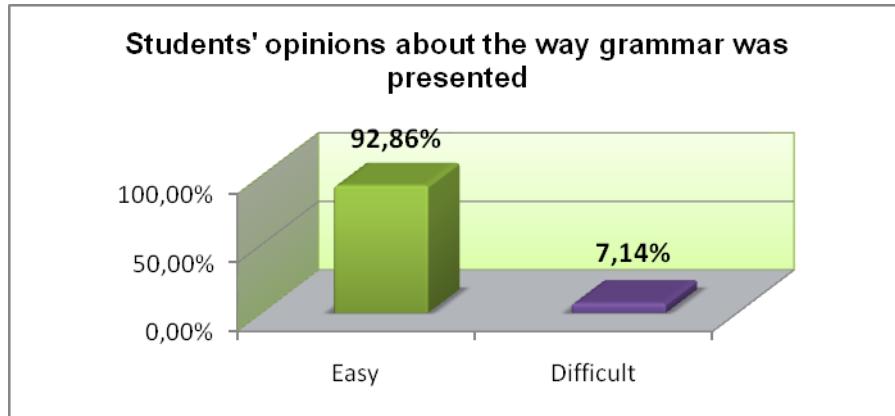


Fig. 34. Students' opinions about the way grammar was presented

As the figures show, in Octavo "C" and Octavo "D" most of the students, that is 92,86% of them, thought grammar was easy in the way it was presented. Only a minority of students thought it was not easy. During the classes, I could really notice that it was much easier for most of the students to learn grammar presented in different



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contexts and situations. I noticed that they could easily remember the use of the third person, the use of some verbs to talk about weekdays and weekend activities, and the use of prepositions with some time expressions. Now, I am really convinced that students feel confused when they copy long lists of grammar rules or when grammar is presented out of context. The opinions given by the majority of students is the result of the way grammar was presented in the different activities.

As a conclusion, students' points of view motivate me to continue working in this way. As an English teacher I have the opportunity to work with a variety of age groups; therefore, to take an active role in trying to improve students' motivation and interest in class is one of the main factors that English teachers should keep in mind.



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### CHAPTER III

#### 3. APPLIED ACTIVITIES

This chapter considers the teaching material, that is to say, the activities I planned for students. The goal that I wanted to achieve was to prove that students could improve the learning of grammar when it was presented in context. It is also important to mention that I tried to present grammar by integrating all the skills of the English language in order to give students the opportunity to learn the language in a real and enjoyable way.

The application of the activities took place from the very beginning of the third term, that is to say the first days of April until May 10. The activities were applied three times a week. The courses in which I chose to apply the activities were Octavo “C” and Octavo “D” of Basic Education. I should mention that the activities were based on the results of the first questionnaire I applied to students of Octavo “C” and Octavo “D” and on the contents of the book students use, Our World Through English, number 1. A lesson plan was prepared for each one of the activities and each one of them began with a warm up based on the topics to be presented.

##### 3.1. Description of the activities

###### ACTIVITY ONE

The general objective of this activity was to give and ask for information about famous people. The specific objectives were to identify famous people and to talk about famous people. I think students felt identified with the topic that this activity was based on because they knew everything about famous people (singers, actors, comedians, etc.)

For this activity, I did not explain to my students any grammar structures. I had them infer rules by asking them questions, and by giving them examples using the grammar point that was going to be taught. Grammar was presented in context. I tried to encourage my students whenever they made a grammar mistake by repeating phrases



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and sentences for them, but in a correct way trying to make them realize what was not grammatically correct. Besides grammar was integrated through listening, speaking and writing because they had to look at different pictures of famous people and describe them. They also had to write short texts to describe someone famous for them. Students worked at this activity in groups and they liked it.

### ACTIVITY TWO

The general objective of this activity was to describe physical appearance. The specific objective was to make descriptions.

The first thing I did before applying to my students this activity was to present the vocabulary that this activity contained. For this, I used different pictures. I also asked some students to come to the front of the class in order to be described by me. Students really enjoyed this activity. They had fun describing people.

Since the main grammar point of this activity was *have / has* and the verb *to be*, I considered that it was not going to be helpful for students to explain grammar rules. What I did was to make as many descriptions as I could, trying to emphasize the use of these grammar points. Also, in groups students made descriptions not only related to the pictures I gave them, but about their friends and family. By doing this, I could notice that it was easier for students to use grammar in a contextualized way.

### ACTIVITY THREE

The general objective of this activity was to describe physical appearance. The specific objective was to make predictions to describe people.

This activity was carried out in the Audio-visual room since students had to watch a video in which some people were described. Grammar was presented in a contextualized way. Students had the opportunity to listen to grammar structures included in short conversations; in this way they practiced the grammar point that this activity was based on. I really do think that by working with movies teachers foster



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students' production and interest. Moreover, movies can serve for a variety of purposes when trying to teach the English language. I should mention that in order to help students understand the video I had to repeat it some times; I could do it because the video lasted only 10 minutes, so it did not take too much time. Students liked this activity.

### ACTIVITY FOUR

This activity was planned to review the simple present tense. The first thing I did was to present students with a picture of a famous soccer player and some information about him. Students were asked to read the text and complete required information. It served students to complete some information about themselves and using this information they had to write a short text about themselves.

In this activity grammar was integrated through the reading skill and it was presented in context. In the text I presented to my students, verbs in the third person of the simple present were in black in order to make students realize what happened to the verb in the third person singular. After they completed information about someone famous, they were asked to write something about themselves. I did it because I wanted my students to notice what happens with the verbs in the first person.

After doing this activity, I realized that if teachers integrate skills to teach grammar in a meaningful way, more students will remember the use of grammar structures.

### ACTIVITY FIVE

The general objective of this activity was to report about others' personal information. The specific objective was to write about a favorite person.

This activity was also planned to review the simple present tense, but now students had to think about a favorite person and give all the information they knew about that person. They had to use the third person of the simple present. Students could accomplish this activity satisfactorily because in the previous activity (number 4) the simple present was presented through a reading exercise, so they could easily



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remember some grammar structures. Whenever they had doubts about the use of the third person, they asked me to help them. Students liked this activity since they love talking about their favorite people.

### ACTIVITIES SIX AND SEVEN

The general objective of these activities was to give and ask information about daily routines. The specific objectives were to talk about time and to talk about daily routines.

These activities were planned to introduce students' daily routines by using the simple present tense. The first thing I did was to have students practice times. The topic was presented through a short reading. Students had to read the text and complete required information. Students also had to complete a short text by looking at drawings about daily routines. Then in order to introduce daily routines, I talked about my daily routines first. Then students were asked to talk about their daily routines. In these activities grammar was presented in context taking into account real life situations.

### ACTIVITY EIGHT

In this activity the general objective was also to give and ask for information about daily routines. The specific objective was to listen for specific information about daily routines.

In this activity grammar was integrated through a listening exercise, and it was presented in context, based on real life situations. The listening exercise was taken from a book of the university, Intro ICON. When I planned this activity I thought it was going to be hard for my students to understand the way people speak in this listening exercise, but I wanted to take the challenge and see what my students were able to do. When I checked their information with them I was really surprised with the results. My students could complete the information that was required in this listening exercise. I felt satisfied with the results.



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### ACTIVITY NINE

The general objective of this activity was to talk about weekend activities. The specific objective was to complete information about weekend activities.

This activity was planned to present my students weekend activities. Verbs for weekend activities were presented by using different flash cards. After looking at some flash cards, students were asked to make predictions about some weekend activities by looking at some pictures included in the activity. In this activity grammar was presented through a reading task. Students had to choose verbs from a box and complete a text with appropriate verbs. After doing this task, students were asked to complete a chart about their weekend activities and write a short text about them. To begin to write the text, I gave them some topic sentences. At the same times students practiced the simple present tense, they also practiced nouns, prepositions, and adjectives. Students accomplished this activity satisfactorily.

### ACTIVITY TEN

It was the last activity that I applied to my students. The general objective of this activity was to talk about weekdays and weekend activities. The specific objective was to ask and give information about different activities.

In this activity I wanted to present to my students the different activities people do on weekdays and weekends. A survey was the first thing they did. They were asked to stand up and walk around the classroom asking their classmates about their weekends and weekday schedules. Then they were asked to make a brief report about their classmates' timetable for different activities. Grammar was integrated through speaking skills. Students practiced the simple present tense by asking and answering Wh-questions.

To finish this activity, students played a game in order to practice weekend activities. They had a lot of fun with this game. Grammar was also presented through a game that my students liked very much.



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As a conclusion, I think that my students felt motivated from all the activities I planned. When I asked them if they liked the way they worked in class, they told me that they really liked it because they learned not only grammar but they practiced it through different skills and different ways. I think that students learn the language better when there is variety in the classroom.



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### 3.2. Activities

#### PEOPLE

##### ACTIVITY ONE

##### COURSES OCTAVO "C" and "D"

1. Warm up: Guess who the person is.

Listen to the teacher describing a famous person. Guess his or her name.

2. Match the names of some famous people with their pictures.



Don Omar



Josh and Drake



Lady Gaga



David Bisbal

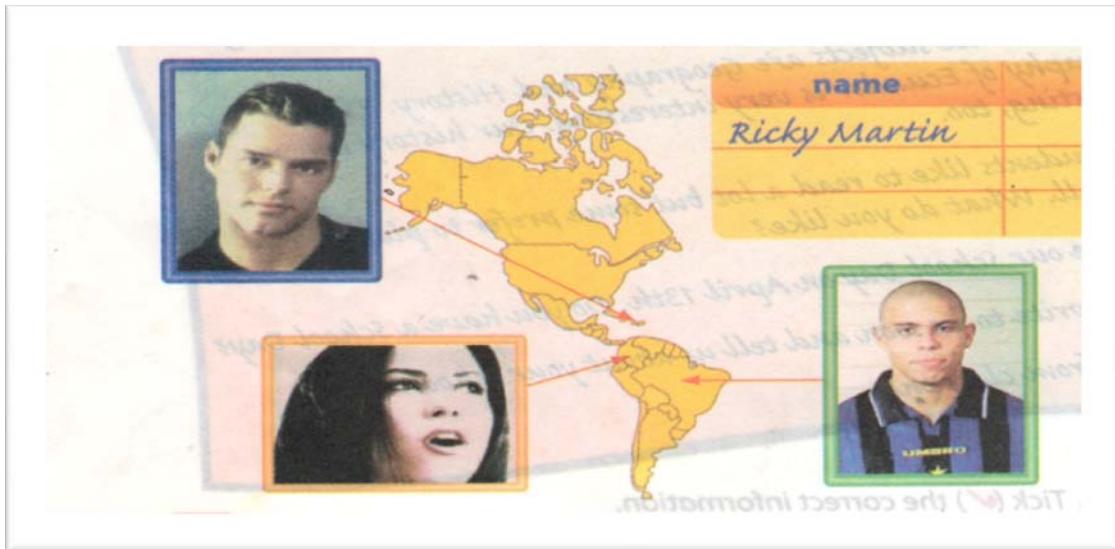


Rafael Nadal



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3. In groups of four look at the pictures in task 2 page 48 (students' book) and talk about the people. Then make an oral report to the whole class.



Our World Through English – Students 'book 1. Unit 8 – task 2 – page 48.

4. Take two pictures given by the teacher. Then in groups of four write a short text about them. After you finish the texts, paste them on the classroom wall to have your classmates read them.

### FAMOUS PEOPLE

#### TEXT 1

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#### TEXT 2

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### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

#### ACTIVITY TWO

#### COURSES: OCTAVOS “C” and “D”

##### 1. Warm up: “Add a word”

Listen to the adjective. Then give a first word to begin a sentence; for example *My*. A second student should give a second word, for example *father*; a third student gives another word; for example *is*, and a last student uses the adjective given by the teacher in order to form a sentence, *My father is short*. The activity continues with different adjectives and different students.

2. Vocabulary for this activity: tall, short, long, dark, straight, curly, fat, thin, average, beautiful, handsome, pretty, old, young, (blue, green, brown, black) eyes, wavy, light, blond.

Look at the pictures and listen to your teacher describe the people in the pictures.





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3. Think of any classmate and make a description of him/her. Do this activity individually.

.....  
.....  
.....

4. Works in groups of 4 and take two pictures to make descriptions. Then read the descriptions and match them with the pictures you receive.

5. Individually think of any family member and describe his/her physical appearance.

My .....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



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### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

#### ACTIVITY THREE

#### COURSES: OCTAVOS “C” and “D”

1. Warm up: Unscrambled adjectives.

Look at the scrambled letters. Then unscramble them to form an adjective.

2. Watch the video that presents short conversations and vocabulary to describe physical appearance. After you watch the video tell the teacher as many words as you remember from the video. Be prepared to answer some questions related to the video.

3. Watch the video again. Whenever your teacher clicks on pause describe the person on the video.

4. Listen to the description your classmate makes. On a sheet of paper draw the person that he/ she describes. Once the description finishes, show your drawing to the whole class. Listen to your classmate revealing the person he described.

5. In groups of 4 think of two teachers. Then make a short description of them. After you finish the descriptions, read them for the whole class but do not reveal the teachers' names; have your classmates guess them.

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### FAMOUS PEOPLE

#### ACTIVITY FOUR

#### COURSES: OCTAVOS “C” and “D

1. Warm up: Who am I?

2. Read about a famous soccer player and complete the chart.



Lionel Messi is a famous Argentinean soccer player. He was born on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1987 and he **lives** in Spain.

Lionel is short. He **has** short, straight and brown hair. His eyes are brown. He **plays** for Barcelona in Spain. He **plays** soccer four hours a day. He **speaks** Spanish. He **likes** Twitter and also **helps** children.

Lionel **has** one sister and two brothers. His father's name is Jorge Messi.

Name	Occupation	Country	Date of birth	Hair	Eyes	Hobby

3. Complete the information about you. Then write a short text using this information.

Name: .....

Occupation: .....

Country: .....

Date of birth: .....



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Hair color: .....

Eye color: .....

Hobby:.....

(Book Our World Through English 1. Students' book. Unit 8, pg. 50, task 1)

#### 4. Read your information to the whole class.



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### FAVORITE PERSON

#### ACTIVITY FIVE

#### COURSES: OCTAVO “C” and “D”

1. Warm up: Thinking fast
2. Work in groups of four. Think of someone who is your favorite person. It could be a family member, someone famous, or a friend. Write all the information you can about him/her to write a short text.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. Exchange information with other groups, so that the different groups read the texts. After reading the texts, choose a person that will give an oral report about the favorite person. Be prepared to ask questions to other groups. All the members of the group can give possible answers.
4. Stick your texts on the classroom walls so that all your classmates walk around the classroom and read the texts that each one of the groups has written.



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### MY DAY

#### ACTIVITY SIX

#### COURSES OCTAVO “C” and “D”

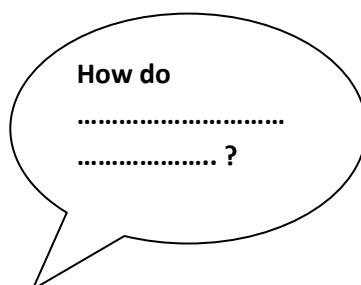
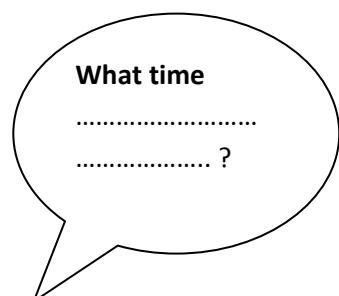
1. Warm up: Find the time
2. Read the text about Diego, Lucy, Alice, Alex and Rose. Then complete the given sentences.

Diego gets up at 5:15. He goes to school by bus. His friend Lucy gets up at 5:30. She goes to school by car because she lives near school. Diego's cousin, Alice, gets up at 5:45. She goes to school by car. Diego's brother, Alex gets up at 6.0'clock. He goes to school by bike. Diego's sister, Rose gets up at 6.15. She goes to school by taxi.

- a. Rose gets up at ..... She goes to school by .....
- b. Lucy gets up at ..... She goes to school by .....
- c. Diego gets up at ..... He goes to school by .....
- d. Alice gets up at ..... She goes to school by .....
- e. Alex gets up at ..... He goes to school by .....

3. Think about you. Then be prepared to make an oral report telling the whole class what time you get up and how you go to school.

4. Walk around the classroom. Make a survey asking another classmate the time he / she gets up and how he / she goes to school. Make an oral report about your friend's information.



Student's name  
.....  
.....



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### DAILY ROUTINES

#### ACTIVITY SEVEN

#### COURSES: OCTAVO “C” and “D”

1. Warm up: Look at the flash cards
2. Match pictures with names of daily routines.
3. Listen to your teacher talk about her daily routines. Then think and write about your daily routines. Read your daily routines to the whole class.

My daily routines

.....  
.....  
.....

4. In groups of five read the text about Robert. Then fill in the blanks with the appropriate daily routines. Check your text with your classmates and your teacher.

Robert is a student. He goes to La Guardia High School. On weekdays he



..... at 5:30. Then he ..... 

After that,



he ..... . Next, he ..... . He eats cereal, toast and fruit. At 6:30 he ..... because he starts school at 7:00 a.m.



At 1:00 p.m. he ..... on foot with his sister, Sandra.



He ..... He eats chicken, salad , rice and drinks some orange



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juice. At 3:30 he ..... At 7:00 p.m. he



..... He eats some salad. Finally, at 9:00



p.m.....





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### WHAT'S YOUR DAILY ROUTINE?

#### ACTIVITY EIGHT

#### OCTAVOS "C" and "D"

1. Warm up: Put phrases in order
2. Listen and check the correct information for each person.

			
	<b>Chris</b> Australia	<b>Yu Chen</b> Taiwan	<b>Gina</b> Mexico
Gets up at...	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 7 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 8 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 9 A.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 8 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 9:30 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 6 A.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 8:30 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 9 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 6:30 A.M.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Eats breakfast?	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 8 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 9 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 8:30 A.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 9 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 9:30 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 10 A.M.	<input type="checkbox"/> 9 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 10 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 8 A.M. <input type="checkbox"/> 11 A.M.
Starts work at...	<input type="checkbox"/> early <input type="checkbox"/> around 8 P.M. <input type="checkbox"/> at midnight	<input type="checkbox"/> at 7 P.M. <input type="checkbox"/> at dinner time <input type="checkbox"/> late	<input type="checkbox"/> at 7 P.M. <input type="checkbox"/> late <input type="checkbox"/> at midnight
Gets home in the evening...	(Intro ICON. Teacher's Manual. Unit 7, page 45)		

3. In groups of five use the information in the chart above and write a short text about each person.

#### Chris

.....  
.....

#### Yu Chen

.....  
.....



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**Gina**.....



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### WHAT'S YOUR WEEKEND LIKE?

#### ACTIVITY NINE

#### OCTAVOS "C" and "D"

1. Warm up: Unscramble the words.

S E E W A Y K D

E W K N E E D

2. Look at the pictures. What can you say about them?



3. Read about Bobbi Brown's weekends. Complete the text with the correct form of the verbs in the box.

get up    live    is    like    work    doesn't work    interview  
start

#### Bobbi's Weekends

Bobbi Brown ..... in New Jersey. She ..... 34 and ..... for the Manhattan New Network in New York City. But she doesn't ..... on weekdays, she only works on weekends. She ..... famous people for an early new program called The World This Weekend. On Saturday and Sunday she ..... at 3:00 in the morning because she ..... work at 8:30. She ..... her job very much.



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3. What's your weekend like? What activities do you do?

Make a list of your weekend activities. Then write a short text about it.

Saturdays	Sundays

### My Weekend

Choose a topic sentence to begin your text.

- a. My weekend is very exciting.
- b. I do many activities on weekends.
- c. I am always busy on weekends.

.....

.....

.....

.....



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### WEEKEND ACTIVITIES

#### ACTIVITY TEN

#### OCTAVOS “C” and “D”

1. Warm up: Looking at flash cards.
1. Using the given phrases, ask any classmate about his or her timetable for daily routines. Work in pairs.

get up ?

have breakfast?

have lunch?

watch TV?

have dinner?

go to bed?

Now write a short text reporting about your partner's daily routines.

My friend's timetable is different on weekdays. ....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Read your text to the whole class.

2. Play the game with a partner. Look at the drawings and make sentences about weekend activities.

#### Instructions:

- a. Write your name on a small piece of paper.



- b. Move your paper by flipping a coin.





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1 space    two spaces



**Jump  
Ahead  
Two**



**Miss  
A  
Turn**

**Go  
Back  
Two**



**LOSE  
YOUR  
TURN**



[http://www.eslhq.com/worksheets/preview\\_worksheet.php?worksheet\\_id=130238](http://www.eslhq.com/worksheets/preview_worksheet.php?worksheet_id=130238)



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### 3.3. Lesson Plans

As I mentioned before, a lesson plan was prepared for each one of the activities.

#### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY ONE

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: People**

**General Objective:** Give and ask for information about famous people

**Specific Objectives:** - Identify famous people

-Talk about famous people

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Guess the person´s name
- Matching pictures with names
- Talking about famous people
- Writing a short text about famous people

#### PROCEDURE

- Students listen to the teacher making a description of some famous people. Then they guess who they are.
- Students look at some famous people´s pictures and match them with their names.
- In groups of four, students talk about the people in exercise 2. Then they make a report to the whole class
- Teacher makes students choose two pictures. Then in groups of four they write a short text about them. After that, students paste their texts on the classroom wall to have their classmates read them.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet, pictures.



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### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY TWO

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: People**

**General Objective:** Describe physical appearance

**Specific Objective:** - Make descriptions.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Add a word
- Making descriptions of different people
- Describing classmates
- Matching pictures with given descriptions.

#### PROCEDURE

- To present vocabulary the teacher gives students an adjective. Then a first student gives a first word to begin a sentence, a second student gives a second word, a third student gives another word and a last student uses the given adjective to form a complete sentence.
- Using pictures the teacher describes some people using the new vocabulary.
- Individually students think of any classmate and make a physical description of him/her.
- In groups of four students receive two pictures and two short descriptions. Then they match pictures with descriptions.
- Individually students think of any family member or a friend. They make a physical description of them.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet, pictures.



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### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY THREE

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: People**

**General Objective:** Describe physical appearance

**Specific Objective:** - Make predictions to describe people

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Unscramble the adjective
- Watching a video to practice vocabulary related to physical appearance
- Making predictions of people's physical appearance from a video
- Making a drawing to describe classmates

#### PROCEDURE

- To practice learned vocabulary, the teacher sticks scrambled letters on the board. Students unscramble the letters and form adjectives.
- After students watch a video that presents vocabulary related to physical appearance, students tell the teacher as many words as they can remember from the video.
- The teacher shows the video again. This time students look at some pictures of people presented in the video and make predictions describing their physical appearance. Then they check the descriptions on the video. The whole class works in this activity.
- One student sits in front of the class and thinks of any classmate. While he or she makes the description of that person, the rest of the students draw the classmate being described on a sheet of paper. Once the student who sat in front of the class finishes the description, he or she reveals who the person is and the rest of the students show their drawings.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet, pictures, video.



## UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA

### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY FOUR

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: People**

**General Objective:** Give personal information

**Specific Objective:** - Talk about oneself

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Who am I?
- Reading a text about someone famous and completing information.
- Completing information about them.
- Writing a text about them using previous information.

#### PROCEDURE

- The teacher thinks of someone famous or any student from the class. Then students try to guess who the person is by making yes/no questions.
- Students read a text about a famous soccer player. Then they complete information about that person.
- Students complete information about themselves. Then they write a text about themselves using that information.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet.



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### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY FIVE

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: People**

**General Objective:** Report about others' personal information

**Specific Objective:** Write about a favorite person.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Thinking fast
- Writing a text about someone favorite
- Changing texts to get informed about others' information
- Making a report about classmates' favorite persons

#### PROCEDURE

- In groups of four the teacher shows students a picture of someone famous. The student who gives more information about that person gets an extra point.
- Students think of someone favorite for them. Then individually write a short text about that person. They give all the information they can.
- In groups of four, students exchange their texts to have their classmates read what they have written.
- After finish reading the texts, each one of the students makes a report about their classmate's favorite person.
- Students stick their texts on the classroom wall to have all the class read them.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet.



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### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY SIX

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: My Day**

**General Objective:** Give and ask for information about daily routines

**Specific Objective:** Talk about time

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Find the time
- Reading a text and completing information.
- Thinking about students themselves and telling the whole class what time they get up and how they go to school.
- Working in pairs to find out what time their classmates get up and how they go to school.

#### PROCEDURE

- The teacher writes times on the board at random. Then students try to find the time the teacher reads aloud.
- In groups students read a text and complete missing information.
- Students think of themselves and tell the whole class the time they get up and how they go to school.
- In pairs students ask and answer questions about the time they get up and how they go to school.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet.



## UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA

### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY SEVEN

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: My Day**

**General Objective:** Give and ask for information about daily routines

**Specific Objective:** Talk about routines

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Look at the flash cards.
- Matching pictures with daily routines
- Listening to the teacher and talking about daily routines.
- Reading a text and filling in the blanks with appropriate daily routines.

#### PROCEDURE

- The teacher shows students flash cards about daily routines. Students look at them and together with the teacher they identify daily routines.
- In groups students receive a set of pictures and a set of activities related to daily routines. Then they match pictures with daily routines.
- First students listen to the teacher to talk about her daily routines. Then individually they think about and talk about their daily routines.
- In groups students read a text and fill in the blanks with appropriate daily routines.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet, pictures.



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### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY EIGHT

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: My Day**

**General Objective:** Give and ask for information about daily routines

**Specific Objective:** Listen for specific information about daily routines

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Put phrases in order
- Listening to and checking information about daily routines.
- Writing short texts using information from a listening exercise.

#### PROCEDURE

- The teacher gives students scrambled pieces of paper containing names of activities related to daily routines. Students unscramble them.
- Students listen to three people talking about their daily routines. Then they check information about them in a chart.
- In groups of five, students use information from the listening activity and write short texts about each person. After students finish the activity, the teacher checks what they have written about the people.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet, CD player.



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### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY NINE

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: My Day**

**General Objective:** Talk about weekend activities

**Specific Objective:** Complete information about weekend activities.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Unscrambling words.
- Making predictions about activities people do on weekends.
- Completing a text using the correct form of given verbs.
- Making notes about weekend activities and writing a text about it.

#### PROCEDURE

- Students unscramble two words: weekdays and weekend
- Students look at three pictures and make predictions about what activities people do on weekends.
- In groups of five, students read a text about someone's weekends. Then they complete it with the correct form of given verbs.
- Students make notes about things they do on weekends. Then they write a short text telling the teacher how their weekend is.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet.



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### LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITY TEN

**Courses: Octavos C and D**

**Title of the Unit: My Day**

**General Objective:** Talk about weekdays and weekend activities

**Specific Objective:** Ask and give information about different activities.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Warm up activity: Looking at flash cards.
- Asking and answering questions about timetables for daily routines.
- Reporting about daily routines.
- Playing a game to talk about weekend activities.

#### PROCEDURE

- Students look at flash cards and identify verbs related to weekend activities.
- In pairs students ask and answer questions about their timetable for daily routines.
- Students play a game to practice weekend activities through the speaking skill. They use a coin to play this game. Each time it is their turn to play, they have to make sentences by using the picture given.

**RESOURCES:** activity sheet.

As a conclusion, I think that my students felt motivated with all the activities I planned. When I asked them if they liked the way they worked in class, they told me that they really liked it because they not only learned grammar but they practiced it through different skills and ways. I also think that if teachers present a variety of activities in the classroom, students will have the opportunity to learn grammar and other language skills in a more fun way.

The activities that I planned were based on the students' real world and the topics were chosen according to their interests and curiosity.



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### CONCLUSIONS

After finishing my research, I found out a very important consideration, the learning of grammar structures does not arouse learners' interest and motivation in the class. It is the way grammar is presented that gives them the opportunity to learn language in a different way.

During the time learners developed grammar activities in context, I could notice that it was not too difficult for them to understand and use grammar points. Contexts based on grammar activities created meaningful and purposeful interaction through language and encouraged students to use it to communicate.

With the results of this research, I can state that communicative grammar activities lead learners to real interaction. I do not agree with those English teachers who think that grammar is learned through memorization of grammar structures. Teaching grammar from a contextual perspective does not mean that teachers should avoid teaching structures, but rather should help learners discover by themselves how grammar works when they use the language to communicate ideas, expressions, and ways of thinking.

The problem that I faced with some students was that sometimes they avoided speaking English because they were afraid that their classmates would make fun of their mistakes. Another important aspect I should mention is that in spite of the effort to communicate, it was not very easy for some students to express what they wanted to since they did not have enough knowledge of vocabulary.

An outstanding conclusion that I arrived at is that when students work in groups they learn to be cooperative and helpful with those who have problems with the use of the English language, especially with grammar. I think it is in the teacher's hands to make the teaching-learning of grammar meaningful and effective for learners and to change the bad image that English learners have about grammar.



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### RECOMMENDATIONS

I would like to make the following recommendations to those English teachers that work with different age groups:

- Grammar activities based on different contexts give learners the opportunity to associate grammar rules with language use.
- Grammar activities based on students' interests help them learn the language in an enjoyable and successful way.
- To integrate language skills helps learners practice language in the way it is presented in real life situations.
- Communicative activities help turn the English classroom into an active place where students develop critical thinking.
- Group work creates in learners a feeling of cooperation and also encourages them when others contribute with a good idea, or perform a task effectively.
- Teaching materials should be developed in such a way that they attract students' interest for learning grammar.

Keeping in mind these recommendations can help English learners to apply grammar in language use.



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# ANNEXES



## UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA

### ANNEX 1

#### ENCUESTA SOBRE LAS CLASES DE INGLÉS

##### Octavo Cursos “C” y “D”

###### 1. Qué importancia tiene para usted el Inglés?

ninguna	<input type="checkbox"/>	poco	<input type="checkbox"/>
importante	<input type="checkbox"/>	muy importante	<input type="checkbox"/>

###### 2. Le gusta que la profesora le hable en Inglés?

sí	<input type="checkbox"/>	no	<input type="checkbox"/>
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###### 3. Qué tipo de actividades le gusta realizar?

juegos	<input type="checkbox"/>	canciones	<input type="checkbox"/>
dramatizaciones	<input type="checkbox"/>	lecturas	<input type="checkbox"/>
otros	-----		

###### 4. Cómo le gusta trabajar en clases?

solos	<input type="checkbox"/>
en parejas	<input type="checkbox"/>
en grupos	<input type="checkbox"/>

###### 5. Por qué le resulta difícil expresarse en Inglés?

miedo a equivocarse	<input type="checkbox"/>
miedo a la burla de los compañeros	<input type="checkbox"/>
no le interesa	<input type="checkbox"/>
otros	-----

###### 6. Sobre qué tópicos le gusta hablar en clase?

amigos	<input type="checkbox"/>	colegio	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		



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familia otros -----  
música

## 7. Qué le parece lo más fácil en Inglés?

hablar	
escuchar	
escribir	
leer	
uso de vocabulario	
uso de la gramática	

## 8. Qué le parece los más difícil en Inglés?

hablar	
escuchar	
escribir	
leer	
uso de vocabulario	
uso de la gramática	

## 9. Sugerencias de cómo quiere que se realicen las clases.

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## UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA

### ANNEX 2

### PRE- TEST

Student's name: ----- Courses: Octavo C and D

#### 1. GRAMMAR

**Read the sentences. Then complete them with the given verbs. (3 marks)**

- a. Margarita ----- (go) to the market and ----- (buy) some food.
- b. Next September, I ----- (celebrate) my birthday.
- c. Sandra's birthday party ----- (be) next weekend.
- d. At Christmas, I ----- (decorate) my house with a Christmas tree.
- e. She ----- (like) to play video games.

#### 2. Complete the sentences with the correct preposition *in, on, at, with* (2 marks)

- a. Paul's birthday is ----- March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- b. ----- vacation children play all day.
- c. I live ----- my family.
- d. You are ----- home.

#### 2. VOCABULARY

**Look at the pictures. Write the names of the celebrations. (3)**

marks)



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-----



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### 3. READING.

Read the text and circle T (true) or F (false) for each sentence. (4 marks)

My classroom is big, There are some chairs and some pictures. There is a big white board on the wall and a small bin near the board. There aren't plants and there isn't a clock. There is a cupboard and there are three maps. I like my classroom very because it is comfortable.

a. My classroom isn't small.	True	False
b. The bin is near the board.	True	False
c. There aren't maps in my classroom.	True	False
d. There are maps on the wall.	True	False

### 4. WRITING.

Use the information in the table and write a short text about Ana's family. (5 marks)

Name	Relationship to Ana	Occupation	Birthday
Marco	cousin	engineer	July 10
Roxana	sister	secretary	September 1
Miguel	father	accountant	April 22

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### 5. LISTENING.

Read these cardinal numbers. Then listen and identify their ordinal numbers.

(3 marks)

22    12    23    15    16    25    30    3    9    20



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### POST TEST

Student's name: -----

Courses: Octavo C and D

#### 1. GRAMMAR

**Read the text. Then complete it using the verbs in parenthesis. (5 marks)**

My mother (be) ..... a beautiful woman. She (have) ..... long, wavy and black hair. Her eyes (be) ..... brown.

Every day she (get up) ..... at 5:30. Then she (prepare) ..... breakfast for me and my sister. Next, she (clean) ..... the house and (go) ..... shopping. In the afternoon, she (watch) ..... TV and (read) ..... a book. Finally, she (go) ..... to bed at 11:00 p.m.

#### 2. VOCABULARY

**Read the text, look at the pictures and write the people's names according to the given descriptions. (3 marks)**

Mary has many friends at school. Ruth has curly, short hair. She is short. Her friend Rosita is tall and thin. She has short and straight hair. She is pretty. Marcela is short and thin. She has short and wavy hair.



.....

.....

.....



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### **3. READING.**

**Read the text and circle T (true) or F (false) next to each sentence. (4 marks)**

My weekend is interesting. I do many things. On Saturday I get up at 9:00 because there is no school. I also go shopping with my mother. On Saturday afternoon I play soccer and volleyball with my friends. On Sundays I visit my grandmother and my aunt Rosita. On Sundays evening I have dinner with my grandmother in her house. I go to bed at 8:00 p.m. because I have classes on Monday. I really relax on weekends.

a. I go to school on weekends.	T	F
b. I don't play sports on weekends.	T	F
c. My grandmother is Rosita.	T	F
d. On Sundays I have dinner with my grandmother.	T	F

**4. Write a short text telling your teaching your daily routines. (5 marks)**

My weekdays are

busy.....  
.....

## 5. LISTENING.

**Listen to this information about some famous people. Tick ( ) the correct information. (3 marks)**

NAME	EYE COLOR					HEIGHT
	brown	black	blue	green	short	
Martha Calero						
Eduardo Flores						
Eulalia Ponce						



## UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA

### ANNEX 3

#### ENCUESTA SOBRE LAS ACTIVIDADES REALIZADAS EN CLASES

##### Octavos Cursos “C” y “D”

Lea las preguntas, escoja una sola opción para cada una de ellas.

##### 1. Qué le parecieron las actividades realizadas en clases?

interesantes  poco interesantes   
no interesantes

##### 2. Le pareció más fácil aprender la gramática presentada en contexto?

sí  no

##### 3. Qué le parecieron los tópicos tratados en clases?

interesantes  no interesantes  aburridos

##### 4. Cómo se sintió trabajando en grupos?

motivado  poco motivado   
no motivado

##### 5. Cómo se sintió trabajando en parejas?

motivado  poco motivado   
no motivado

##### 6. Qué le parecieron las clases de Inglés?

interesantes  poco interesantes   
aburridas

##### 7. La forma como se presentó la gramática le pareció

fácil  difícil