



UNIVERSITY OF AZUAY
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY, LETTERS AND EDUCATIONAL
SCIENCES

**“APPLICATION OF TECHNIQUES TO DEVELOP THE ENGLISH ORAL
SKILL IN STUDENTS OF THE THIRD YEAR AT MIGUEL MERCHAN
HIGH SCHOOL”**

**RESEARCH PROJECT PRIOR TO OBTAINING THE DEGREE OF LICENCIATE
IN EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE SPECIALTY ENGLISH**

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CUENCA – ECUADOR

2012

All the contents of this work are the author's responsibility

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I want to express my immense gratitude to God Who has been so kind to me and given me the opportunity to study and fulfill many goals during these years.

I am also very grateful with Mst. Nancy Criollo whose advice and patience have been very important for the development of this project.

It's important to thank all the support received from the authorities, teachers and students of Miguel Merchán High School who made this research possible.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my dear husband who has been so patient and supportive during these years of study; to my beloved parents whose example of effort, love and generosity have been very important to me; to my little Angel whose presence inside me is my inspiration to do any necessary effort to achieve my goals.

DIANA

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RESUMEN

En la presente investigación se exponen los diferentes argumentos que justifican la necesidad de una aplicación de estrategias y actividades que permitan a los estudiantes del Tercer Año de Bachillerato del Colegio Miguel Merchán de la ciudad de Cuenca poner en práctica verbal lo aprendido en sus clases de inglés y así poder lograr una mejor asimilación que le permita comunicar sus ideas y sentimientos mejorando de esta manera su competencia comunicativa.

Debido a que los estudiantes del Tercer Año de Bachillerato del Colegio Miguel Merchán presentan problemas en relacionar conocimientos previos con nueva información y consideran que cada tema está aislado de cualquier otro, se ha considerado la teoría del Aprendizaje Significativo de David Ausubel como una de las bases para la determinación de actividades que motiven a los estudiantes y les brinden herramientas para poder expresar sus ideas de forma verbal.

El Programa Nacional de Inglés en el que se basa la educación pública establece como principal objetivo la adquisición de una competencia comunicativa. Es por ello que se ha considerado como teoría importante para esta investigación el enfoque comunicativo, el mismo que establece principios para facilitar el aprendizaje del inglés en una manera verbal, tomando siempre en cuenta que el estudiante es el principal actor dentro de su propio proceso de aprendizaje, considerando al maestro como un facilitador de la lengua extranjera.

La aplicación de las actividades que se proponen en esta investigación tiene completa aprobación por parte de las autoridades de la institución y al mismo tiempo se considera pertinente su utilización en otros niveles debido a su flexibilidad en contenidos y temas gramaticales.

ABSTRACT

The following research aims at developing the English oral skill of the third year students at Miguel Merchán High School through the correct application of different techniques and activities. A diagnosis has made it possible to demonstrate that these students present problems whenever they want to communicate and express their ideas in a verbal way. David Ausubel's Meaningful Learning Theory has been considered in order to correlate previous knowledge to new information and also to determine motivating activities for the students. The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) helped us establish principles on which we based our proposal of activities to facilitate the English learning in an oral way by considering the student as the main actor in their own learning process. After some of the activities were applied in class, we obtained positive results on students and the Institution's authorities who expressed their complete support to the use of these techniques not only in the third year but in other levels of the establishment since they have contents' and grammar structures' flexibility.

INTRODUCTION

Miguel Merchán High School is a public educational institute which follows the governmental proposal for English teaching described in the English National Program. This program states as main objective the students' achievement of the communicative competence. This is, to handle the new language in order to get information and express ideas and feelings. Students of the third year of this high school have presented problems in achieving this goal, so this research gives the institution's teachers a proposal of activities to help students develop the English oral skill in a better way.

In the first chapter, three techniques were used in order to diagnose the existent reality within the classes. These techniques allowed us to determine facts and difficulties that students have in order to communicate and also to determine a low motivation on both, teachers and students in the class.

The second chapter establishes the basis on which this project is supported in order to propose new strategies, techniques and activities that help teachers have better results from their classes. The Meaningful Learning Theory by David Ausubel considers the linking between previous knowledge and new information. It states motivation as a very important fact and also gives us tools as the advance organizers which help the teacher link different topics within the classes. On the other hand, the Communicative Language Teaching's main objective is the acquisition of the communicative competence. This approach helped this project establish the role of the students and teachers in the teaching-learning process and also the characteristics that the activities should have in order to be communicative for the student.

The third chapter was shared with the teachers of the institution and applied in the fourth chapter for the validation of it. It's composed by several activities that gather the characteristics needed by the students to put into practice their speaking skills in a practical and amusing way.

After the application of this project, the principal of the institution approved the use of these activities in the classes as a mean of practice and reinforcement within the classrooms. These activities were also considered appropriate in other levels due to the grammar structure and contents' flexibility they have.

Chapter I

Diagnosis

1.1 Background

Nowadays globalization, the internet, means of communication, and the possibility of having better opportunities in life are some of the reasons why a person is motivated to learn another language, especially English. According to some research, English is the fourth most widely spoken native language in the world and it is also the most spoken official language.¹

In Ecuador, teaching and learning English is now more important for people than it ever was before. Most of us are now aware of the necessity of learning and communicating in English due to new societal opportunities.

This project takes place in Miguel Merchán High School which is a Public Institution that follows the national curriculum. The Ecuadorian Educational and Cultural Ministry considers the English language as an important tool for people that are today preparing themselves in the classrooms.²

The percentage of students whose relatives live abroad (especially in the United States) is very high. Most of them plan to travel away and live with their families as well. In some other cases, there are students whose plans are to emigrate and look for opportunities in other countries, even if they don't have relatives with whom to live. This is happening amongst the students of this institution and is part of our society as a whole as well.

Learning English is a necessity for these students, especially if their plans are to live in countries and cities where English is the main language. Being able to communicate in English will give them more opportunities to understand and be understood in any circumstance and they will also have better chances of being hired for a job. It will be easier for them to follow commands and make fewer mistakes than a person who doesn't know as much English.

¹ *Importance Of Learning English*. September 2011. Available in <<http://www.oppapers.com>.

² *Programa Nacional De Inglés*. Diseño Curricular por Competencias. Ministerio de Educación. Dirección Nacional de Currículo. División de Idiomas. 2007

Other students don't see themselves in the future as emigrants. They are willing to search for opportunities in their own country, Ecuador. They believe that learning English is important because it increases their chances of getting a good job. Knowing English will help students broaden their social network because they will be able to communicate with more people around the world.

This research aims at providing tools to improve English oral skills for third year students at Miguel Merchán High School. This project will offer teachers some techniques and strategies for helping their students to communicate and express their ideas in a natural way by better applying what is learnt in class. It is known that the basis of student learning should not lie exclusively on the content of a lesson, but also in the process of interaction, and that means oral communication by students in the classroom and beyond.³

1.2 Miguel Merchán High School as a Public Educational Center

As a public institution, Miguel Merchán High School has to base its English subject curriculum on the **English National Program** proposed by the National Educational and Cultural Ministry⁴. The English National Program states the following information:

"The English subject for eighth, ninth, and tenth grades of Basic Education as well as major degree courses have a functional - communicative approach. This approach helps the student to develop receptive linguistic competences for listening and reading and productive competences for speaking and writing. The program concentrates on teaching the students to receive and share information through these competences as the main approach through socialization, development of values and development of sub-skills. This will help the students in their study process as well as their future careers.

Having the English contents organized by the linguistic competences will permit us to clearly define the performance of the students when they finish the

³ ORTIZ, Alexander. *Estudios Pedagógicos y Didácticos*. Barranquilla. 2005

⁴ *Programa Nacional De Inglés*. Diseño Curricular por Competencias. Ministerio de Educación. Dirección Nacional de Currículo. División de Idiomas. 2007

study of the subject. This performance is assessed by 'indicators or standards' which specify what students will need each year in order to:

- speak and write English on a level that corresponds to an **intermediate level**.*
- be able to access English for other academic subjects.*
- help direct them to have productive lives.*

*Within the **intermediate level**, students understand complex sentences, but they still need repetition. They acquire words and phrases that cover many daily activities. They use English spontaneously, but they may have difficulties expressing all their ideas due to vocabulary restrictions and to limited handling of language structures.*

The students speak by using simple sentences that are comprehensible and accurate, but that are often marked with some errors. They may have problems in understanding and producing complex structures and academic language.

The components of the competences have been considered to formulate the performance standards. These components are: concepts, procedures and values.

Evaluation of linguistic capacities is considered within the same methodological parameters of the teaching process that considers the new language learning as a communicative experience that gives students the main role inside the teaching-learning process of a new language”.

This project will be applied to the third year students of high school. Miguel Merchán High School divides its schedules into day and night sections. These classes are divided into two majors: accounting and chemical biology. There are four different classes of accounting (three in the morning and one in the evening) and one class of chemical biology. There are 150 students and three English teachers in total. Each class has 30 students maximum.

It's established that English classes are to be taken 5 hours a week starting from the eighth grade of basic education and up. The book to be used is ***Our World Through English*** produced by the CRADLE project used by the Foreign Languages National Department of the Educational and Cultural Ministry. This book constitutes the only didactic material authorized in the implementation of the curriculum. The

use of this material is obligatory for both students and English teachers in every public school.⁵

1.2.1 Objectives of the Public English Curriculum

As we can see, the general and specific objectives of the English curriculum used by the National Program are the following⁶:

1.2.1.1 General Objective

To strengthen and innovate the teaching-learning process of English language with the purpose of promoting values and developing a communicative competence through linguistic competence. This includes the skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing tied to performance indicator systems (standards).

1.2.1.2 Specific Objective

- *To design an English curricular proposal that incorporates a communicative teaching methodology based on the consecution of linguistic competences and tied to standards to promote the interaction of cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies, and the practice of the language in a permanent and contextualized way.*
- *To develop the students' linguistic competences in the handling of English language in a communicative manner focusing on systems that integrate the language (syntax, semantics, phonology, and morphology)*
- *To develop the student's capacity to know about the world and Ecuador, its people and concerns and to obtain similar information about other countries in order to increase the possibility of understanding, friendship, and collaboration with other people who are able to communicate through English.*
- *To develop skills in critical and independent learning in order to use English as an effective tool for personal and professional development for the country's benefit.*

⁵ Programa Nacional De Inglés. Diseño Curricular por Competencias. Ministerio de Educación. Dirección Nacional de Currículo. División de Idiomas. 2007

⁶ Programa Nacional De Inglés. Op.cit 5

- *To promote the integration of values and linguistic capacity of students in order to develop citizens with ethics and civic responsibilities.*⁷

1.2.2 The Student's Performance Objectives

The National English Program establishes the following objectives for student performance:

By the end of the third year of high school, the students will be able to:

- *Understand and produce multiple linguistic forms in order to socialize, including basic greetings and language associated to courtesies.*
- *Understand, both auditory and written, a variety of instructions used in basic situations of class in order to handle teaching-learning activities.*
- *Understand and produce a variety of language with the objective of achieve competent communication in English between the teacher and/or classmate.*
- *Understand, both written and oral, and produce in simple form, both written and oral, descriptive information about:*
 - *People, including themselves, other people and family groups by applying micro functions such as giving names, describing physical characteristics, working places, ages, personalities, customs, etc.*
 - *Places and their characteristics: towns, cities, country regions, and also about neighbors and distant countries*
 - *Natural phenomenon: floods, drought, contamination, protecting the environment, illnesses, etc.*
- *Understand and produce, both orally and written, simple instructions about what to do and how to do things according to health topics, environmental protection as well as practical activities that include handicrafts and cooking recipes*
- *Understand, orally and written, and produce (in a less complex oral and written way) simple narrations about topics related to health, environmental issues, historical events, biographies, tales, fiction, legends, etc.*⁸

⁷ Programa Nacional De Inglés. Op.cit 5

⁸ Programa Nacional De Inglés. Op.cit 5

1.2.3 Methodology

The methodology all public centers base their curriculum on is described in the National English Program as follows:

1. *Teaching based on content and competences development.* The course uses a variety of topics and real life situations in order to teach the English language. Teaching this style has the advantage of giving more significance to the students and therefore motivates them. With methodology based upon the use of this content, clear connections are established between learning the language and other types of learning.

A curricular design based upon competences allows students to develop communicative competences that are essential for giving and getting information in different situations and places.

2. *Language skill integration.* The goal of this program is to present and develop linguistic competences through speaking, writing, listening, and reading skills in an integrated way. In other words, the student has a receptive experience (whether reading or listening) of a topic and then uses this information to create oral or written text.
3. *Academic and cognitive skills development.* The program develops cognitive skills and study techniques.⁹

The four English skills are described in the English National Program as follows:

1.2.3.1 Listening

*Listening is a receptive skill and its main characteristics are the silence kept by the person who is listening and the selective attention he gives according to his/her objectives. Therefore, by applying this principle in class, the student needs motivation for listening, and the teacher has to create this motivation by establishing tasks related to the text that is to be processed.*¹⁰

1.2.3.2 Reading

Reading is also a receptive skill since it is through reading that we get information. This is put into practice by the person remaining in silence when

⁹ Programa Nacional De Inglés. Op.cit 5

¹⁰ Programa Nacional De Inglés. Op.cit 5

*reading, selecting, and processing information according to his needs and aims. The teacher then needs to establish student motivation for the student to read.*¹¹

1.2.3.3 Speaking

*Speaking is a productive skill. It is used to transmit information. Its main characteristic is that of using a system of sounds with meaning. In order to develop this skill, the teacher has to give a receptive experience that may be used as a model for the student and offer several opportunities for oral practice. At the beginning it will be guided, but will gradually become freer.*¹²

1.2.3.4 Writing

*Writing is also a productive skill. It is used to transmit information. It is characterized by using symbols which have meaning. The teacher has to give written language modules in textual form and offer adequate guided practice at the beginning until it eventually becomes freer.*¹³

1.3 DIAGNOSIS

As described before, students at Miguel Merchán High School follow a national program which is the same for every public institution. The English curriculum's main goal is to get students to have communicative competence through the linguistic competences, which include the four skills.

In order to analyze how well students in the Third Year of High School handle the English speaking skills, it was necessary to apply an oral diagnostic interview. This technique helped us to diagnose and determine the students' level of achievement of this skill. The diagnostic interview topics were based on the contents and knowledge that are described in the English National Program and in more detail described in the English Language Curriculum of the Educational and Cultural Ministry.

English classes were observed and the English teachers and students were surveyed. These surveys helped to diagnose levels of comprehension in the

¹¹ *Programa Nacional De Inglés. Op.cit 5*

¹² *Programa Nacional De Inglés. Op.cit 5*

¹³ *Programa Nacional De Inglés. Op.cit 5*

English classes at Miguel Merchán High School, and how they affect the development of the speaking skills.

1.3.1 Diagnostic Interview

In order to diagnose and determine the level of oral skill, a diagnostic interview was applied to the students. All 150 students in both, day and evening classes were interviewed.

The diagnostic interviews were based on the goals and topics set by the government in the English National Program as they were described above in the general and specific objectives and also in the student's performance objectives.

As it was said before, the goal that students are expected to achieve is to have a communicative competence, which, as it will be described in the second chapter, is the ability to use the language correctly and appropriately to accomplish communication goals. It does not include the ability to use the language exactly as a native speaker does¹⁴. It does include knowing what to say and how to say it appropriately based on certain situations of participants, their roles, and intentions. Communicative competence is viewed as mastery of functions needed for communication across a wide range of situations.

Evaluation and qualification of students were based on the principles mentioned above, which correspond to the communicative competences.

In order to evaluate the students, a conversation based on the interview topics was maintained between the researcher and each student. The examiner listened to the student as he or she did the test, and then evaluated their level by comparing the students' performance in four areas: fluency and coherence; comprehension; grammatical and lexical accuracy, and pronunciation. The ranks for each of these areas went from 1 –5. One being the lowest level and five the maximum. Each question was over 20 points. The questionnaire where the researcher filled in during each interview is at the end of the thesis (Annex 03).

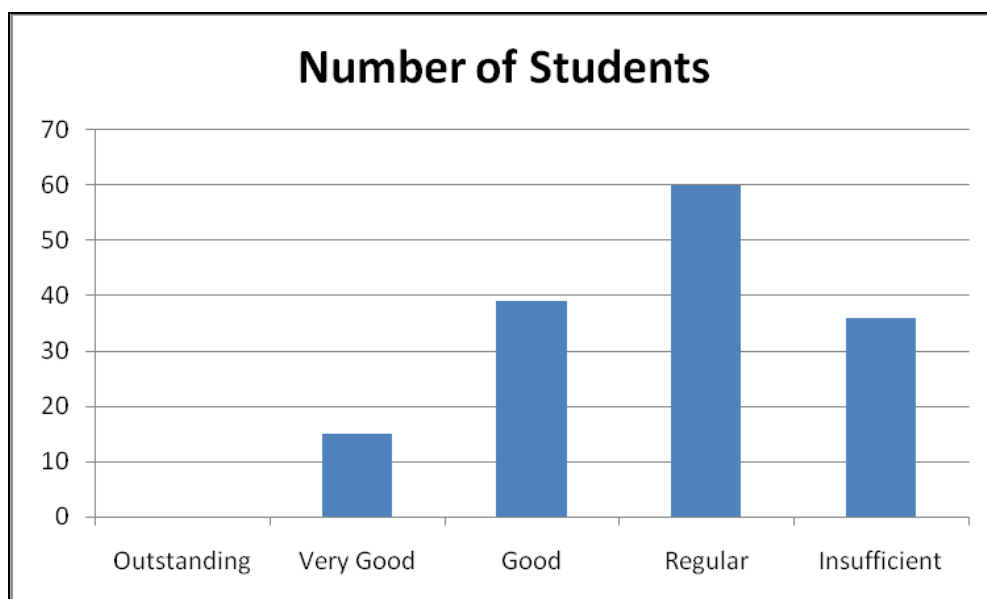
¹⁴ *The Essentials Of Language Teaching*. February 2011. Available in <<http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/index.htm>

- **Fluency and Coherence.** This refers to how good the candidate is at talking at the right speed and how good they are at connecting their ideas together.
- **Comprehension.** This refers to how well the student understands his/her interlocutor. It is shown by the answer that the student replies to the conversation.
- **Grammatical and Lexical Accuracy.** This refers to how many structures and how much vocabulary the student has and how well they use them. This criterion considers the communicative functions of speech.
- **Pronunciation.** This refers to how well the candidate pronounces the language. As well as considering the communicative effect of the candidate's pronunciation. There is evaluation of how much strain it causes a listener and how noticeable their accent is - although accent itself is not a problem.

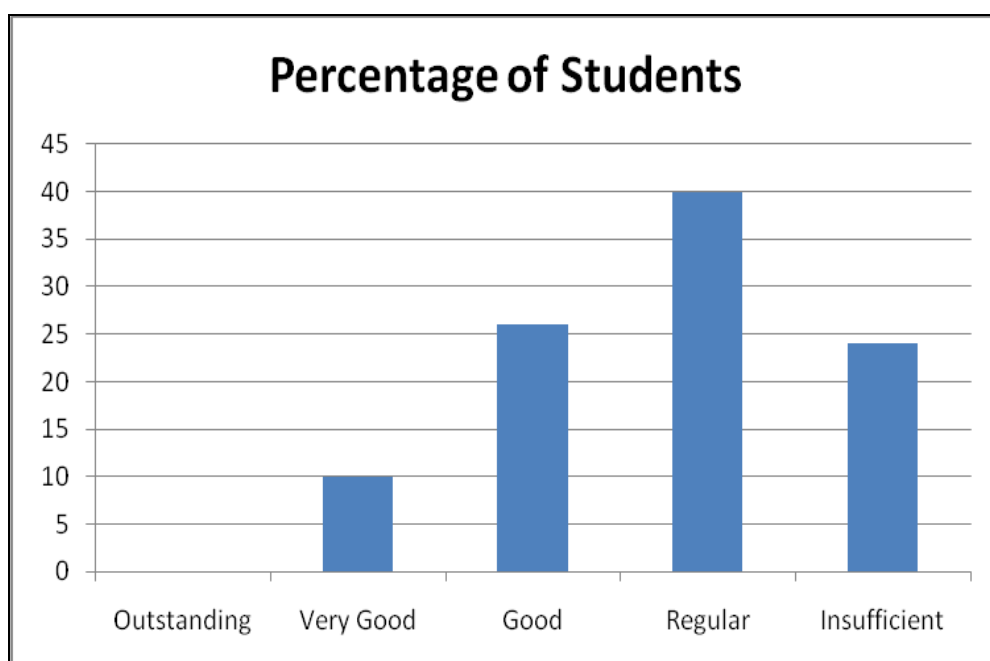
1.3.1.1 Results of the Diagnostic Interview

The analysis of the diagnostic interviews led us to the following results:

Grade	Outstanding 20-19	Very Good 18-16	Good 15-14	Regular 13-12	Insufficient 11 or less	Total
Number of Students	0	15	39	60	36	150
%	0	10	26	40	24	100



GRAPH 1



GRAPH 2

The classification of the grades into: outstanding, very good, good, regular and insufficient is based on the *National Teacher's Career and Establishment Law*¹⁵, chapter XIII Of the Evaluation, which states in article 303:

¹⁵ *Ley Carrera Docente Y Escalafón Del Magisterio Nacional*. Ministerio de Educación y Cultura del Ecuador. 1990

“The scale of grades will be from one to twenty and it will have the following equivalence:

20-19: Outstanding

18-16: Very good

15-14: Good

13-12: Regular

11 or less: Insufficient

As we can see in graphs 1 and 2, 60 students (40%) obtained grades among 13 to 12. We can then interpret this qualification as a *regular* achievement of English Oral Skills. A total of 39 students (26%) got a grade among 15 to 14 which is *good*. On the other hand, 36 students (24%) are in an *insufficient* level of acquisition of oral communicative skills. There are only 15 students (10%) in a *very good* level of acquisition of this skill. There are no students in an *outstanding* level of application of English oral skills.

1.3.1.2. Diagnostic Interview Conclusions

There are some characteristics that were observed from the students when they were interviewed:

- Some students got stressed when they found out it was an English interview.
- They were not used to speaking in English.
- Most of them understood the questions but didn't have enough vocabulary to express themselves in English and therefore they answered in Spanish.
- They translated the questions to facilitate their answer.
- Some of them needed examples in order to understand the questions.

The analysis of all these results allows this project to state that the English speaking skills of the third year students of Miguel Merchán High School present problems. Students present problems with their communicative competence since they find difficulties in expressing their ideas and feelings.

1.3.2 Classroom Observation

The class observation technique was necessary in order to have more detailed and precise evidence of what was done in the English classes, and to identify strengths and weaknesses at the time of teaching and learning this subject. After class observation, we analyzed some of the attitudes students and teachers presented during the English class period. We observed the kinds of activities that were developed in class, how involved the students were in their own learning, and some other characteristics that are described below:

- Right after the teacher got in the class and greeted the students they were asked to open their books. It was evident that the teacher didn't have to tell the students the page number where he wanted to work. This behaviour tells us that the students could almost predict their English teacher. They were used to working in their books and didn't expect anything that would be different from one class to the next.
- There was little or no variety in the type of activities the teacher applied in class. It was noticeable that all of them were based on the book and its activities; therefore, the students had the same routine of taking their books out and using them in every class.
- There were no warm-up activities to introduce the topic or to get the students involved and interested in what the class was to be about.
- Once the class had started, it was noticeable that students got easily bored and since there was no interaction within the class, they started talking in Spanish to each other instead of doing the task their teacher had asked them to. The result of this behaviour was that some of the students paid attention to their class and others just waited until their friends had finished so they could copy the answers down, even if they didn't know the meaning of those answers.
- The teacher addressed himself to the students that were willing to learn. There was no control or monitoring on what the other students were doing. The students that didn't participate in class would copy the answers from their friends or from the board at the end of class.

- After the task was explained in English, the teacher would do the corresponding translation. Most of the students waited for this moment and didn't make any effort to understand the English commands.
- Answers for the tasks were written on the board by the teacher a few minutes before the class ended. Students limited themselves to copy these answers. This describes how students didn't have much interest in learning the new things the teacher proposed on the board.
- Students were asked to use new vocabulary in written exercises introduced by the book, but they didn't have enough knowledge to fulfil the activities. The students just limited themselves to repeat what was written in the examples of their book. This demonstrates that students didn't have enough practice for using the English they learned in new situations besides their book activities. They completed tasks, but it was possible to see that they weren't able to use these sentences in a new situation.
- The majority of the class time was spent either with the teacher lecturing to the class or students working on written assignments addressed in their books
- Teaching and instructions were usually addressed to the students as a whole. They didn't take into account that in a class of many students there are always a few who don't have the same level as their classmates. In these cases, the differences of levels of knowledge were pretty noticeable in each class.
- Students' interaction in English with either their teacher or classmates was almost inexistent. Students didn't express any new ideas in English apart from reading out loud the answers of applied exercises whenever their teacher asked them to. It could be said that the students who participated in class were practically the same every day.
- Students were generally very passive in the classroom. Students limited themselves to watch or listen to the teacher.
- Teachers typically focused on the content of the task or assignment, responded to students' signals, communicated the task's procedures, and checked students' work.

- Teachers spent very little time interacting with students regarding personal issues, encouraging students to succeed, showing personal regard for students, and showing interest in students' work
- Teachers used tape recorders or in other cases they just read out loud the dialogues or whatever material the students needed to fulfil an activity which involved listening. There was no other type of technology used in the classroom by the teacher or the students.

1.3.2.1 Class Observation Conclusions

Through class observation, it was possible to describe in more detail the characteristics of the third year English classes of Miguel Merchán High School. The following are the conclusions about the speaking skills of the students, which is the one we want to improve:

- There was not much interaction between teacher and students since the activities were based upon the textbook, and other kinds of techniques were not applied to get the students involved in class.
- Students didn't have communicative tasks which would lead them to speak in English. Most of the classes were aimed at writing in their books or notebooks. After this, there was no more oral interaction besides answer checking.
- Warm up activities to introduce the topic or to get students involved in the oncoming class were not used at all. These types of activities motivate students and help them to get interested in the class.
- There was a lot of speaking in Spanish amongst students. They didn't use the new language in order to communicate with their classmates or the teacher.
- Students didn't practice their listening skills which would help them speak. They waited for the teacher's translation of the proposed tasks.
- Most of the classes were predictable for the students and they knew that the task answers would be written on the board some time before the class ended. They just limited themselves to wait until

this happened and their only concern was to fill in the book's blanks even if they didn't know what they were writing down. This shows us that students were not very motivated to learn and that they were interested in only fulfilling the tasks even if they didn't learn.

- Written exercises were not addressed to improve other skills. The teacher didn't relate them to other content or activities where students could see that the new knowledge was also useful in other fields.
- Participation didn't involve the whole class, so there were some students that didn't care about learning or clarifying any doubts they may have had.
- The teacher was the main actor in the teaching-learning process. The students were generally very passive in the classes.
- Other kinds of technological resources besides a tape recorder were not used. Students didn't have access to new experiences or dialects that could be beneficial to their learning process other than the skill of writing.
- Teachers didn't apply other techniques or strategies that could help their students to achieve the English National Program's objectives which are based on communicative competence. This is to say, teachers are not basing their class planning on the government's goals, but they are only focusing on finishing the book.

1.3.3. Survey to teachers and students

It was necessary to survey the English teachers and students of the third year of Miguel Merchán High School in order to diagnose the situations that are occurring in the English classes from the teacher's and students' points of view. This survey aims at determining different aspects which include students' motivation, types of activities, and the level of practice of speaking skills in the classrooms. All of these aspects directly affect the goal that this project aims to improve in these students learning process.

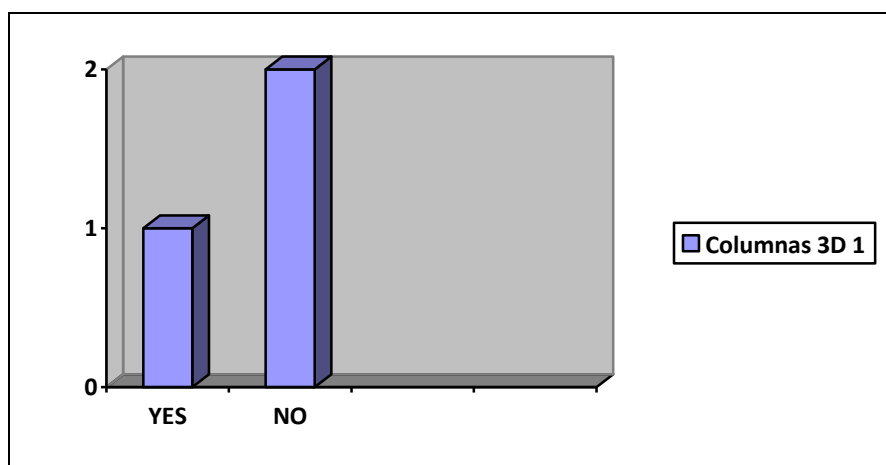
1.3.3.1. Survey applied to the English teachers in the Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School

As it was described before, Miguel Merchán High School has two specializations, Accounting and Chemical Biology. These classes are divided in two schedules: morning and evening. There are three teachers in charge of the learning processes of these classes and all of them were asked to fill out this survey.

The corresponding questionnaire is at the end of this thesis (Annex 04).

1.3.3.1.1 Analysis of the teachers' answers

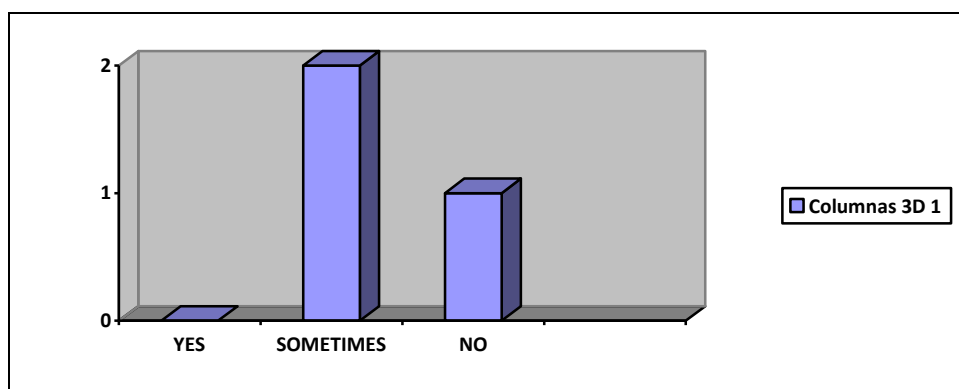
1. Do your students demonstrate an interest in learning English?



GRAPH 3

Two out of the three teachers didn't think their students demonstrated an interest in learning English. They believe that most of the students gave more importance to other subjects rather than English. Students had attitudes that tell their teacher that their only aim was to get a grade high enough to pass the subject. The fact of learning the subject was not relevant for the students.

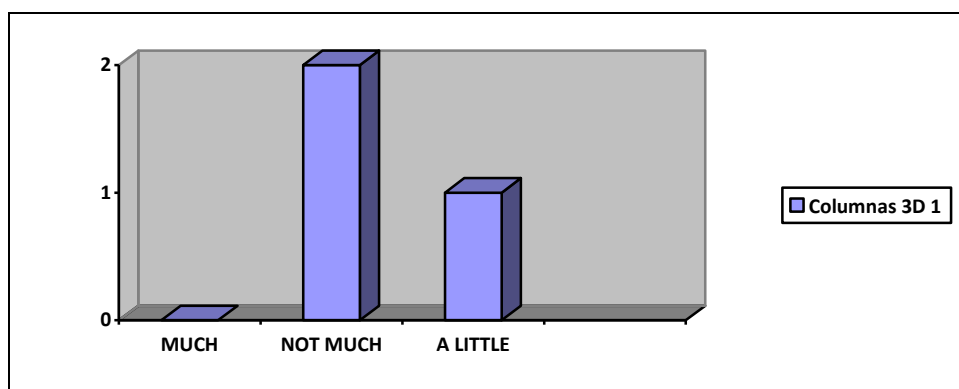
2. Do you believe your students enjoy the activities that are taught in English class?



GRAPH 4

Two teachers believed that their students sometimes enjoyed the activities in the class. One of them answered that his students didn't demonstrate to be enjoying the things taught in class. In the other two responses, the teachers explained that the book's contents are not suitable to the reality of students lives and that may be a reason that students didn't identify or relate to English learning.

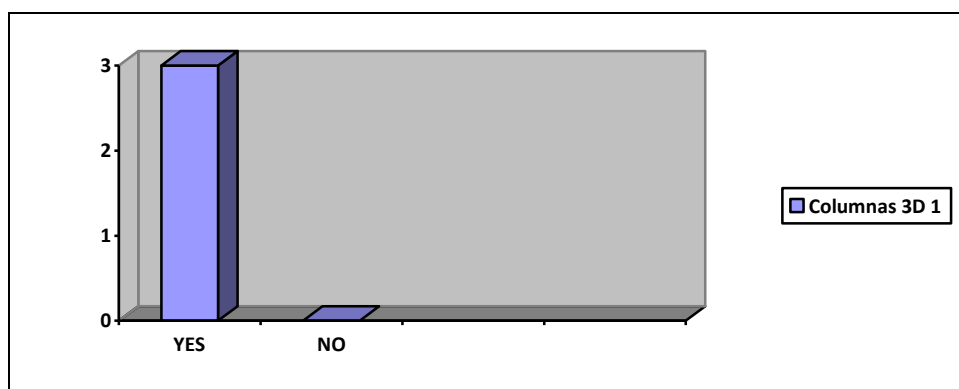
3. How much do you think your students participate?



GRAPH 5

Two teachers believed that their students didn't participate much in their classes. There was one teacher who thought his students participated a little in class. They were aware that the participation during class is performed by the same students in most of the cases.

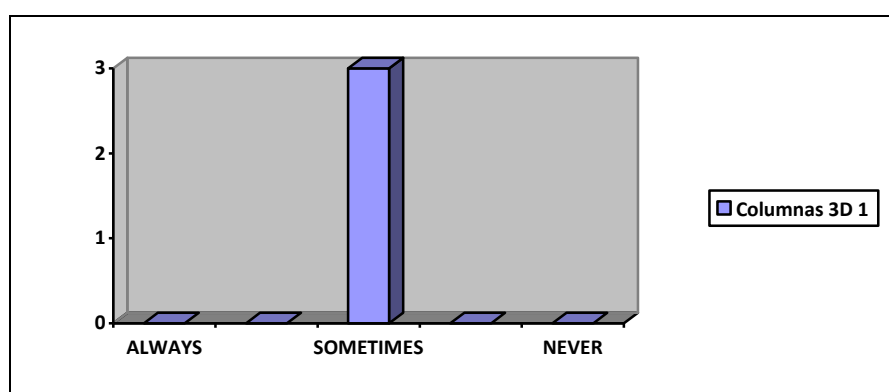
4. Do you believe that the activities provided by the book are sufficient for your students' English learning?



GRAPH 6

All of the teachers consider that the activities proposed by the book are enough for their students to learn in class. They think the textbook is the only instrument that they have to deal with throughout the whole year in order to fulfil the annual plan successfully and on time.

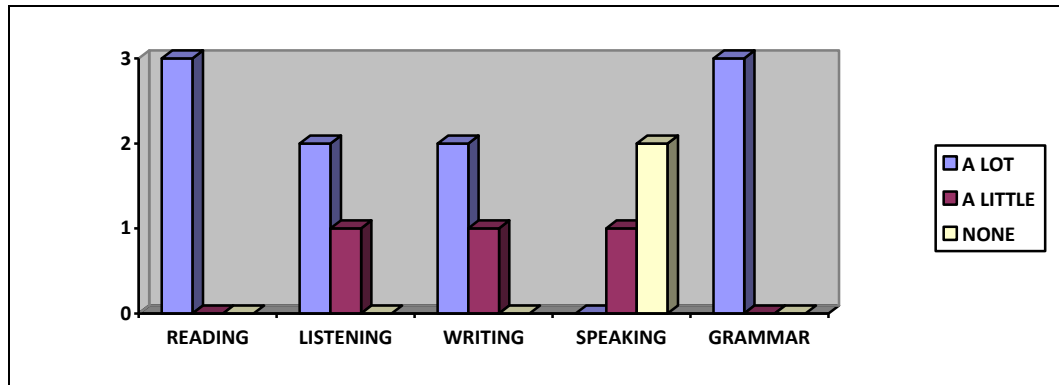
5. How often do your students speak English to communicate in class?



GRAPH 7

All of the teachers said that their students sometimes used English to communicate in class. However, these students used the new language just to call out the answers for the tasks, but did not use it as a communicative tool to express themselves.

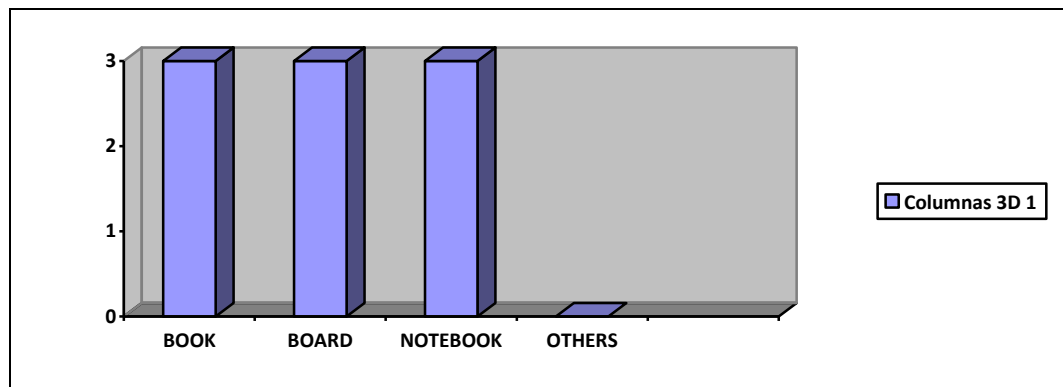
6. Throughout the year, how much class time did you spend in: reading, listening, writing, speaking, grammar?



GRAPH 8

As we can see in the graph, teachers focus on grammar and reading exercises. Almost all of these activities are suggested by the text book.

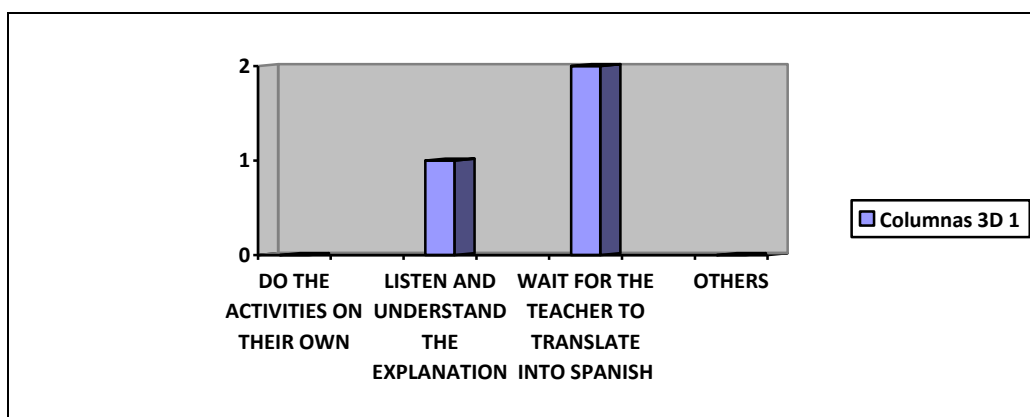
7. The applied activities in the class are done in:



GRAPH 9

As we can see, the resources that teachers use in their classes are: the book, board, and notebook. There were not any teachers who said that they used other kinds of resources. The teachers asked their students to read the text book and used its suggestions; they did the corresponding explanation on the board. Then they asked their students to complete the tasks in the book and if there wasn't space or if the topic required it, they did the exercises in their notebooks.

8. In order to do any activity in the English class, your students:



GRAPH 10

One teacher believed that his students listened and understood the explanation whenever they needed to. On the other hand, two of the teachers were aware that their students waited for the corresponding translation.

1.3.3.1.2 Conclusions of the teachers' answers

The application of this survey helped us determine different aspects that directly affect the practicing and learning of speaking skills which have been presenting problems in the third year of English classes at Miguel Merchán High School. The features that were found from this survey are described as follows:

- Most of the teachers consider that their students don't presently think that English is an important subject to learn for their future. This lack of student motivation directly affects the teachers' motivation to do different things and this is one of the reasons why teachers don't vary their planning or sequencing of planning.
- Teachers believe that it is very important to cover their school's annual planning which includes finishing the textbook. This is one of the main reasons why they don't plan techniques and activities different from the ones that are suggested in the book.
- Teachers think that the book's contents are not related to the students' reality. If students don't relate and therefore aren't interested in the subject's topics, they won't feel motivated to learn and apply what they learned in class to real life.

- Teachers are conscious that all of the students should be participating, but they don't see much interest in the rest of students so they address their classes to those few who indeed show interest. Most of their students remain passive in class and it's a small group of students who participate in it.
- They think that completing the book's activities is the most important goal to be achieved by the end of the scholar year. This answer shows us that teachers are aiming at a wrong target. As we now see, the English National Program and therefore the National Curriculum of the English Subject proposes a communicative competence objective which is not necessarily achieved by finishing the book.
- In order to finish the book and fulfil the plan, teachers don't apply other activities apart from those suggested by the book since they consider the book sufficient for students to learn.
- Teachers consider time a limited resource in class that doesn't allow them to apply other techniques that may be more beneficial for their students' acquisition of the new language.
- Inside the class, students get to practice a lot of English grammar, reading, listening, and writing, but they don't know how to relate this new knowledge to previous knowledge that would help students communicate orally in the new language.
- Teachers dedicate most of their time to develop other skills rather than speaking skills. This influences students in lacking self confidence in trying to communicate in verbal ways.
- Most of the teachers are aware that students wait for an oncoming translation after the material has been explained. There is no student effort to understand or comprehend what their teacher is saying in English. Students don't practice their listening skills and therefore they don't try to communicate in English. They use their mother language to talk in class both with their teacher and their classmates. At this level of high school, students should be capable of understanding commands and doing tasks in the class on their own.

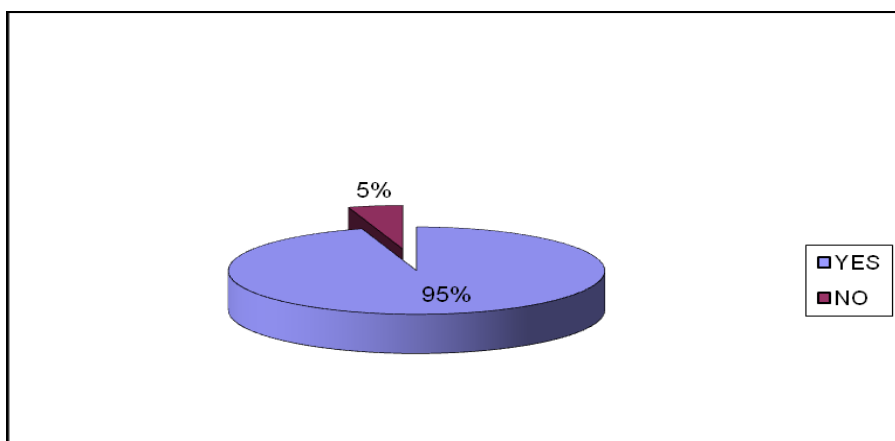
1.3.3.2. Survey applied to the third year students at Miguel Merchán High School

There are 150 students in the third year at Miguel Merchán High school. They are divided into 5 classes of two specializations: Accounting and Chemical Biology which are further divided into two schedules, morning and evening sections. This survey was applied to all of the students.

The corresponding questionnaire that was applied to survey the students is at the end of this thesis (Annex 05).

1.3.3.2.1. Analysis of the students' answers

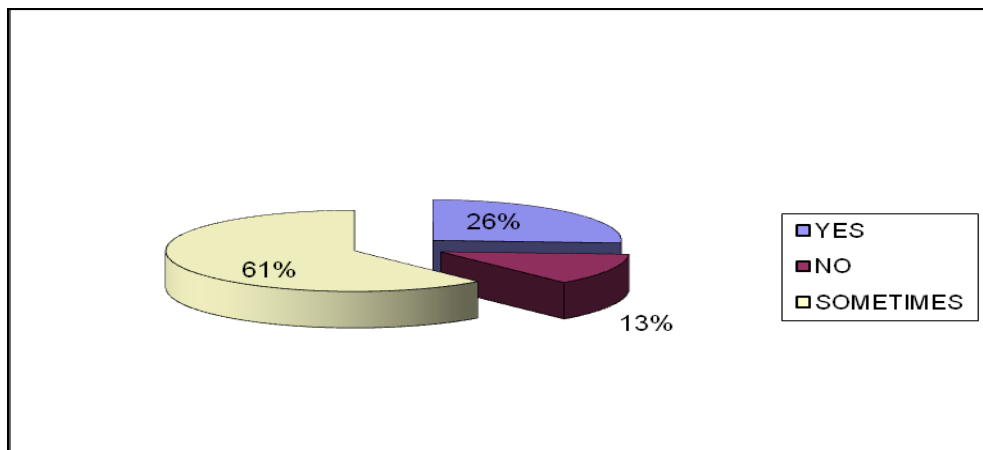
1. Do you consider that learning English is important for your future?



GRAPH 11

A 95.3% of the students consider that English is important for their future. Students are aware of the need and importance English has nowadays, so they are willing to learn this language.

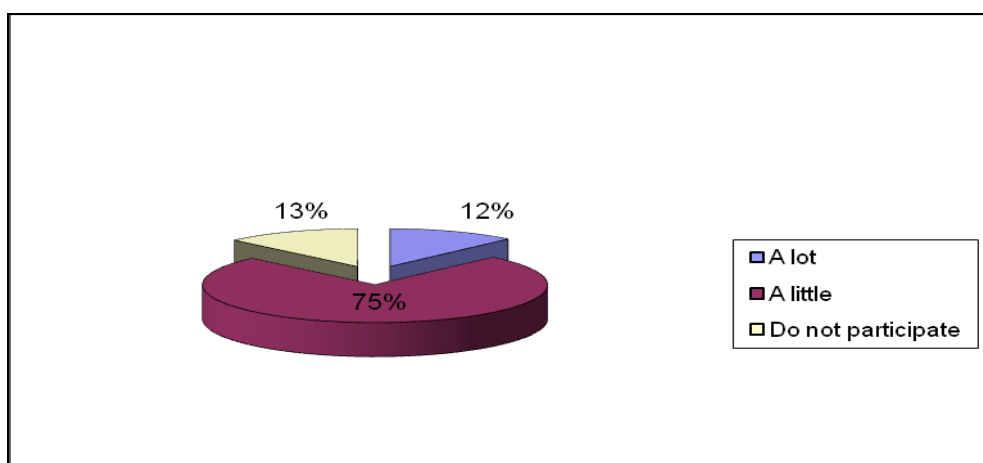
2. Do you enjoy your English classes?



GRAPH 12

A 61% of students sometimes enjoy their English classes, 13% don't enjoy them and 26% consider their classes enjoyable all the time. These are opinions that suggest that the proposed activities don't correspond to the level of enjoyment that students actually have. Students manifest that sometimes they feel frustrated and aren't able to fully develop some activities successfully due to a lack of vocabulary or previous knowledge.

3. How much do you participate in the English class?

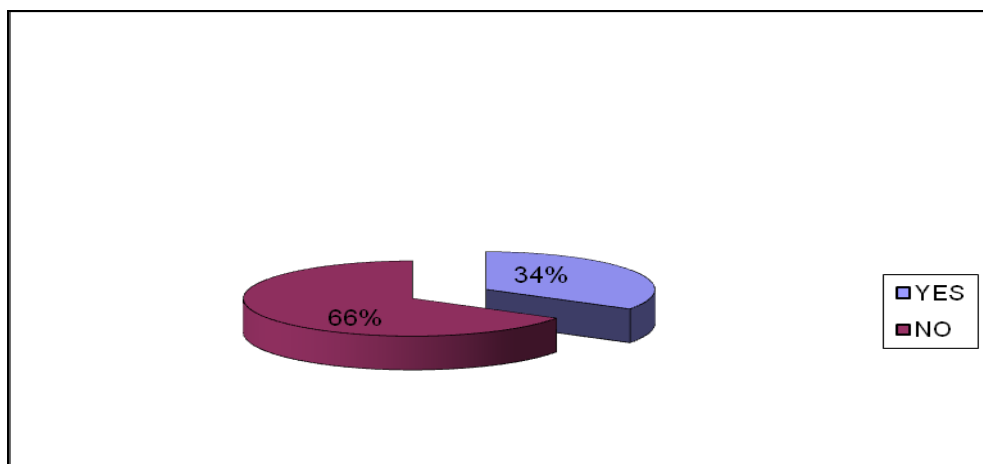


GRAPH 13

A 75% of students consider that they just participate a little in the class, 13% don't participate at all, and 12% participate a lot in the class. This level of

participation coincides with the teachers' opinion and directly affects the learning process of these students since they don't practice what they learn in the class.

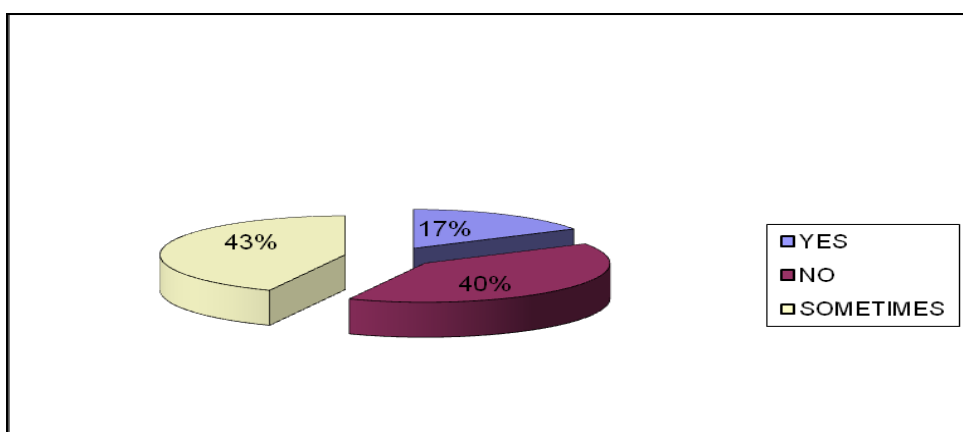
4. Do you consider that the activities proposed by the book and teacher are sufficient for your English learning?



GRAPH 14

A 65% of the students don't consider that the activities proposed by the book and the teacher are sufficient for their learning. On the other hand, the 34% are satisfied with the procedure and activities set in the class. Students say that more activities, vocabulary, dynamism and creativity are needed in the class since the teacher is based almost all the time upon the book and its program.

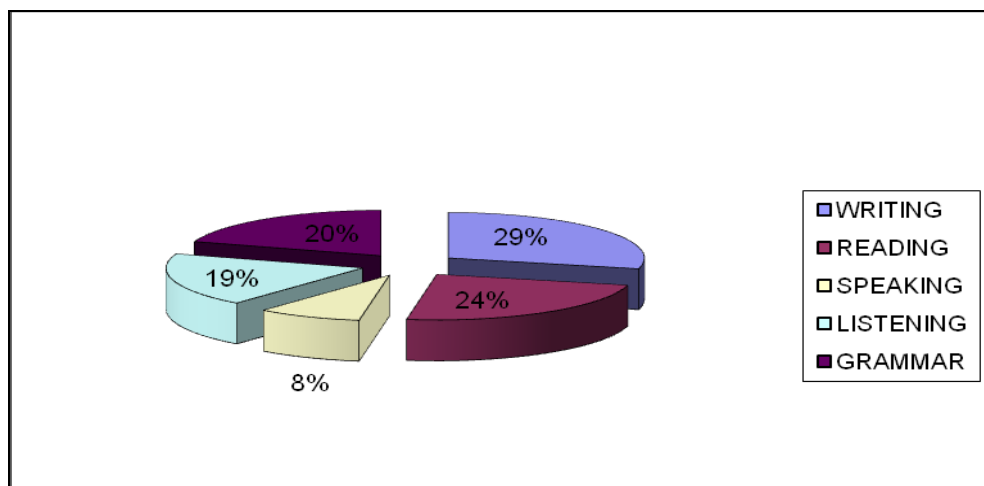
5. Do you feel motivated to speak in English by the activities developed in class?



GRAPH 15

Only 17% of the students feel motivated to speak in English, 43% of them sometimes speak in English, and 40% don't speak in English at all. Some students suggested that their teachers don't use activities interesting enough to challenge them so they feel more interested in the subject.

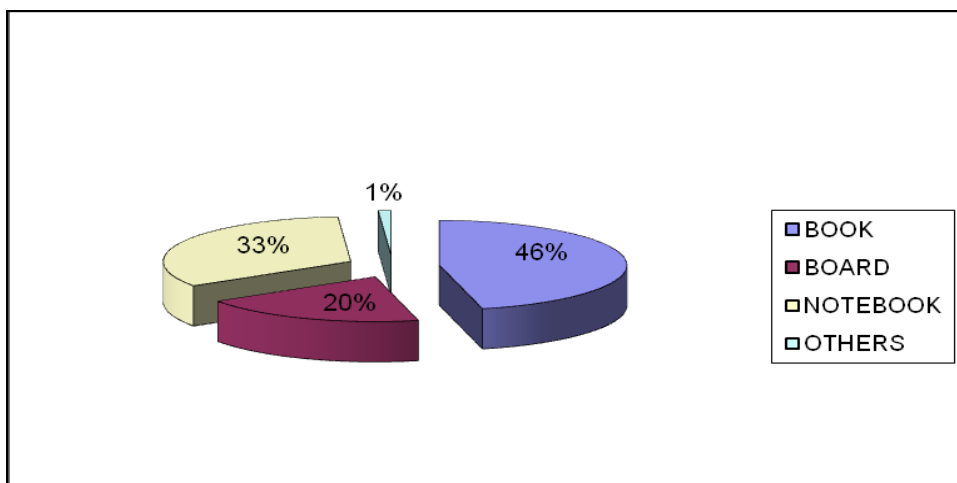
6. What kind of activities do you do more in class?



GRAPH 16

According to the answers, 28% of activities proposed in class are writing exercises, 24% reading, 20% grammar, 19% listening, and only 8% of the activities ask the students to speak in class. These percentages demonstrate that the teachers practice the other skills much more than speaking. This directly affects the students' capacity to use what they learned in class to express themselves in English in an oral way whenever they need or want to.

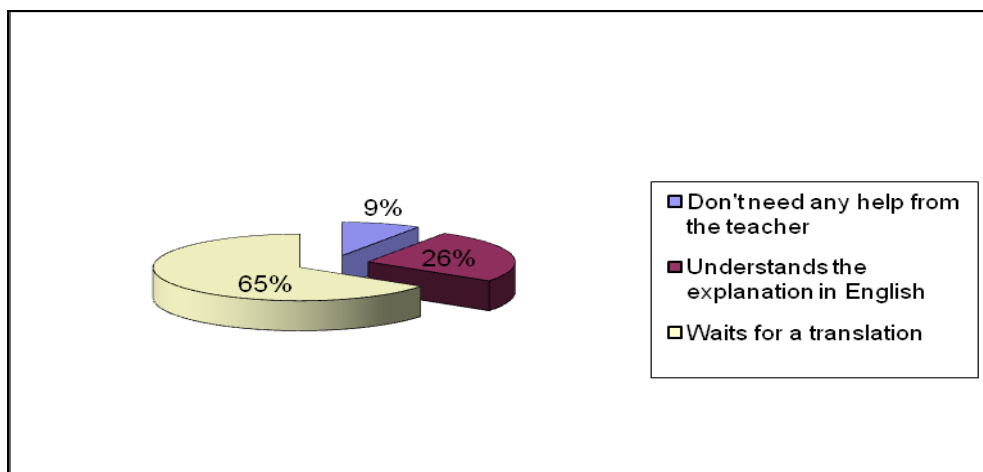
7. The activities in class are developed mostly in:



GRAPH 17

Students' perception of the activities done in class are the following: 46% of the activities are developed by using the book, 33% use the notebook, 20% are activities proposed on the board, 1% are other activities apart of these options.

8. In order to do the English activities you:



GRAPH 18

As we can see on the graph, 65% of the students wait for the corresponding translation by their teacher before they do any task; 26% understand the English explanation, and only 9% of the students don't need any help from their teacher before they develop any task.

2.3.3.1.1. Conclusions of the students' answers

The application of this survey helped us widen our comprehension of what is happening inside the English classes and what is the student's perception of them. It should be said that all these aspects directly affect the motivation level students have and their predisposition to learn the new language.

- Most of the students feel indifferent and not motivated to participate in their English classes. Teachers have been using strategies that don't involve their students throughout the teaching – learning process.
- Most of the students don't know how to use their previous knowledge in different situations and they are afraid of communicating and using the new language for expressing their ideas with spontaneity and self confidence.
- Students don't consider the activities proposed by their teacher are enough for their new language acquisition. Most of the classes are dedicated to teach grammar structures and to complete tasks in the textbook.
- Students are led to practice word spelling and sentences that are built in a mechanical and organized way. Teachers don't dedicate enough time for their students to talk so they are not able to communicate and use whatever they learned in class in an oral way.
- Students suggest the use of other types of activities that challenge them and make them feel more motivated to learn.
- Students can almost predict their English classes and they wait for the corresponding translation after their teacher has explained the task in English

2.3.4. Conclusions of the Diagnosis

Through the use of the described techniques, it was possible to determine the level of oral skills for the third year High School students, which doesn't correspond to the levels suggested by the English National Program and the National Curriculum of English. It was possible to see that students have problems in expressing their own ideas and in applying what they have learned for communicative purposes.

The class observations and the survey application techniques widened our diagnosis since we could see and get the teachers' and students' points of view concerning their own teaching-learning processes. These mentioned techniques helped us see the reality of the English classes and what the teachers do in order to motivate their students to learn the new language and also to observe the application of teaching English oral skills. It is also possible to state that there are many aspects these High School teachers need to change in order to motivate and create a better English learning environment so their students learn and participate more in class.

This project aims at providing useful techniques and strategies to be used for English classes, at giving teachers more tools and activities so their students can better grasp the information in English classes, and also at developing student communicative skills which is the main objective of the National English Curriculum.

Chapter II

2. THEORETICAL CONCEPTS IN ENGLISH TEACHING

After the diagnosis has been done, it will be necessary to determine and describe the theoretical framework which will support this project to facilitate and propose useful techniques for the teachers to apply in their classes in order to improve the students' English oral skills.

The Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School students present problems in correlating previous knowledge to new information taught by their teachers. There is no linking between the activities and other situations, so students consider each topic an isolated one with little or no relationship or application to other situations. Another big problem in the English classes is the level of motivation teachers and students have. Being motivated is an important issue that directly affects the teaching – learning process.

The Meaningful Learning Theory proposed by David Ausubel states that learning depends on the previous cognitive structure which is related to the new information. His learning principles, through the design of metacognitive tools, allow a better orientation of the teaching process since it's possible to know the cognitive structure's organization of the student. It states that students possess a series of experiences and knowledge that will affect their learning and that these experiences have to be related to the new ideas and concepts so they can be learned meaningfully.¹⁶

Motivation promotes meaningful learning and the teacher is the one in charge of this issue. The teaching strategies have to count with a correct and justified selection of both methodological and logistical resources.

¹⁶ Ausubel, David, *"Cognitive Structure And The Facilitation Of Meaningful Verbal Learning. Journal Of Teacher Education"*, 1963.

David Ausubel's theory will help us solve some of the previously mentioned problems that English classes present in this high school in order to improve the English oral skill of these students.

The English National Program and therefore the National Curriculum of English proposed by the government for every public institution establishes that the main goal to be achieved by the students is the acquisition of a communicative competence through the linguistic competence. There are many aspects that communicative competence involves and concerns, and they will be described in this project in order to lead us to techniques and strategies that improve English oral skills of the students at this High School.

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)'s main goal is the development of communicative competence. This approach is composed of a set of principles about how learners learn; the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning; and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom. The description of this approach will help us design strategies, techniques, and activities that will improve the speaking skills of the third year students at Miguel Merchán High School.

2.1. DAVID AUSUBEL'S MEANINGFUL LEARNING THEORY

David Ausubel was born in 1918 in New York, United States. He was influenced by Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory. He published several books on developmental and educational psychology. His theories are very important for educators. He based his work on verbal learning.¹⁷

This author states that student learning depends on previous cognitive structures being correlated with new information. "Cognitive structure" is the group of concepts and ideas that the person owns in a determinate field of knowledge and its organization.¹⁸

¹⁷ Ausubel, David. Op.cit 16

¹⁸ Ausubel, David. Op.cit 16

Ausubel saw knowledge as representing an integrated system. All the ideas are linked together in order. The human mind follows logical rules for organizing information into respective categories.¹⁹

In the learning process, it's very important to know the student's cognitive structure. It's not a matter of only knowing the amount of information students have, but a matter of knowing also the concepts and statements that are handled by the students and their degree of stability.

As we could see in the diagnosis, English teachers of the Third Year of High School instruct their classes as isolated topics and don't apply techniques that relate students' previous knowledge to new topics proposed in class. In this case, Ausubel's learning principles give us a way to design metacognitive tools that allow us to use the organizational cognitive structures of the students. This will better orient the teaching process since it won't be seen as a process that begins with blank minds anymore. It considers that students possess a series of experiences and knowledge that will affect their learning and could be utilized for their own good.

2.1.1. Rote and Meaningful Learning

Ausubel differentiates Rote from Meaningful Learning and it is described as follows:

2.1.1.1. Rote Learning

Rote learning is related to memorizing information in an arbitrary way. It consists of arbitrary, verbatim and non-substantive incorporation of new knowledge into cognitive structures²⁰. It occurs when there is little or no effort by the part of the student to relate new information to relevant knowledge that he already has. The knowledge or information is stored in an isolated compartment and is not integrated into the person's larger cognitive structure. "Rotely learned materials are discrete and isolated entities which have not been related to established concepts in the

¹⁹ Ausubel, David. Op.cit 16

²⁰ Ausubel, David. Op.cit 16

learner's cognitive structure"²¹. Because rote learning is not anchored to existing concepts, it is more easily forgotten. Since there isn't any organization or differentiation of previous concepts, learning becomes mechanical, difficult to remember, and not useful in a future situation.

2.1.1.1.1. Characteristics of the Rote Learning

- Arbitrary, verbatim, non-substantive incorporation of new knowledge into cognitive structure.
- No effort to integrate new knowledge with existing concepts in cognitive structure.
- Learning not related to experience with events or objects.
- Non affective commitment to relate new knowledge to prior learning.

These are some characteristics of the reality present in the Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School students, which were described in the diagnosis. It showed us that students don't relate new information to previous structures and that is why they find assimilation of new knowledge difficult and easy to forget. Since students don't link new information to other situations, they may easily forget what they learn in their English classes and therefore, they may not differentiate structures that they may use in real life circumstances when they want to express themselves and communicate.

2.1.1.2. Meaningful learning

Meaningful learning, on the other hand, is part and parcel to higher order thinking. Such thinking takes place when we grasp the interrelationship between two or more ideas, old and new.

Meaning is created through some form of representational equivalence between language (symbols) and mental context. Meaningful learning is the one where knowledge, skills, values, and habits that have been acquired can be used in any circumstance and situation that occurs or may occur in the future for the person.

²¹ AUSUBEL, David, Op.cit 16.

It becomes part of the cognitive structure of a man and can be used at the right time to learn more things or to solve problems that may come in the future.²²

Through meaningful learning, the person constructs meaning that enriches his/her knowledge of the physical and social world. He also enhances his personal growth.

The three key aspects that should support the instructional process will be: the achievement of meaningful learning, comprehensive memorization of the classroom content, and functionality of learning. Meaningful learning will also allow the student to better understand many facets of one's environment; it will facilitate the awakening of intellectual curiosity, and it will stimulate critical thinking and enable the person to decipher reality²³.

Meaningful learning occurs when the new information is “connected” with a relevant concept previously acquired in the cognitive structure. This is to say, the new ideas and concepts can be learned meaningfully in the same capacity as other relevant ideas and concepts that are clear and available in the cognitive structure of the person. They are like the *hook* to catch the new ideas.

In order to improve the English oral skills of our students, it is important for the teacher to promote and propose activities which allow students to learn meaningfully, so that they can associate everything they have learnt, to express their ideas correctly, and to successfully achieve their communicative purposes.

2.1.1.2.1. Types of Meaningful Learning

It's important to highlight that meaningful learning is not the “simple connection” of new information with the pre existent one in the cognitive structure of the person who learns. On the contrary, mechanical learning consists of the “simple connection”, arbitrary and not important. Meaningful learning involves the modification and evolution of new information and the cognitive structure that is

²² AUSUBEL, David, “*Psicología Educativa*”, p 36-42

²³ AUSUBEL, David, Op.cit 22

related in the learning process. Ausubel distinguishes three types of meaningful learning: representations, concepts and statements.

a. Learning of Representations

This is the most elemental type of learning upon which the rest of them depend. It consists in giving meaning to determinate symbols. Ausubel says: "It happens when arbitrary symbols, with their references, that could be objects, events or concepts, and their meaning get together and acquire a real meaning to the student"²⁴. This kind of learning is present mostly in children. For example, learning the word "table" happens when the meaning of that word becomes a representation or equivalent to the table the student perceives at that moment. Therefore, they mean the same thing for the student. It's not a simple association between the symbol and the object; the learner relates them in a substantive, non arbitrary way like a representational equivalence with the relevant contents existing in the cognitive structure.

b. Concepts Learning

Concepts are defined as "objects, events, situations, or properties which have attributes of common criteria and that are designed through a symbol or sign"²⁵. Concepts are acquired through two processes: formation and assimilation. In the building of concepts, the characteristics of the concept criteria are acquired by the direct experience in successive periods of formulation and hypothesis testing. According to the previous example, we could say that the student acquires the generic meaning of the word "table", that symbol is useful too as giving meaning to the cultural concept of "table". In this case, equivalence between the symbol and its characteristics of common criteria are established. This is how students learn the concept of "table" through several encounters with their table and the other students' table.

The learning of concepts by assimilation is produced in the way the student widens his vocabulary since he can define criteria features of the concepts by using

²⁴ AUSUBEL, David; SULLIVAN, Edmund. *"El desarrollo infantil"*. Paidós. Barcelona, 1983

²⁵ AUSUBEL, David; SULLIVAN, Edmund. Op.cit 24

the available combinations in the cognitive structure. This is how the student can distinguish amongst different colors and sizes and state that it's a "table" when he sees others at any moment.

c. Learning of Statements

This type of learning goes beyond the simple assimilation of what words represent in a combined or isolated way since it demands understanding the meaning of expressed ideas in a concept form.

Learning of statements implies the combination and relationship of several words, each one of them constitutes a unit referent. Then, these words will be combined in such way that the resulting idea is more than the simple addition of the individual words. This produces a new meaning that is assimilated to the cognitive structure.²⁶

2.1.1.2.2. Advantages of Meaningful Learning

- It makes the retention of the information last longer.
- It's easier to acquire new knowledge related to old information previously obtained. This is because it's easier to retain new contents when the cognitive structure is clear.
- When the new information is related to the old one, it's kept in the long-term memory.
- It's active since it depends on the assimilation of the learning activities done by the student
- It's personal since meaningful learning depends on the cognitive resources of the students.²⁷

2.1.1.2.3. Requirements to Achieve the Meaningful Learning

- a. Logical Significance of the Material:** the material must be significant and capable of being related by the student. The learner must have previous

²⁶ AUSUBEL, David; SULLIVAN, Edmund. Op.cit 24

²⁷ AUSUBEL, David; SULLIVAN, Edmund. Op.cit 24

knowledge of what he/she is going to learn. Books need to have clear sequential material with advance organizers and units to help students prove the acquired knowledge.²⁸

- b. **Psychological Significance of the Material:** the student connects the new knowledge to the previous one and understands it. Students have to possess previous knowledge and relevant ideas necessary for adapting the new information into a larger pattern or cognitive structure.
- c. **Favorable Attitude of the student:** The learner must have a positive attitude to learn. This means that the student must try to relate the new ideas to the ones he already has.²⁹ Students must be interested in learning the new material that is presented to them.

If the student's intention is to memorize, no matter the potential meaning the material to be learnt has, both the learning process and the results will be mechanical. In the opposite way, no matter the willingness of the student or the process, the result won't be meaningful if the material is not meaningful and if it's not appropriate to be related to the cognitive structure. This component of emotional and behavior dispositions is where the teacher can only influence through motivation.

2.1.1.2.4. Contributions of Ausubel's Theory

2.1.1.2.4.1. Expository Teaching

One of the most important things that Ausubel suggests to promote meaningful learning is *Expository Teaching*. This teaching style consists of explaining or exposing facts or ideas. It is an efficient and effective way of organizing classroom learning.

²⁸ AUSUBEL, David; SULLIVAN, Edmund. Op.cit 24

²⁹ STANLEY, Ivie, "Ausubel's Learning Theory: An Approach To Teaching Higher Order Thinking Skills", High School Journal 82.1 (Oct 1998): p35

Formal education is a slow, incremental process. What is acquired one day provides the basis for what will be learned the next. Practice or drill is necessary in order to master most classroom learning. Expository teaching uses drills. Practice is useful "for acquiring many skills and concepts that do not occur frequently and repetitively enough in more natural settings". Though children may learn some things from incidental contact, most of what they acquire at school comes from deliberate, guided practice.³⁰

2.1.1.2.4.2. Advance Organizers

Advance organizers help the student face new information. An advance organizer is information that is presented prior to learning and can be used by the learner to organize and interpret new incoming information. It functions as a bridge between the new material and the current knowledge of the student. These organizers have three purposes:

- To direct student's attention to what is important in the material
- To highlight the relationships between ideas that will be presented and the previous ones.
- To remind the student of relevant information he/she already has in order to acquire new information.³¹

The effectiveness of an advance organizer depends upon the relationship between the existing cognitive structure and the new knowledge to be learnt

Advance Organizers are divided in two categories:³²

- a. Comparative Organizers.** They activate the existing schemes, that is, they remind the student what he already knows, but its importance is unknown. It can also point out differences and similarities of the concepts

³⁰ AUSUBEL, David. "*The psychology of meaningful verbal learning*". New York:Grune & Stratton. 1963

³¹ AUSUBEL, David. "*Educative Psychology*". Trillas Editorial, Mexico. 1976

³² AUSUBEL, David. Op.cit 31

- b. **Explanatory Organizers.** They provide new knowledge that students will need in order to understand the subsequent information. They also help students to learn, especially when the topic is complex, unknown, or difficult. These organizers must be understood by the students so it will be effective.

Advance organizers are generally used at the beginning of a lesson or unit. They could also be used to introduce a complete area of study.

Graphic organizers indicate comparisons. In this type of graph we have:

- **Radial Organizers:** They're used to create, manage, and exchange information and knowledge. They represent information and knowledge via the spatial organization of concepts/topics, ideas, words, or other items linked to and arranged in a radial pattern around a central concept.³³
- **Perceptual Organizers:** These are things such as the titles and subtitles of the texts. If they are presented in a content chart way, they have a main idea of the topic to be seen. It's important to try to cover the lexical understanding of this table of contents
- **Conceptual Schemes:** They are very effective for any explanation. As an example, we have the summary tables.
- **Concept Maps:** These are vertical and hierarchical. They are valid to present inclusivity: supra and subordination of concepts.
- **Conceptual Network:** They present relationships of all kinds between subordinate concepts and the exposure of several central concepts. They ease schematic, categorical exposures that are more complex than concept maps.
- **Double-entry tables:** They make comparisons by crossing information.
- **Teaching Materials:** Since we are putting emphasis not only on teaching but also on learning, it's normal that the teaching materials change in order to attend to the students' needs. They have to be designed to stimulate learning, not to interfere. They must be designed to conform to psychological criteria using color, font size, distribution, illustrations, etc.

³³ *Concise Learning*. Available in <<http://conciselearning.com/visualmapping.html>. Access November 2011.

Besides, they have to be clear on psychological principles related to thinking development. This is the case of the didactic guides.

Advance organizers will be useful for this project since they will help us present topics and reinforce previous knowledge by applying the corresponding techniques. They will be used for the purpose of practicing and improving English oral skills by the third year students at Miguel Merchán High School.

2.1.1.2.5. Pedagogical Applications of Ausubel's Theory in the Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School

- The teacher must know the students' previous knowledge. This is to say, he/she has to be sure that the contents that are about to be presented can be related to the previous ideas of the student. This is very helpful at the time of planning the class.
- The teacher has to organize the material in the classroom in both logical and hierarchical way. It's not only a matter of content but also the way it is presented to the student.
- Motivation has to be considered as a main factor for the student to be interested in learning. A student with a positive attitude and a good relationship with the teacher will be motivated to learn.
- The teacher has to use examples by using drawings, diagrams, and photographs to teach concepts.
- Concrete material must be dynamic and multivalent.
- The teacher should make effort to seize every opportunity in order to integrate what students learn in a communicative way.
- The teacher should apply contents to real cases of students' lives. This way, students will feel familiar with the situations and will try to express feelings and ideas in order to participate in class.
- The teacher must use correct English structures and have correct pronunciation since students will repeat and pronounce things similarly as their teacher does.
- Expository teaching will help us design techniques and strategies to promote oral skills in our students by the use of drills and guided practices. This will

help these students with better acquisition of knowledge so that they can express themselves in a verbal way.

- Advance organizers will help us present topics and reinforce previous knowledge by applying the corresponding techniques.

2.1.2. Conclusions

Meaningful learning is the one suggested in education because it allows the student to understand learning by using the new knowledge in different situations, both for solving a problem and for supporting future learning.

This theory will support this project's aim of providing teacher's techniques that help their students apply the new language for communicative purposes in a more independent way. This will allow a grasp of English not only in theory but through practice.

2.2. COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

According to Morrow, *communication* is characterized by the following features:

- It's based on interaction.
- It's unpredictable in both form and message.
- It varies according to the sociolinguistic discourse context.
- It's carried out under performance limitations such as fatigue, memory limitations, and unfavorable environmental conditions.
- It always has a purpose (to establish social relations, to express ideas and feelings).
- It involves authentic language.
- It's judged to be successful or unsuccessful on the basis of actual outcomes.³⁴

By *competence*, Chomsky means shared knowledge of the ideal speaker-listener set in a completely homogeneous speech community. Such underlying knowledge enables a user of a language to produce and understand an infinite set

³⁴ MORROW, Keith. "*Communicative Language Testing: Revolution or evolution?*". London: Oxford University Press.

of sentences out of a finite set of rules. Transformational grammar provides for an explicit account of this tacit knowledge of language structure, which is usually not conscious but is necessarily implicit.³⁵

Dell Hymes believes that Chomsky's view of competence is too idealized to describe actual language behavior. Hymes points out that the theory does not account for socio-cultural factors or differential competence in a heterogeneous speech community. He says that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only grammatically but also appropriately. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not to, and as to what to talk about, with whom, when, where, and in what manner. The place of interaction is also an important factor in defining a situation, where you are contributing to the nature of interaction and the variety of language use. Hymes says that the rules of use are dominant over the rules of grammar.³⁶

Hymes concludes that a linguistic theory must be able to deal with a heterogeneous speech community, differential competence, and the role of socio-cultural features. He defines performance as the actual use of language in a concrete situation. In conclusion, Hymes distinguishes two kinds of competence:

- **Linguistic Competence:** it deals with producing and understanding grammatically correct sentences.
- **Communicative Competence:** it deals with producing and understanding sentences that are appropriate and acceptable to a particular situation. Hymes defines communicative competence as knowledge of the rules for understanding and producing both the referential and social meaning of language.³⁷

³⁵ CHOMSKY, Noam qtd in HYMES, Dell. *"On Communicative Competence, in Sociolinguistics"*. J.B. Pride and J.Homes, Eds. Harmondsworth: Penguin

³⁶ HYMES, Dell. *"On Communicative Competence, in Sociolinguistics"*. J.B. Pride and J.Homes, Eds. Harmondsworth: Penguin

³⁷ HYMES, Dell. Op.cit 36

According to Dell Hymes, Communicative Competence refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately.³⁸

Canale and Swain believe that the sociolinguistic work of Hymes is important to the development of a communicative approach to language learning. Their work focuses on the interaction of social context, grammar, and meaning. This interaction is more precisely called social meaning.³⁹

They strongly believe that the study of grammatical competence is as essential to the study of communicative competence as it is the study of sociolinguistic competence.

"Communicative competence was understood as the underlying system of knowledge and skill required for communication. Knowledge refers here to what one knows (consciously or unconsciously) about the language and about other aspects of communicative language use; skill refers to how well one can perform this knowledge in actual communication"⁴⁰

Furthermore, they point out that no communicative competence theorists have devoted any detailed attention to communicative strategies that speakers employ to handle breakdowns in communication. Examples of communication breakdowns include false starts, hesitations and other performance factors, avoiding grammatical forms that have not been fully mastered, addressing strangers when unsure of their social status, and keeping the communicative channel open. They consider such strategies to be important aspects of communicative competence that must be integrated with the other components.

Canale and Swain defined communicative competence in terms of four areas:

³⁸ HYMES, Dell. (1966) "*Two Types of Linguistic Relativity*" In W. Bright Sociolinguistics pp. 114-158.

³⁹ CANALE, M.; SWAIN, M.. "*Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching And Testing*", Applied Linguistics 1. 1980

⁴⁰ CANALE, M.; SWAIN, M. Op.cit 39

- a. Linguistic competence.** It's also called grammatical competence. This competence refers to knowing words and rules. The person knows how to use the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary of a language. In this competence we have the questions: What words do I use? How do I put them into phrases and sentences?⁴¹

Grammatical competence includes knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence—grammar semantics, and phonology. They point out that grammatical competence will be an important concern for any communicative approach whose goals include providing learners with knowledge of how to determine and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances.⁴²

The first step we need to follow is to teach vocabulary. By teaching vocabulary, we help our students have tools and words which they can use whenever they need. Vocabulary shouldn't be presented on lists since it's inadequate. The vocabulary has to be presented in context. According to syntax teachers have to propose activities where students use the words within a sentence.⁴³

- b. Sociolinguistic competence:** Appropriateness. This competence refers to having the knowledge of how to use and respond to language appropriately, according to the setting, the topic, and the relationships among the people communicating.

Through this competence we have the questions: Which words and phrases fit this setting and this topic? How can I express a specific attitude (courtesy, authority, friendliness, respect) when I need to? How do I know what attitude another person is expressing?

Sociolinguistic competence is made up of two sets of rules: sociolinguistic rules of use and rules of discourse. They believe that knowledge of these rules will be crucial in interpreting utterances for social meaning, particularly

⁴¹ CANALE, M.; SWAIN, M. Op.cit 39

⁴² CANALE, M.; SWAIN, M. Op.cit 39

⁴³ CANALE, M.; SWAIN, M. Op.cit 39

when there is a low level of transparency between the literal meaning of an utterance and the speaker's intention.⁴⁴

Teachers need to teach useful expressions and everyday language. We expose the students in isolation to expressions (set phrases) according to the topic and situation, before they see the expression within a context. E.g. I feel awful. The same language according to the language means different things.⁴⁵

- c. Strategic competence:** appropriate use of communication strategies. It is associated with the interlocutor's ability in using communication strategies.

It is to be able to recognize and repair communication breakdowns, how to work around gaps in one's knowledge of the language, and how to learn more about the language in the context.

This competence asks: How do I know when I've misunderstood or when someone has misunderstood me? What do I say then? How can I express my ideas if I don't know the name of something or the right verb form to use?

Strategic competence is made up of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient grammatical competence.⁴⁶

- d. Discourse competence:** cohesion and coherence. It is to know how to interpret a large context and how to construct longer stretches of language so that the parts make up a coherent whole. How words, phrases and sentences are put together to create conversations, speeches, e-mail messages, newspaper articles.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ CANALE, M.; SWAIN, M. Op.cit 39

⁴⁵ CANALE, M.; SWAIN, M. Op.cit 39

⁴⁶ FAERCH, Claus; KASPER, Gabriele, "Two Ways of Defining Communication Strategies"

⁴⁷ CANALE, M.; SWAIN, M. Op.cit 39

As we can see, the communicative competence is the ability to understand a language and to make oneself understood. This is what teachers should put all their efforts into, in order to have students try to communicate even if they don't know all the words. Teachers should give students tools for them to solve problems and face challenges in any situation, not only in the classroom environment.

The desired outcome of the language learning process is the ability to communicate competently, not the ability to use the language exactly as a native speaker does⁴⁸. It includes knowing what to say and how to say it appropriately based on the situation, the participants, and their roles and intentions. Communicative competence is viewed as mastery of functions needed for communication across a wide range of situations.

Our government proposes for students in all public institutions including Miguel Merchán High School a goal based on communicative competence. This project will present techniques and strategies that will help teachers promote and improve speaking skills, which are the main problem for these students and therefore must be reinforced in the classes.

2.3. COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can be understood as a set of goals and principles for language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom. The *main goal* of this approach is the teaching of communicative competence.⁴⁹

This approach describes a set of very general principles grounded in the notion of communicative competence as a communicative syllabus and methodology as the way of achieving this goal. Communicative language teaching refers to a set of principles that can be applied in different ways, depending on the

⁴⁸ “*The Essentials Of Language Teaching*”, <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/index.htm> Access: February 2011.

⁴⁹ RICHARDS, Jack C. *Communicative Language Learning Today*. 2006 Available in: <http://www.qzabansara.com/Article/NF115831.pdf>

teaching context, the age of the learners, their level, their learning goals, and so on.⁵⁰

There are three elements involved in this approach:

- Communication principle,
- Task-based principle, and,
- Meaningfulness principle.

All these three aspects support that learning is promoted when real communication, meaningful tasks and meaningful language for the students are part of the activities used in language teaching.⁵¹

Communicative Language Teaching highlights real communication through interaction in the target language, introduces authentic texts, enhances the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning, and attempts to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.⁵²

Based on this perception, when applied to language learning, "functional activities" and "social interaction activities" are consequently selected according to how well they engage the learner in meaning and authentic language use.⁵³

Learning to communicate is interpersonal. Attempts to communicate may be encouraged from the very beginning. Teachers can use dialogues around communicative functions and not normally memorized. There is some drilling, but peripherally; any device that helps to communicate and understand is acceptable.

Students do not simply learn the linguistic structures and grammar rules. Rather, they should be actively making meaning through activities such as collaborative problem solving, writing for a purpose, discussing topics of genuine

⁵⁰ RICHARDS, Jack, Op.cit 49

⁵¹ RICHARDS, Jack; RODGERS, T.S. *"Approaches and methods in language Teaching"*. New York: Cambridge. 2001

⁵² RICHARDS, Jack; RODGERS, T.S. Op.cit 51

⁵³ RICHARDS, Jack; RODGERS, T.S. Op.cit 51

interest, reading, and viewing and responding to authentic materials⁵⁴. Students will be more motivated to study a foreign language since they will feel they are learning to do something useful with the language they study.

The communicative approach will lead this project in the proposal of activities for which the main objective is to have students communicate orally. The use of different strategies such as problem solving, authentic material usage, dialogues, etc. will be focused on the students' reality and interests. This is how it will engage and motivate students to participate and be an active part of their learning process by using English for communicative purposes.

2.3.1 Characteristics of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT)

- This approach makes real communication the focus of language learning.
- It provides opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know. Learners are seen as active participants in the construction of knowledge, rather than passive recipients of information provided by the teacher or the textbook. Students are communicators. They are actively engaged in negotiating meaning (in trying to make themselves understood) even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete. They learn to communicate by communicating.
- The teacher has to develop a different view of learners' errors as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence. The teacher is the initiator of the activities, but he/she does not always himself/herself interact with the students. He/she establishes situations that prompt communication between and among the students.⁵⁵
- Language teachers are no longer viewed as the authority of knowledge. They play different roles, such as communication facilitators, independent participants, needs analysts, counsellors, monitors, and

⁵⁴ RICHARDS & RODGERS, 2001, p.161. <<http://www.math.mun.ca/~yliang/clt.htm>

⁵⁵ Larsen-Freeman, Diane, "Techniques And Principles In Language Teaching" Oxford University Press, 1986.

group process managers. All of these in order to create more fascinating experiences for the learners.⁵⁶

- There are efforts to make tasks and language relevant to a target group of learners. There are analyses of genuine, realistic situations. There is an emphasis on the use of authentic, from-life materials, and an attempt to create a secure, nonthreatening atmosphere. All of these help learners learn a language through authentic and meaningful communication, which involves a process of creative construction, to achieve fluency.
- It links the different skills such as speaking, reading, and listening together, since they usually occur so in the real world.
- In terms of classroom activity, it includes group work rather than individualistic approach to learning; the groups should be small. Small numbers of students interacting are favoured in order to maximize the time selected to each student for learning to negotiate meaning.⁵⁷
- By using authentic material, it gives students an opportunity to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used by native speakers.
- It lets students infer or discover grammar rules.⁵⁸

2.3.2. Classroom Activities in Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative practice refers to activities where there is a practice in using language focused on a real communicative context, where real information is exchanged, and where the language used is not totally predictable.

Functional communication activities require students to use their language resources to overcome an information gap or solve a problem. Social interactional activities require the learner to pay attention to the context and the roles of the people involved, and to attend to such things as formal versus informal language.

⁵⁶ Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.167. Available in: <<http://www.math.mun.ca/~yliang/clt.htm>

⁵⁷ Larsen-Freeman, Diane, Op.cit 55

⁵⁸ Larsen-Freeman, Diane, Op.cit 55

2.3.3. Features of Communicative Activities

According to Morrow, activities that are truly communicative have *three features*: information gap, choice, and feedback.⁵⁹

2.3.3.1. Information-Gap. This refers to the fact that in real communication, people normally communicate in order to get information they do not possess. Students complete a task by obtaining missing information.⁶⁰

More authentic communication is likely to occur in the classroom if students go beyond practice of language forms for their own sake and use their linguistic and communicative resources in order to obtain information. In so doing, students will draw available vocabulary, grammar, and communication strategies to complete a task.⁶¹

2.3.3.1.1 Jigsaw activities. These are based on the information-gap principle. Typically, the class is divided into groups and each group has part of the information needed to complete an activity. The class must fit the pieces together to complete the whole. In so doing, they must use their language resources to communicate meaningfully and so take part in meaningful communication practice.⁶²

2.3.3.2. Choice. The speaker has the choice of what he/she will say and how he/she will say it. If students can only say something in one way, the speaker has no choice and the result, therefore, is not communicative.

2.3.3.3. Feedback. A speaker can evaluate whether or not his/her purpose has been achieved based upon the information he/she receives from his/her listener. If the listener has an opportunity to provide the speaker with such feedback, then the exchange is communicative

⁵⁹ MORROW qtd in LARSEN-FREEMAN, Diane. Op.cit 55

⁶⁰ RICHARDS, Jack. “*Communicative Language Teaching Today*”. Cambridge University Press. Available in: <http://www.qzabansara.com/Article/NF115831.pdf>

⁶¹ RICHARDS, Jack. Op.cit 60

⁶² RICHARDS, Jack. Op.cit 60

2.3.4. Authentic Materials

Since the activities carried out in language classroom are intended as a preparation for survival in the real world and since real communication is a defining characteristic of CLT, the relationship between classroom activities and real life should as far as possible mirror the real world, and real world or “authentic” sources should be the basis for classroom learning. Since language is a tool of communication, methods and materials should concentrate on the message and not the medium.⁶³

Some *benefits* of authentic materials include (the following).⁶⁴

- They provide cultural information about the target language.
- They provide exposure to real language.
- They support a more creative approach to teaching.

Widdowson, on the other hand argued that it is not important if classroom materials themselves are derived from authentic texts and other forms of input, as long as the learning processes they facilitated were authentic. *Critics* of the case for authentic materials point out that:

- Created materials can also be motivating for learners.
- Created materials may be superior to authentic materials because they are generally built around a graded syllabus.
- Authentic materials often contain difficult and irrelevant language.⁶⁵

However, since the advent of CLT, textbooks and other teaching materials have taken on a much more “authentic” look; reading passages are designed to look like magazine articles (if they are not in fact adapted from magazine articles) and textbooks are designed to a similar standard of production as real world sources such as popular magazines.

⁶³ RICHARDS, Jack. Op.cit 60

⁶⁴ RICHARDS, Jack. Op.cit 60

⁶⁵ WIDDOWSON qtd in RICHARDS, Jack. “*Communicative Language Teaching Today*”. Cambridge University Press. Available in: <http://www.qzabansara.com/Article/NF115831.pdf>

Whatever students learn in their classrooms, teachers must promote their ability to use the language so they can express their ideas, opinions or requests. This project will propose activities based upon adapted material since they have to be adjusted to the real needs of the students. All of the activities will be focused on improving and developing the speaking skill, which is one of the major difficulties for the third year students at Miguel Merchán High School.

In order to respond to the current needs of students, this project will be based on this approach, since it gives the teacher strategies and methodologies that provide learners with opportunities to use the language by themselves for communicative purposes.

2.3.5. Activities to Develop Communicative Competence

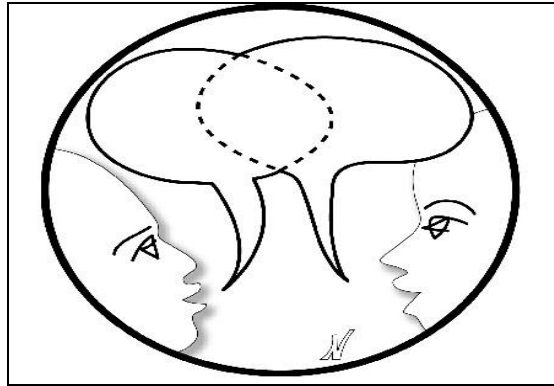
The “Communicative” in CLT refers to the act of communication in which people engage every day. Teaching doesn’t mean just explaining but, it means helping to understand. This is, that teaching should be active and that students should practice much more than just listen to explanations. Let us think about how we learnt to cook, to drive, or make a paper airplane, we didn’t do it by listening to an explanation, we learned it by doing it.⁶⁶

The purpose of real communication is to accomplish a task, such as conveying a telephone message, obtaining information, or expressing an opinion. In real communication, participants must manage uncertainty about what the other person will say.

The following are the types of activities in CLT:

⁶⁶ Turner, Jonathan, “*Communicative Activities For The English Class*”, 2008

2.3.5.1 Jigsaw and Information Gap Activities



Jigsaw activities are more elaborate information gap activities that can be done with several partners. In a jigsaw activity, each partner has one or a few pieces of the "puzzle," and the partners must cooperate to fit all the pieces into a whole picture. The puzzle piece may take one of several forms. It may be one panel from a comic strip or one photo from a set that tells a story. It may be one sentence from a written narrative. It may be a tape recording of a conversation, in which case no two partners hear exactly the same conversation.⁶⁷

With information gap and jigsaw activities, instructors need to be conscious of the language demands they place on their students. If an activity calls for language students who have not already practiced, it's better to brainstorm with them when setting up the activity to review the language they will need, eliciting what they already know and what they are able to produce themselves.⁶⁸

2.3.5.2 Role-Play

Role play refers to activities in which students are assigned roles and put into situations that they may eventually encounter outside the classroom. They improvise a scene or exchange based on given information or clues.

⁶⁷The Essentials of Language Teaching. Developing Speaking Activities. Available in: <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/speaking/developspeak.htm>

⁶⁸ The Essentials of Language Teaching. Developing Speaking Activities. Available in: <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/speaking/developspeak.htm>

As a type of communicative activity, role play is a very valuable method to help learners interact and provide them an opportunity to practice in the target language context. Role-plays give students an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts and in different social roles.⁶⁹

Role play gives students the opportunity to learn to work together, to develop tolerance and empathy as they begin to see the world from different perspectives, and promotes active learning, enriching and reinforcing their more traditional school experiences.

All students are involved in the class in some way, either as listener/watchers (audience) or listener/speakers (performers).⁷⁰

In order to succeed with role plays, the teacher needs to:

- Prepare carefully: Introduce the activity by describing the situation and making sure that all of the students understand it.
- Set a goal or outcome: Be sure the students understand what the product of the role play should be, whether a plan, a schedule, a group opinion, or some other product.
- Use role cards: Give each student a card that describes the person or role to be played. Since our students present a lower-level, the cards can include words or expressions that students might use.
- Brainstorm: Before the role play starts, have students brainstorm as a class to predict what vocabulary, grammar, and idiomatic expressions they might use.
- Keep groups small: Less-confident students will feel more able to participate if they do not have to compete with many voices.
- Give students time to prepare: Let them work individually to outline their ideas and the language they will need.

⁶⁹ LARSEN-FREEMAN, Diane. Op.cit 55

⁷⁰ WOODS, Siabhra. "A VALIDATION OF DRAMA IN THE CLASSROOM". Available in: www.hltmag.co.uk/may01/sartmay013.rtf

- Be present as a resource, not a monitor: Stay in communicative mode to answer students' questions. Do not correct their pronunciation or grammar unless they specifically ask you to.
- Allow students to work at their own levels: Each student has individual language skills, an individual approach to working in groups, and a specific role to play in the activity. Do not expect all students to contribute equally to the discussion, or to use every grammar point you have taught.
- Do linguistic follow-up: After the role play is over, give feedback on grammar or pronunciation problems you have heard.⁷¹

2.3.5.3. Improvisations

The objective here is total spontaneity and improvisation. Students have no time to prepare. Their roles and situations are given to them on the spot and they have to react immediately. This allows their own imagination to construct situations and ensures richer dynamics.

The teacher does not give details or language phrases to use. Improvisations work best if students are given roles and situations and asked to react immediately. Improvisations can be introduced very briefly with a 'warm up'.⁷²

Improvisations encourage students to:

- use whatever language they have available to communicate;
- develop "thinking on your feet" skills and gain confidence in dealing with the unexpected;
- focus on getting the message across rather than on repeating dialogues;
- use their imagination
- imagine themselves using the language in real-life situations;
- be creative with language.⁷³

⁷¹ The Essentials of Language Teaching. Developing Speaking Activities. Available in: <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/speaking/developspeak.htm>

⁷² Teaching English. Improvisations. How do improvisations work?. Available in: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/activities/improvisations>

⁷³ Teaching English. Improvisations. How do improvisations work?. Op.cit 72

2.3.5.4. Problem Solving

It's also called problem-based learning (PBL). In order to learn, students engage complex, challenging problems and collaboratively work toward their resolution. PBL is about students connecting disciplinary knowledge to real-world problems—the motivation to solve a problem becomes the motivation to learn. Learning becomes active in the sense that students discover and work with content that they determine to be necessary to solve the problem.⁷⁴

By working in groups, students identify what they already know, what they need to know, and how and where to access new information that may lead to resolution of the problem. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator of learning who provides appropriate background and support of the process, modeling the process, and monitoring the learning. The tutor must build students confidence to take on the problem, encourage the student, while also stretching their understanding.⁷⁵

2.3.5.5 Language Games

Games are used frequently in the Communicative Approach. The students find them enjoyable, and if they are properly designed, they give students valuable communicative practice.⁷⁶

Shelley Vernon considers that: "learning through games relaxes students, helps bonding between class members and with the teacher and makes the classroom atmosphere much more supportive for learners. Students learn more effectively because the activity grabs their attention and interest so naturally they make more effort to concentrate and retain language. Students get involved in the activity itself and are more inclined therefore to contribute in class, so even the shy students come forward to join in"⁷⁷. It helps all students retain information better.

⁷⁴Problem Based Learning. Available in <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Problem-based_learning

⁷⁵ Problem Based Learning. Op.cit 74

⁷⁶ Richards & Rodgers, Op.cit 56

⁷⁷ Teaching English Games. Available in: <http://www.teachingenglishgames.com/adults.htm>

2.3.5.6. Other Activity Types in Communicative Learning Teaching

Many other activity types have been used in CLT, including the following:⁷⁸

- a. **Task-completion activities:** puzzles, games, map-reading, and other kinds of classroom tasks in which the focus is on using one's language resources to complete a task.
- b. **Information-gathering activities:** student-conducted surveys, interviews, and searches in which students are required to use their linguistic resources to collect information.
- c. **Opinion-sharing activities:** activities in which students compare values, opinions, or beliefs, such as a ranking task in which students list six qualities in order of importance that they might consider in choosing a date or spouse for example.
- d. **Information-transfer activities:** These require learners to take information that is presented in one form, and represent it in a different form. For example, they may read instructions on how to get from A to B, and then draw a map showing the sequence, or they may read information about a subject and then represent it as a graph.

⁷⁸ Other Activity Types in CLT. Available in: <http://ptrirat.wordpress.com/tag/activities-in-clt/>

TECHNIQUES TO DEVELOP THE ENGLISH ORAL SKILL



By Diana Vásquez Paredes

Cuenca, 2012

Chapter III

TECHNIQUES FOR DEVELOPING THE ENGLISH ORAL SKILL

The activities that are presented in this chapter aim at helping teachers to motivate their third year students at Miguel Merchán High School to use their English knowledge in order to communicate, express ideas and to improve their English oral skill as part of their communicative language competence.

These communicative activities are based on the theoretical conceptions that were described in the previous chapter. The general objective of each of the following activities has to do with practicing in a verbal way what students know and have learnt in their English classes based on situations that are commonly encountered in everyday life.

Tips for the Teacher

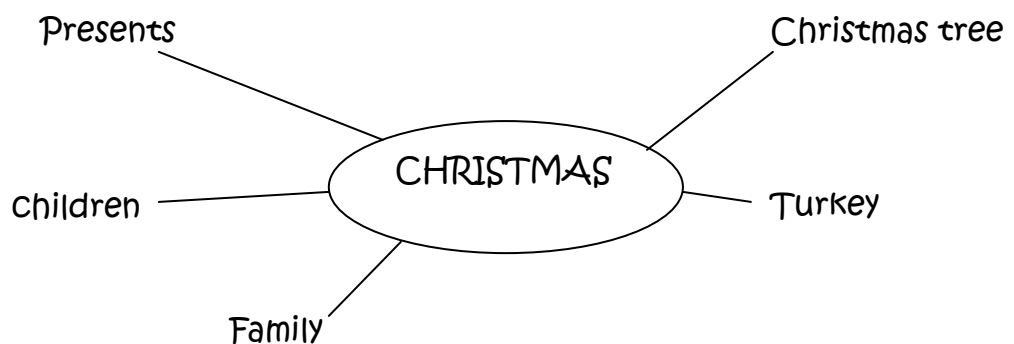
Since the following activities are developed in pair or group work, the teacher can follow some tips so the activities get more effective, amusing, interesting, and challenging for the students:

- The teacher sets rules in the class where Spanish won't be allowed at all. In order to fulfil this objective, the teacher can write on the board the teams numbers and give them 5 points in advance. Each time the teacher hears any Spanish from a team, a point is erased from the board. Another option is that instead of drawing points on the board, the teacher can use pots for each team and put some candies inside them. The candies will represent the points of each team.
- In the opposite case, each time a group participates and finishes the activity with enthusiasm, the teacher delivers a point to the respective teams.
- The teacher defines a President and Secretary of the group in order to take notes or represent the team when exposing the group's ideas. This role will be changed every time a new activity is about to start.

- In order to time the activities, the teacher can put on some modern music liked by the students. This way, the students don't get stressed when developing the activity and they are enjoying the waiting time instead. When the teacher turns off the music the students will know that the time is up and they have to get ready to participate.
- To help students have an authentic experience of understanding and using language, the teacher can prepare them by raising their awareness of the context in which the activity will occur. It is found necessary to review the vocabulary and sentence structures that will be present in the proposed material.
- The teacher can use a bell or a whistle to tell students that the activity is over or some Spanish has been heard.
- The teacher's attitude during the activities is very important since the class will be led by him/her. His/her level of enthusiasm will motivate the students.
- While students are working, the teacher monitors each group or pair in case students need help or are not speaking in the target language.
- The teacher can adapt the activities to needed structures or grammar choices as he/she needs.

3.1. INFORMATION GAP

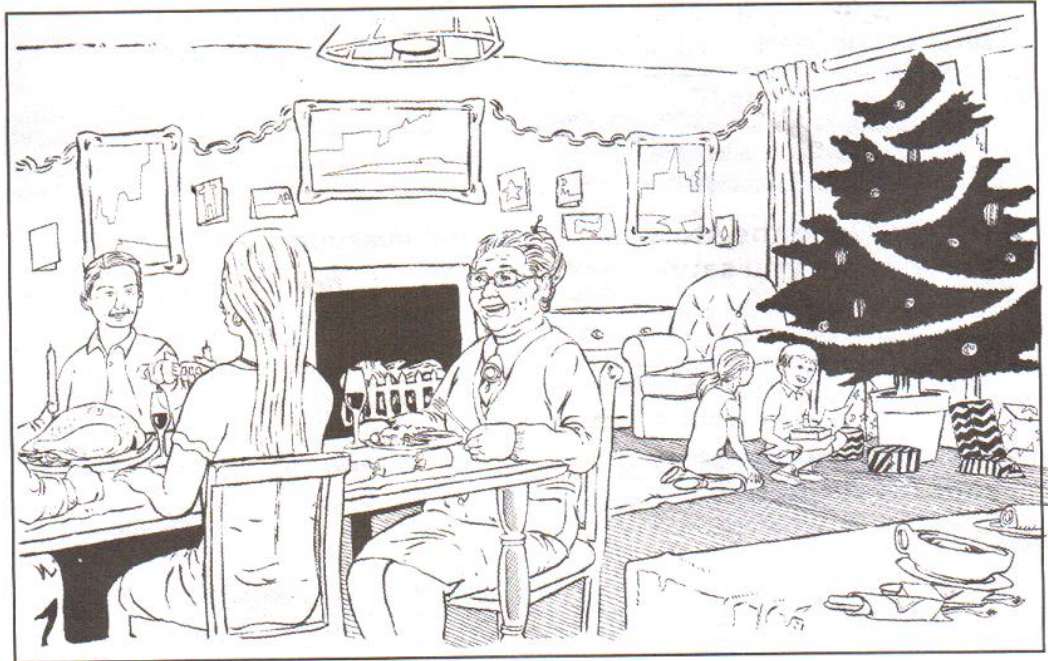
- **Activity 1: SPOT THE DIFFERENCE** ⁷⁹
- **Estimated Time**
20 minutes
- **Warm Up**
Brainstorm: The teacher elicits vocabulary related to Christmas and writes it on the board.



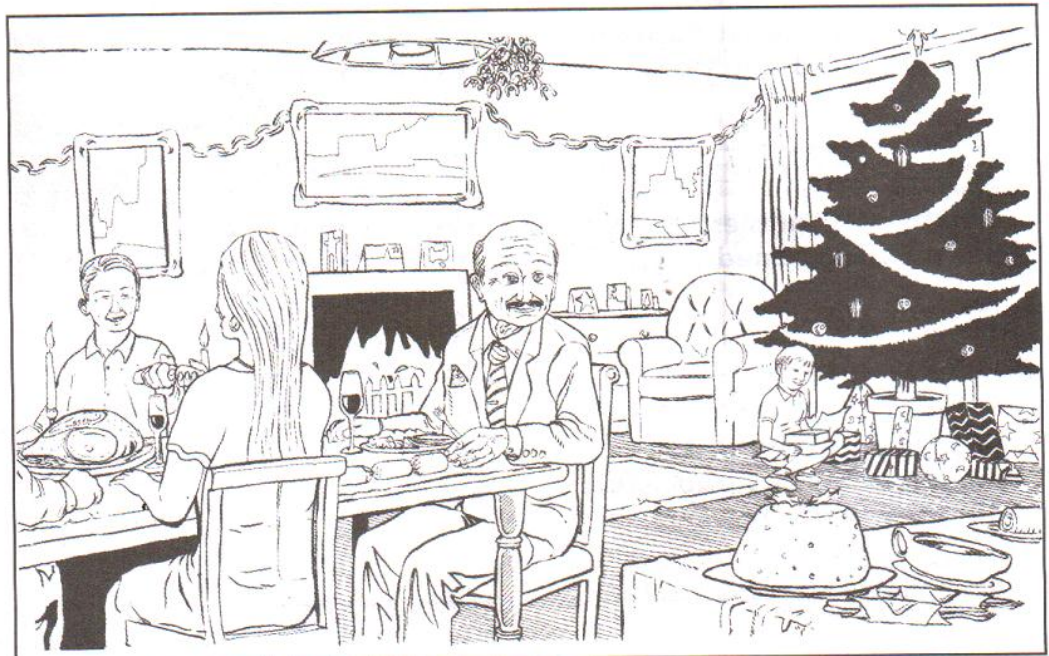
- **Development of the Activity**
- The teacher puts students in pairs, sitting back to back.
- The teacher hands out a picture to each student. Picture 1 to one student, picture 2 to the other.
- Each student describes his/her picture until they manage to find 10 differences. Students ask each other questions about their picture.
- When all the pairs have finished, the teacher asks each pair to describe a difference. The teacher writes the given answers on the board.

⁷⁹ Adapted from: CLT Newsletter. Cambridge Publishing. December 2008

PICTURE 1



PICTURE 2



- **Concluding the Activity**

The teacher concludes the activity by correcting errors and explaining any needed structure that may have been heard during the activity development.

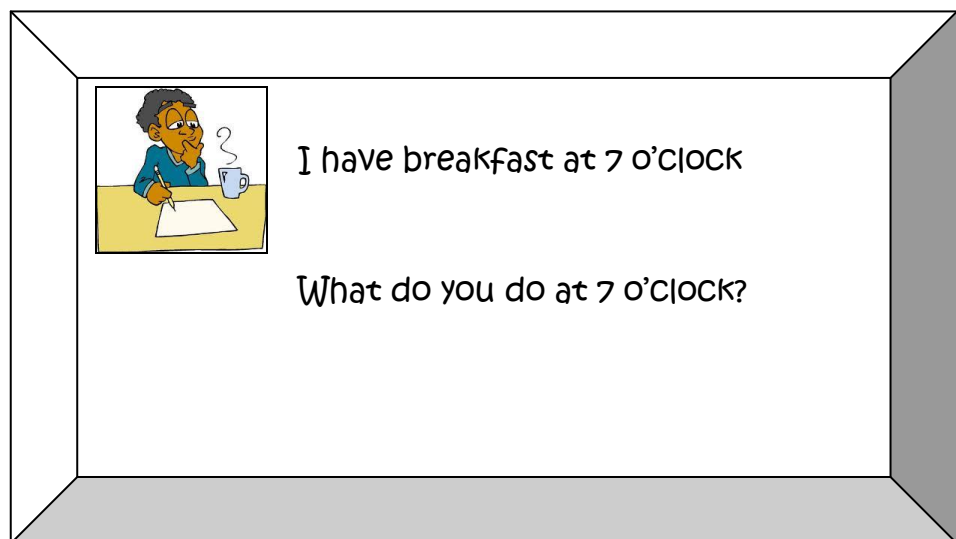
- **Activity 2: TALK ABOUT YOUR ROUTINE⁸⁰**

- **Estimated Time**

20 minutes

- **Warm Up**

- The teacher describes his own daily routine to the students with the help of flashcards.
- He/She places a picture on the board and describes it orally.
- The teacher asks several students what they do at a certain time.



⁸⁰ Adapted from: Lowes, Ricky; Target, Francesca. Helping Students to Learn. Richmond Publishing. 1998

- **Related Vocabulary**

- As the teacher asks several students different questions about their daily routine, the teacher writes on the board some of the useful vocabulary that students will have to use in the oncoming activity:

Get up
Have breakfast
Go to school
Have lunch
Afternoon
Go out

- **Useful Language and Structures**

The teacher elicits from students some of the question structure they will need to know in order to find out the required information.

What time do you.....?
When.....
How.....
Where.....

- **Development of the Activity**

- Students are asked to work in pairs.
- The teacher explains that they have to find out as many details as they can about their partner.
- Students are given a copy to write down what they find about their friend.
- The pairs have 5 minutes to complete the chart with the corresponding information.
- When time is up, the teacher asks students in random about the information they found.

Name:	STUDENT A
Get up?	
Breakfast?	
School?	
Lunch?	
Afternoon?	
Friends?	
Go out?	

Name:	STUDENT B
Get up?	
Breakfast?	
School?	
Lunch?	
Afternoon?	
Friends?	
Go out?	

- **Concluding the Activity**
- The teacher can change the categories, add or delete any of them according to the group.
- As students work in pairs, the teacher monitors the class and notes down any mistake that he considers have to be corrected in front of the whole class.
- After getting information from the groups, the teacher explains any recurrent mistake that students may have made during the activity development.

3.2 JIGSAW ACTIVITIES

Activity 1. MAKE UP A STORY ⁸¹

- **Estimated Time**
30 minutes
- **Warm Up**
The teacher displays pictures of events where students have to describe what they think it happened before, during and after that event. The teacher writes on the board important structures for describing past events.
- **Related Vocabulary**
The teacher writes on the board the following words and asks students to tell what they think the words are about. *Love story*

couple	To fall in love
Honeymoon	To travel
Restaurant	To live
Lawyer	To fight

⁸¹ Adapted from: Elevator Resource Bank. Richmond Publishing. Apolo Editorial. Mexico. 2007

- **Useful Language and Structures**

The teacher discusses with the class the various stages of a relationship and writes them on the board. The teacher explains the meaning of some expressions with *get*.

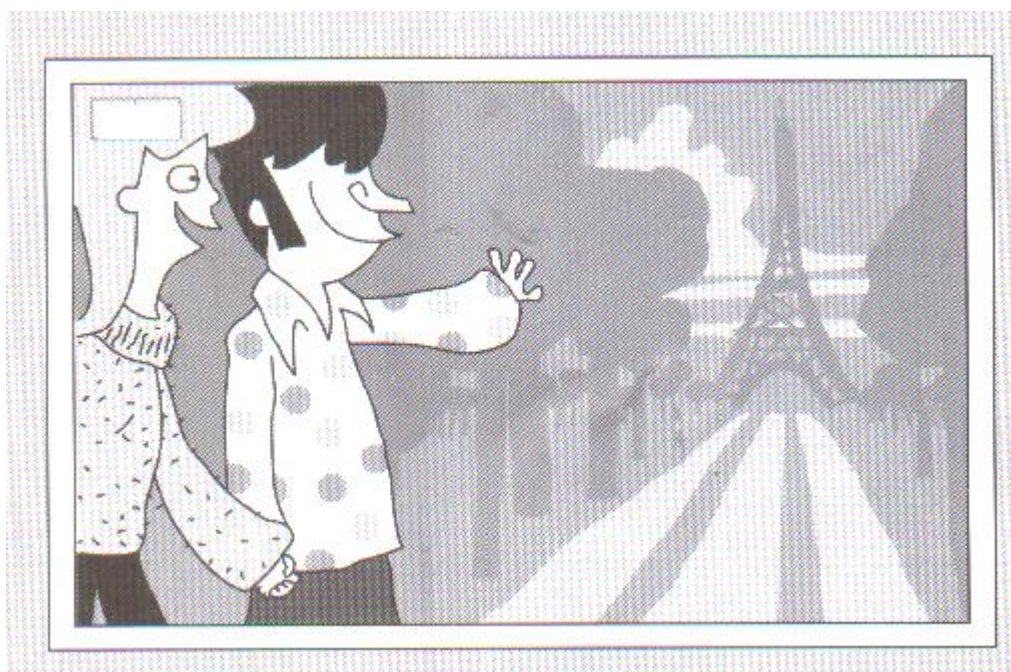
To get to know someone.
To get along with someone.
To get engaged.
To get married.
To get upset.
To get divorced.
To get over someone.

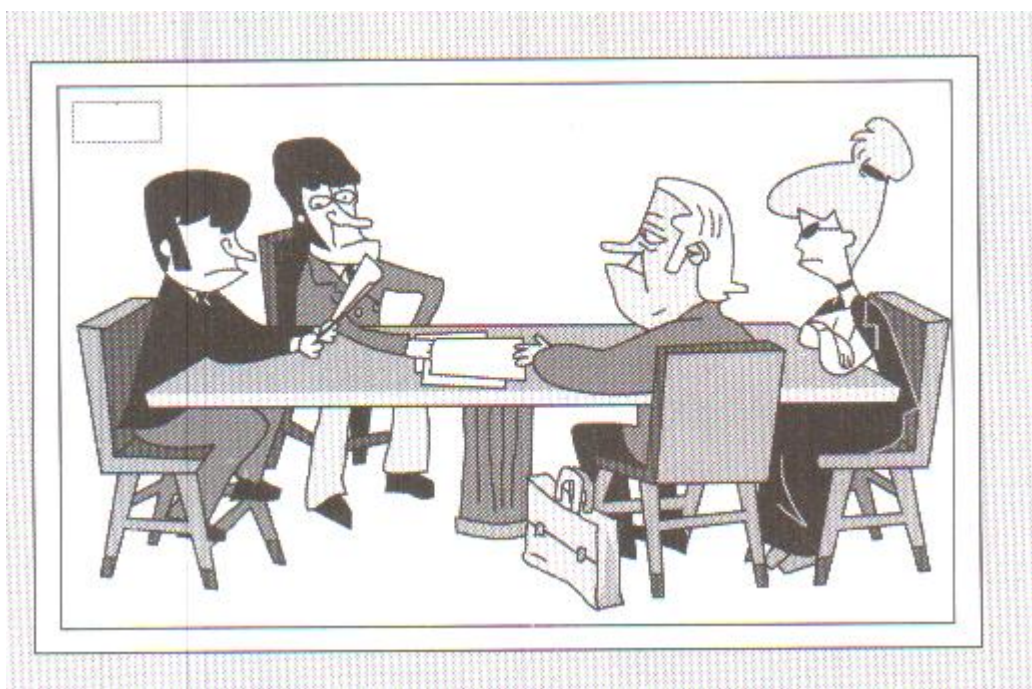
- **Development of the Activity**

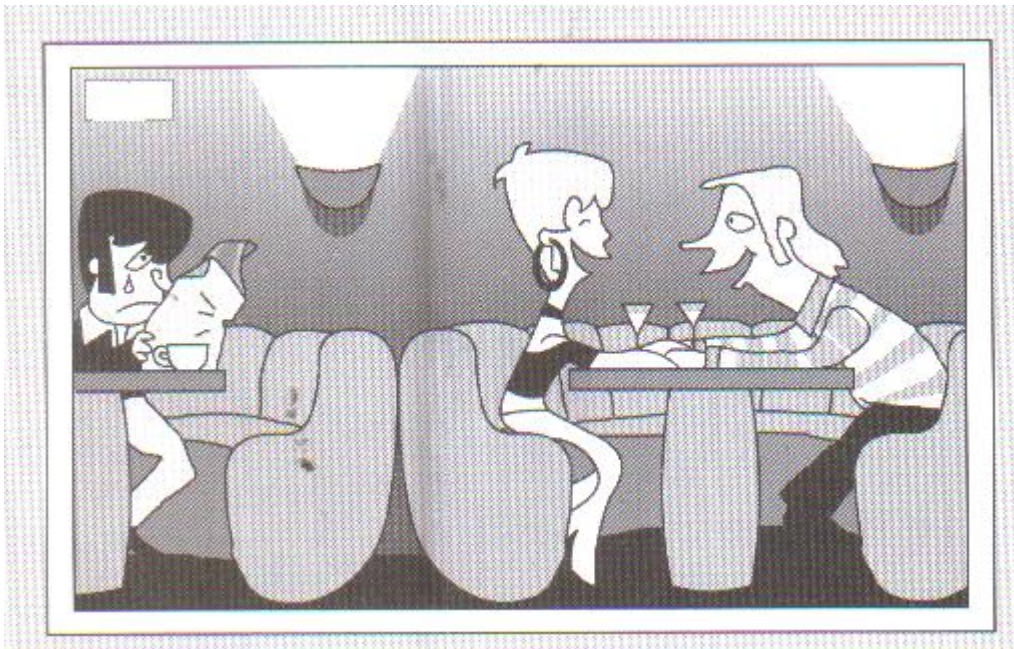
- The teacher prepares a story told by the sequence of 7 pictures and has 4 sets of these pictures.
- The teacher hands in a picture to each student, they are not allowed to show their picture to anybody.
- The teacher gives the instruction to make groups by searching for the same picture they have.
- There are 7 groups of 4 students.
- Each group discusses and decides the story that is behind that picture. Each person of this group will have to say the same story that the group decided.
- The teacher asks the students to number themselves up to 4.
- Students swap groups by searching for the same number they have. Ones go with ones, twos with twos....
- There are now 4 groups of 7 students.
- Now each group has the seven pictures of the whole story. Each member of the group tells the story that was told inside the previous group NOT showing the picture. The students decide the sequence of the story and place themselves according to their decision.

- After they put the story in order, students tell it to the whole class by finally showing the pictures.









- **Concluding the Activity**

There is no correct answer in the story telling and there will be different endings for sure. The teacher won't judge the stories but will reinforce the structures and grammar problems that students may have had during the activity development.

Activity 2. PICTURE DESCRIPTION ⁸²

- **Estimated Time**

20 minutes

- **Warm Up**

The teacher asks students to draw in their notebooks an image that he/she is about to describe:

⁸² Adapted from: Granger, Colin. Play Games with English. Macmillan Heinemann. 2003.



Example:

- It's a bedroom
- There is a bed
- There is a cat **on** the bed
- There is a window **next to** the bed
- The curtains are open
- There is a lamp **above** the bed
- The light is on
- There is an open book **next to** the bed
- The book is **in front of** the door
- The door is open....

The teacher displays then the picture so the students can check what they did by comparing it with the correct answer.

- Related Vocabulary

The teacher explains the following vocabulary and prepositions that will be useful for the students to develop the next activity.

Cupboard	Plate	In
Oven	Drawer	On
Door	Glass	Next to
Salt	Cup	In front of
Sink	Saucepan	Behind

- **Development of the Activity**

The teacher divides the class in groups of 5 students.

- Each group decides who is going to draw.
- Each team receives a picture and a blank paper. Students will have 7 minutes to describe the picture as accurate as possible so their teammate draws it down.
- The teacher collects the drawings of all the teams and they all decide which is the closest to the picture.



- **Concluding the Activity**

As the teams describe the picture, the teacher monitors and checks if students are using the target language.

- The teacher corrects and reinforces any structure that may have appeared during the activity.

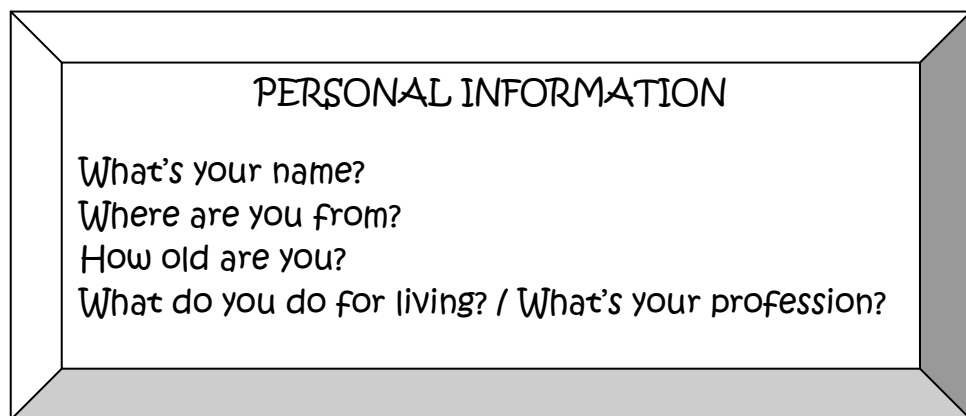
Activity 3: FIND OUT INFORMATION ⁸³

- **Estimated Time**

25 minutes

- **Warm Up**

- The teacher writes on the board **Personal Information** and displays a picture of a person to the class. He/She explains that students need to find out some information about this person. The teacher elicits from students the needed questions in order to get to know the person's name, age, occupation, and any other details that students may want to know.
- The teacher writes the questions on the board.



- **Development of the Activity**

- The class is divided in groups of six students.
- The teacher gives each student in the group a card. He/She tells the students that they are the person on the card, and that they must not show their card to the other students.
- Students must ask and answer questions to find out information about the other members of the group.
- Students write down sentences about the other members of their group.

⁸³ Adapted from: Thacker, Claire; Ackroyd, Sarah. English in Mind – Teacher's Resource Pack 1. Cambridge University Press. UK. 2004.

- When the groups have finished collecting their group's information, the teacher asks questions about any of the students and his/her classmates will give the asked information.

a.



b.



c.



d.



e.



f.



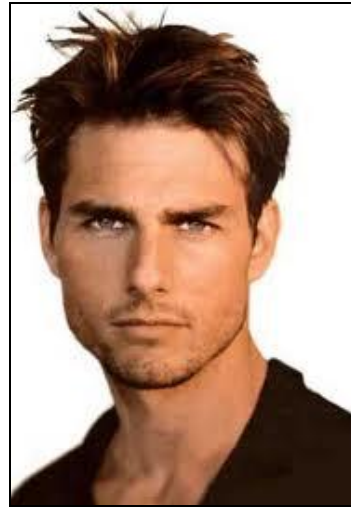
- **Concluding the Activity**
- During the activity, the teacher monitors and checks if students are forming the questions and answers correctly. Any repeated errors will be gone through as a class after the activity.

3.3. ROLE PLAY

Activity 1: UNBELIEVABLE STORY ⁸⁴

- **Estimated Time**
30 minutes
- **Warm Up**
The teacher divides the board in two parts and writes the names of three famous couples by separating men and women. The teacher asks the students if they know who they are and what they know about them. As they do this, the teacher writes down useful words and structures that students express or try to say. The teacher displays the pictures of the famous people and asks three students to come up to the front and match the couples:

⁸⁴Adapted from: Vernon Shelley Ann <http://www.teachingenglishgames.com>.



Penelope Cruz	Mark Anthony
Jennifer Lopez	Brad Pitt
Jennifer Aniston	Tom Cruise

- **Related Vocabulary**

The teacher tells the students the story that is about to happen with one of the couples (which correspond to the role play). As he/she does this, he/she writes on the board several words that students will find in their role cards and explain to them:

To drive	Taxi driver
To run away	Paparazzi
To break up	Famous people
To get divorced	Airport
To get back together	
To kiss	

- **Useful Language and Structures**

The teacher elicits some expressions that the students may want to say in order to fulfill their role.

Taxi driver	Driver's friends
Guess what?	I don't believe you!
You are not going to believe me!	It's impossible!
I took them to the airport	They are divorced!
They kissed!	You are lying!

- **Development of the Activity**

- The teacher divides the class in groups of three: a taxi driver and two friends. He gives a role card to each student.

- Students have 10 minutes to get ideas and to prepare what they are about to say to their classmate.
- The students present their performance in front of the class.
- The teacher provides feedback between role-plays so students can try to incorporate this advice when they do the role-play with their next partner.

Role 1: Taxi driver



You were driving your taxi and **Mark Anthony** and **Jennifer Lopez** were running away from paparazzi when they stopped you. You took them to the airport. In the taxi, they kissed and said love words.

Tell your friend about what happened. Remember that **Mark** and **Jennifer** got divorced some time ago.

Role 2: Driver's friend



Your friend is always inventing stories about famous people. Tell your friend that you don't believe his stories. Interrupt his story about meeting **Mark Anthony** and **Jennifer Lopez** to ask questions and make comments.

- Concluding the role play

After the role play is over, the teacher gives feedback on grammar or pronunciation problems that may have occurred during the activity.

- **Activity 2: GET THE INGREDIENTS!** ⁸⁵
- **Estimated Time**
20 minutes
- **Warm Up**
- The teacher brings in some pictures or realia of some food items and elicits from the students the vocabulary.
- **Related Vocabulary**
- The teacher focuses on describing with the students the amounts taking into account whether they are countable or uncountable nouns.

Flour	Eggs
Rice	Carrots
Sugar	Tomatoes
Butter	Onions
Milk	

- **Useful Language and Structures**
- When students have described all the pictures, the teacher asks which of them are needed to make a cake. The teacher asks a person if he/she's got some of the required ingredients.

Have you got any....?	No, sorry...
Do you have....?	Yes, here you have!
How much....?	
How many.....?	

⁸⁵ Adapted from: Ackroyd, Sarah; McKeegan, David. English in Mind – Teacher's Resource Pack Starter. Cambridge University Press. 2004.

- **Development of the Activity**
- The students are asked to work in pairs.
- The teacher hands in a role to each student of the pair.
- Students are told that they are going to make a recipe but they don't have the required ingredients so they have to go to their neighbor's house to ask for help.
- Each student has to cook a different recipe, and there will be objects that both students will need so they have to deal with the other person.
- The teacher asks some pairs to demonstrate the dialogues to the rest of the class.

Student A: Neighbor 1

You are cooking a meal for your family. You need some ingredients but the supermarket is closed. You are desperate so you decide to go to your neighbor's house and ask for the ingredients you need.



Ingredients for a Meat Lasagna

1kg of pasta
 Three tomatoes
 1kg of meat
 5 eggs
 One chicken
 1 kg of cheese
 A cup of flour

You have these ingredients:





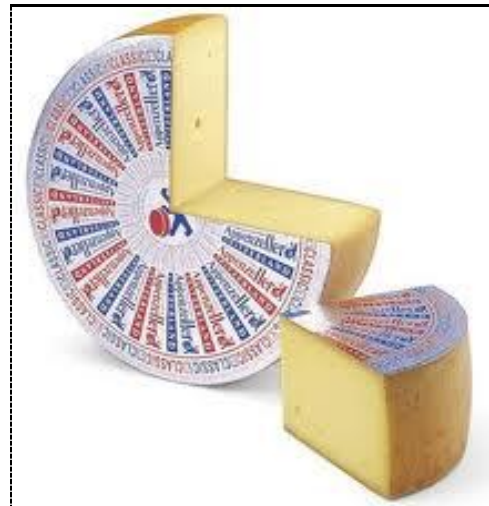
Student B: Neighbor 2

You are making a cake for your sister. You need some ingredients but the supermarket is closed. Your neighbor comes to your house and asks for some ingredients. You ask your friend for the components that you need for making the cake.

Ingredients for a Chocolate Cake

- 1kg of chocolate
- 5 eggs
- 1 kg of flour
- 3 cups of milk
- 2 spoons of butter
- 2 cups of sugar
- 1 condensed milk

You have these ingredients:



- **Concluding the Activity**
- As the pairs are working, the teacher monitors his students and at the end of the class, he corrects or reinforces any structures that were not well used by the students during the activity development.

3.4. IMPROVISATION

Activity 1: TELLING A STORY⁸⁶

- **Estimated Time**
30 minutes
- **Warm Up**
The teacher displays pictures or flashcards of different actions and asks students to describe them. The teacher asks students to describe the pictures in past tense so they practice this structure before the activity starts.



- **Useful Language and Structures**
The teacher tells the students that they are going to tell a story in sequence with a group of classmates by using some things that the teacher will give to each of them.

⁸⁶ Adapted from: Vernon Shelley Ann <http://www.teachingenglishgames.com>.

Once upon a time.....

Then.....

After that.....

Next.....

Finally....

- **Development of the Activity**

- The teacher divides the class in groups of five.
- The teacher gives each group a different set of things. Each person of the group has a piece of realia, for example: a pair of glasses, a cell phone, a menu, a hat, and a musical instrument.
- The groups come to the front of the class and each person incorporates and describes the function of his/her item in the story that is told by the group.
- The groups have no time to prepare their story. The teacher motivates the students to try and make a funny story as they show their objects.

Examples of realia that the teacher may use are:



- **Concluding the Activity**

After the groups have presented their story, the teacher asks the students to decide which group made the funniest and most imaginative story. The teacher can give the winner group a prize such as a chocolate to each member of the group. He/She points out repeated mistakes that may have appeared during the activity

Activity 2. VIDEO INTERPRETATION ⁸⁷

- **Estimated Time**

40 minutes

- **Warm Up**

The teacher shows pictures of five TV programs. He asks the class to call out the names of these programs and initiates a conversation by asking for the common characteristic of those programs (e.g.Ecuadorian). Students are asked to describe some things of each program, such as their schedule, the channel that presents them, etc. Students discuss and tell which program they prefer and why.

1.



2.



⁸⁷ Adapted from: Teaching Skills. Shane English Schools. London. UK. 2001.

3.



4.



5.



- **Development of the Activity**
- The teacher presents to the class a video of selected scenes with sound off of one of the before mentioned programs:



[El Combo Amarillo - Ecuavisa \[www.baiaryoutube.com\].mp4](http://www.baiaryoutube.com)

- The teacher asks the class for ideas of what they think is happening in the video and writes on the board some of the expressions and situations the students propose.
- The class is divided in groups of three.
- Students are assigned roles and act out what they think was taking place in the video.
- **Concluding the Activity**
- The teacher motivates the class by asking for applause to every group and then, they decide which of them had the most imaginative ideas and best performance for the video interpretation. The teacher corrects mistakes that may have been repeated during the activity.

Activity 3: CARTOON STORY⁸⁸

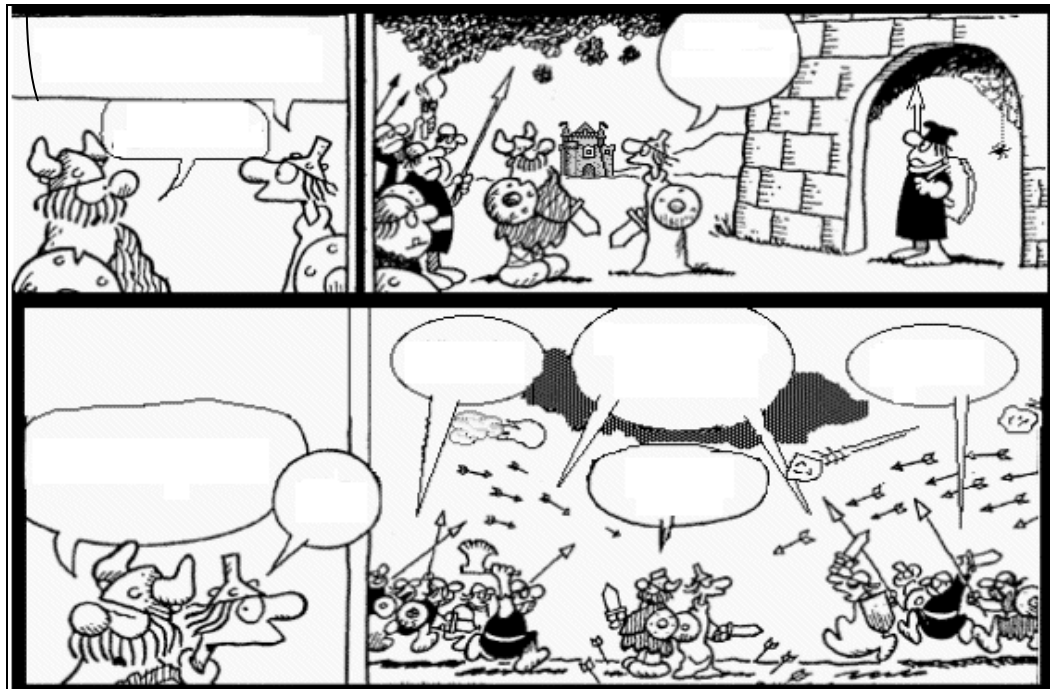
- **Estimated Time**
20 minutes
- **Warm Up**
- Brainstorm: the teacher asks the students to say names of different cartoons and writes the answers on the board.
- The teacher displays pictures of a cartoon story in disorder and asks the students to decide the order of it and what they think the characters are saying.
- The teacher writes the answers on the board.

⁸⁸Adapted from: Vernon Shelley Ann <http://www.teachingenglishgames.com>.



- **Development of the Activity**
- The class is divided in pairs.
- The students receive a copy of a cartoon where the pictures are in disorder.
- The students decide the order of the story and then they discuss what they think the characters are saying in the cartoon. Students write down the answers and decide which of them is going to tell the story to the class.
- The teacher asks a student of the group to come to the front and show the class his group's story.

Option 1



Option 2



- **Concluding the activity**

The teacher motivates the students by asking for applauses and giving every group a prize for their participation.

- The students are reinforced by their teacher on specific aspects that are considered required after the activity is over.

- **Activity 4: REAL PHOTOS DESCRIPTION⁸⁹**

- **Estimated Time**

15 minutes

- **Warm Up**

- The teacher shows the class a special photograph of him/her (trying it to be with company and in a special place interesting enough to call the students' attention). The teacher elicits questions from the students in order to describe the picture to the class: place, people, feelings of that moment, etc.



⁸⁹Adapted from: Holderness, Jackie; Hughes, Annie. 100 + Ideas for Children. Macmillan Heinemann. Athanaeum Press. 2004.

- **Development of the Activity**

- This activity requires that the teacher takes the class to the computer room where students have internet access and more specifically to the web page: Facebook.
- The teacher asks students to work in pairs. Students choose their partner since it's easier for them to show their pictures to whom they consider they can trust and have more confidence in telling the story that is behind the pictures.
- Each group works in a computer and one student at the time displays his/her favorite pictures that are posted in his/her Facebook web page.
- The person who is showing the pictures is in charge of the explanation of the pictures, trying to tell his friend where the picture takes place, what he/she was doing, how he/she was feeling at that moment, who he/she is with, etc.
- The other person gives opinions and asks for more questions to his/her classmate.
- Once this student finishes, the other student has access to his/her pictures and shows them to his/her classmate.



- **Concluding the Activity**

- As the activity is being performed, the teacher monitors the class and confirms that students are using the target language.
- At the end of the class, the teacher reinforces any structures which students may have had problems with in order to communicate to their group.

Activity 5: 30 SECONDS ⁹⁰

- **Estimated Time**

25 minutes

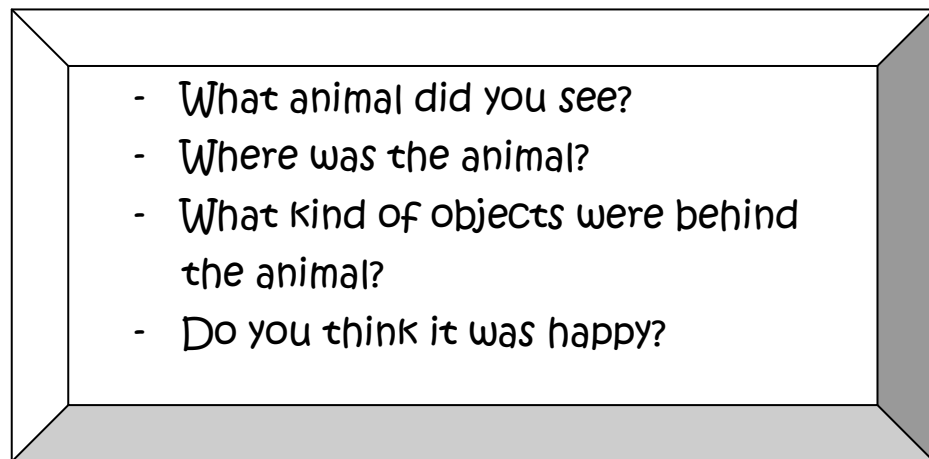
- **Warm Up**

The teacher shows a picture to the class and asks the students to pay attention to every detail they get to see.

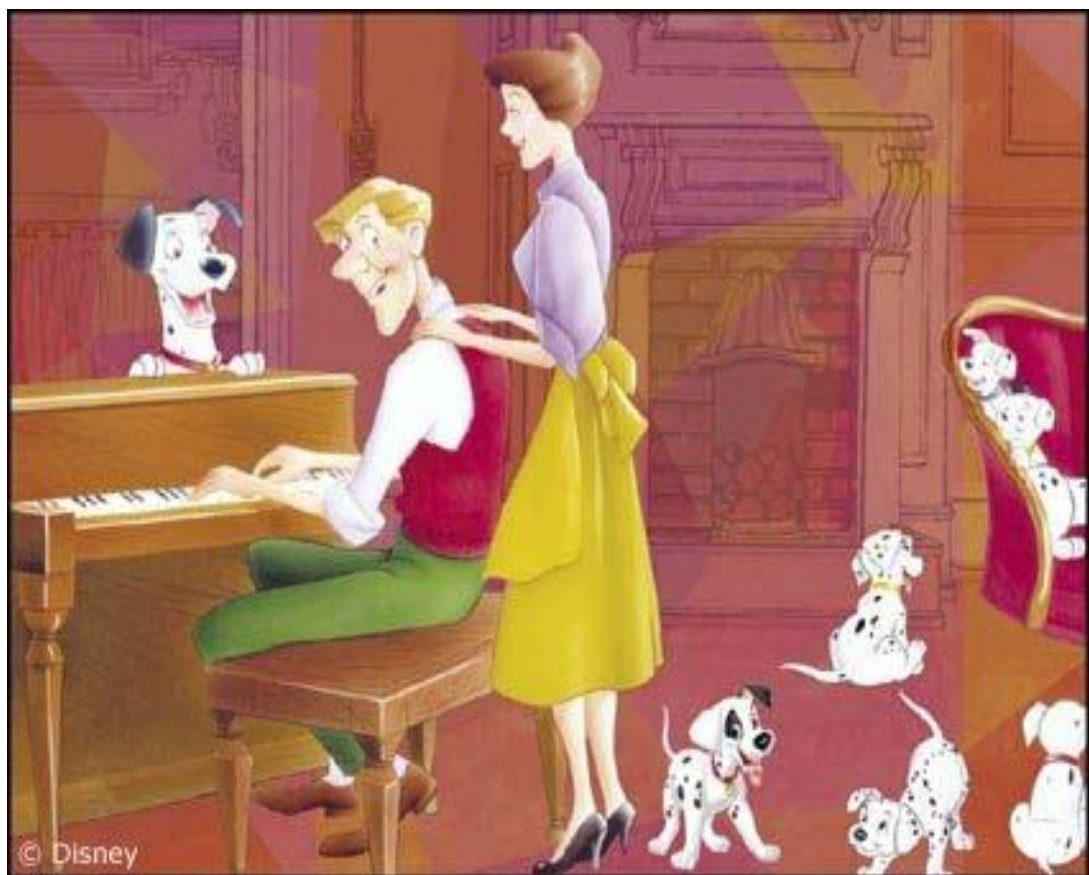


⁹⁰ Adapted for: Granger, Colin. Play Games with English. Macmillan Heinemann. 2003.

The teacher hides the picture and asks questions to the class, trying to make a conversation with the students as he/she asks for details. Example:



- **Development of the Activity**
- The class is divided in pairs.
- The teacher explains that he/she is going to display a picture for 30 seconds and the class has to pay attention to its details as much as they can. In this case, the use of an in focus or the computer lab is recommended so the teacher assures that every student gets to see the picture's details.
- The teacher could put some music on as the students look at the picture.
- The picture is hidden and then the teacher asks the pairs to start asking and answering questions about the picture in turns. They should try to emphasize on little details of the picture.
- The teacher then stops the activity and asks students to move and swap pairs.
- Another picture is displayed. This is until three pictures have been shown to the class.





- **Concluding the Activity**
- The teacher monitors the development of the activity and takes notes of any mistakes that might have been heard.
- The teacher makes any further explanation of the structures that were used and had recurrent mistakes during the activity.

3.5. PROBLEM SOLVING

Activity 1: PICTURE EXPERT (Opinion-sharing) ⁹¹

- **Estimated Time**
25 minutes

⁹¹ Adapted from: Teaching Skills. Shane English Schools. London. 2001.

- **Warm Up**

The teacher displays two pictures of different situations and asks for students to give opinions of what they think is happening and what happened before. The teacher also asks for feelings students think the characters of the picture have. The teacher writes on the board some of the opinions.



- **Development of the Activity**
- The teacher explains his/her students that they will be part of a *photography contest* so they will have to decide which picture is the best.
- The students are divided in groups of 5 people.
- Each group decides and backs up their decision on which picture is the best for them and why. They can compare and contrast the pictures.
- The teacher asks a person from each team to describe the group's favorite picture and the reasons for this decision.
- Students will have to try and convince the other groups that their decision is the best.

Picture A



Picture B



Picture C



Picture D



- **Concluding the Activity**

The teacher writes on the board any structures and grammar errors that may have occurred during the activity and explains the students the correct ones.

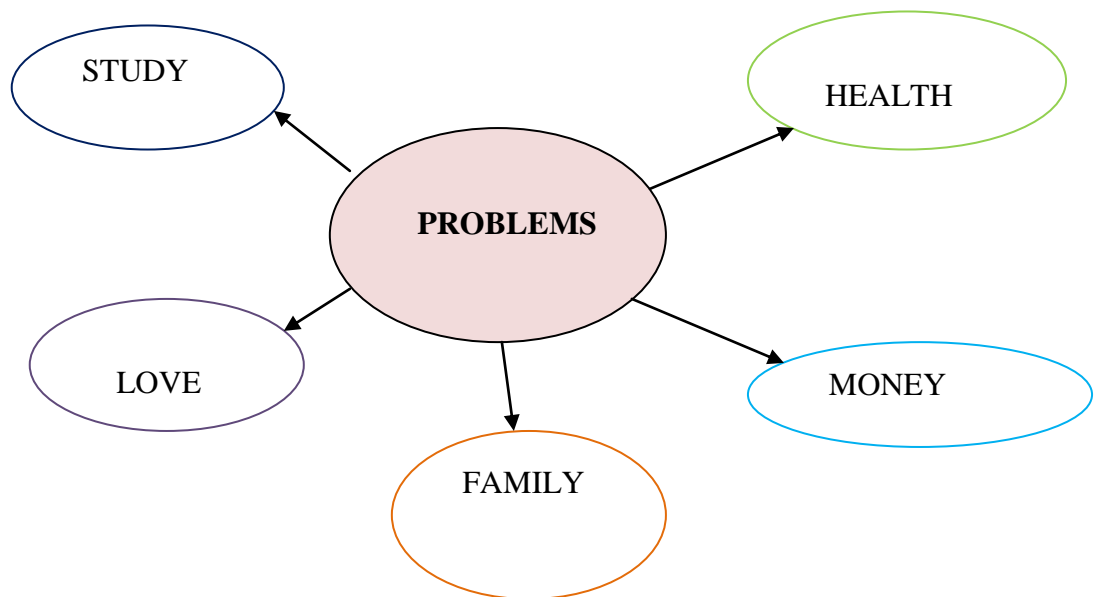
Activity 2. GIVING SUGGESTIONS (Opinion-sharing) ⁹²

- **Estimated Time**

25 minutes

- **Warm Up**

Brainstorm: The teacher writes on the board the word PROBLEMS and asks students to tell him/her some types of problems they can think of. For example:



- **Related Vocabulary**

⁹² **Source:** Elevator Resource Bank 3. Richmond Publishing. Apolo Editorial. Mexico. 2007.

As the teacher writes down the answers to the brainstorm, he/she asks students for some more details of the types of problems and writes on the board some words that they will find in this activity.

Boyfriend	To be in love
Girlfriend	To live
Best friend	To wait
	To tell

- **Useful Language and Structures**

He / She should...
He / She shouldn't...
Why doesn't he / she ..?

- **Development of the Activity**
- Students are divided in groups of 3.
- The teacher gives each group one problem for them to discuss and give advice. Some groups will have the same problem.
- Students have 10 minutes to put their ideas in order.
- The teacher becomes the problem person and reads out loud one of the problems. The groups that analyzed it give their advice.
- The teacher tries to maintain a conversation with the groups by agreeing or disagreeing with their suggestions.
- Other groups may participate in the conversations as well.

My best friend is 16 and she is in love with a man who is 52 years old. She has changed a lot. I don't know what to do.



I love my girlfriend but my family and I are going to live in Quito. I think it's very difficult to maintain a distance relationship. My girlfriend says she will wait for me. What should I do?



I saw my best friend's girlfriend kissing another man in a restaurant. Should I tell my friend?



- **Concluding the Activity**

The teacher reinforces structures that students may have had during the activity development.

Activity 3: PICTURE INTERPRETATION ⁹³

- **Estimated Time**

20 minutes

- **Warm Up**

- In this case, it's recommended that the class is taken to the Computer lab so all the students get to see the pictures. The teacher displays a picture to the

⁹³ Adapted from: Harmer, Jeremy. The Practice of English Language Teaching. Pearson Education Limited. 2001.

class and asks questions in order to start a conversation of the conclusions that students have of the picture.

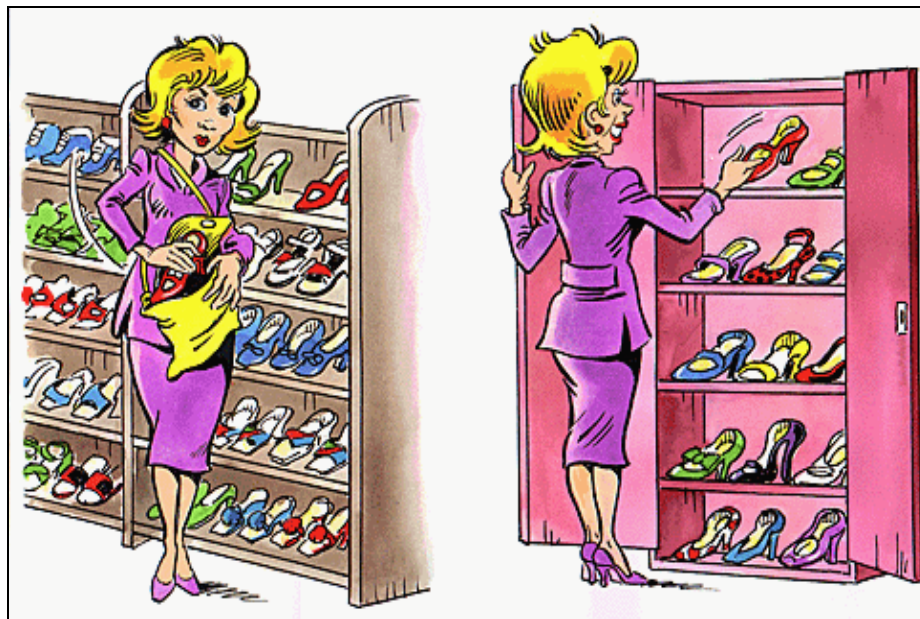
- Students are asked for details of what might have happened before the picture was taken and what will happen to the people of the picture.
- Students tell their opinions to the class.



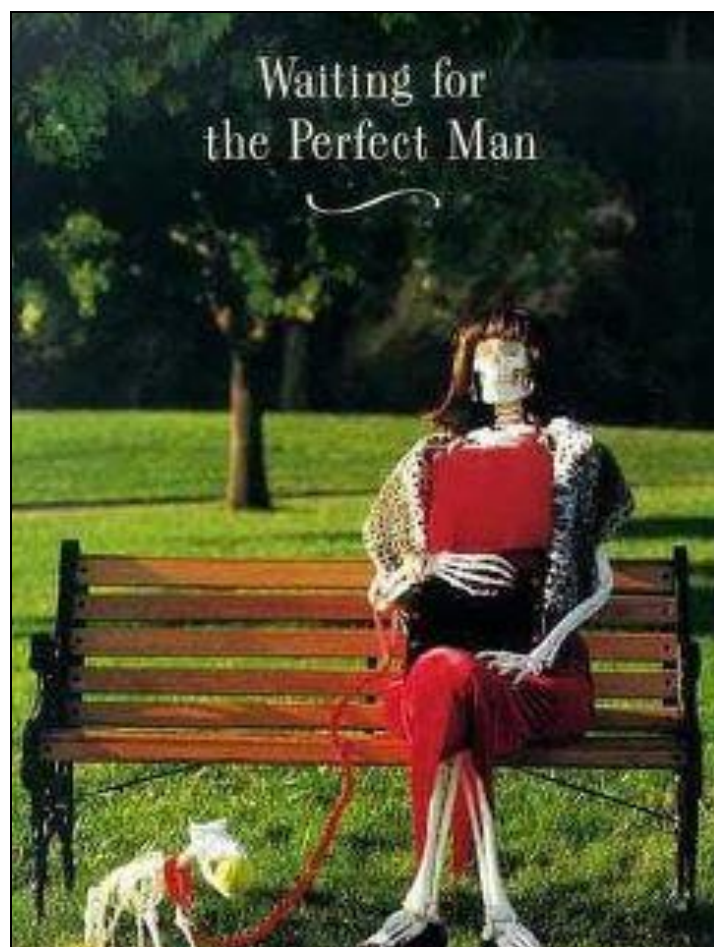
- **Development of the Activity**

- The class is divided in groups of five students. The teacher assigns the roles of secretary and president of the group to two students.
- The teacher displays two pictures at a time and leaves them in the front, so the students discuss about the pictures when looking at them.
- The teacher gives the class five minutes to discuss about the pictures and the story they think is behind them.
- Each group takes notes about their conclusions.
- The teacher then, displays another picture with the same procedure.
- One person of the group exposes to the class their conclusions

PICTURE A



PICTURE B



- **Concluding the Activity**

There is not correct or wrong answer in any of the students' picture interpretation. The teacher focuses on helping students to express themselves and in correcting any recurrent mistakes that may have been heard during the activity development.

3.6. LANGUAGE GAMES

Activity 1. FIND SOMEONE WHO....⁹⁴

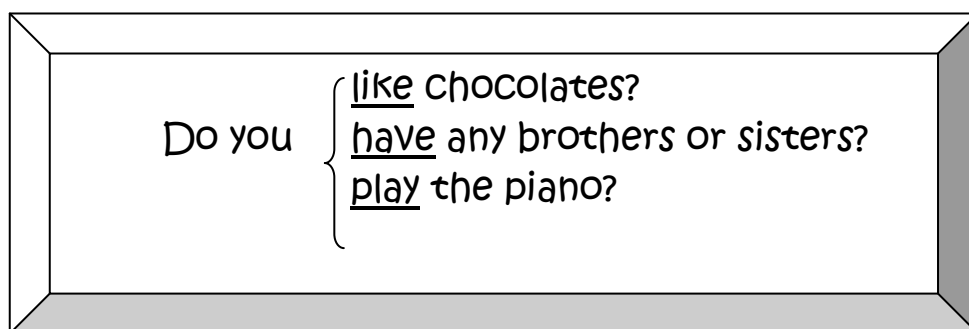
- **Estimated Time**

20 minutes

- **Warm Up**

Toss a ball: The teacher models a question as he tosses a soft ball to any of the students. The student answers the question and asks another thing as he passes the ball to a classmate. This person answers the question and so on.

The teacher writes on the board examples of the questions that came out from the game.



⁹⁴ Adapted from: Granger Colin. Play Games with English. Macmillan Heinemann. 2003.

- **Development of the Activity**
- The teacher pairs up the students.
- Each pair gets two sets of questions. Each question is explained to the class.
- The teacher explains that students must walk around and ask each other the questions in order to find someone in the class who does what the questionnaire says.
- The first pair to complete both questionnaires is the winner.
- The winner pair will have to tell the rest of the class what they found out about the other students in the class.

Person A

Find someone who...	Name
.... walks to school.	
....doesn't like playing football.	
.... has to cook for the family.	
....has a party every weekend.	
....likes Math.	
....plays the guitar.	

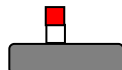
Person B

Find someone who...	Name
....loves to read books.	
....has two dogs.	
....goes to church every Sunday.	
.... likes horror movies.	
....listens to music at night.	
....doesn't like pizza.	

- **Concluding the Activity**

- As students are walking around the class, the teacher monitors and checks students are using the target language and notes down any repeated errors.
- The teacher goes through important errors and reinforces correct structures.

Activity 2: SUBMARINE ⁹⁵



- **Estimated Time**

15 minutes

- **Warm Up**

The teacher draws the following chart on the board:

	Eat	Swim	Play
Alicia		√	
Erick	√		
The dogs			√

The teacher asks the class: Was Alicia *eating*? The class answers by tracking the coordinates in the chart. The teacher asks some more questions in order to practice the target structure with the students.

- **Development of the Activity**

- The teacher pairs up the students and gives each student a chart for the game.
- Students have to draw 7 submarines in their paper not letting the other person to look at it. One submarine goes in one square of the chart.
- **In turns** students use the coordinates to make a **complete** sentence or a question (this depends on the teacher's decision). For example:

⁹⁵ Adapted from: CLT Newsletter. Cambridge Publishing. December 2008.

Sentence: Kevin was playing soccer.

Question: Was Kevin playing soccer?

- The other student will track the coordinates in his paper (Kevin and play) and checks if there is a submarine in that square or not. If there is a boat, the student has to destroy his submarine by answering “yes, *he was*”. If there is no boat, the student answers “no, *he wasn’t*”.
- Students continue playing until one of them sinks all of his/her opponent's submarines.
- Example:

Student A

	play	watch	read	listen	drink	study
Kevin						
Sara and Peter						
Jenny						
You						

Student B

	play	watch	read	listen	drink	study
Kevin						
Sara and Peter						
Jenny						
You						

- **Concluding the Activity**
- It's important to point out that this game can be adapted to whatever grammar and form (affirmative, negative, question) the teacher would like to practice.
- The characters and actions of the charts can also be adapted and changed into drawings or well known people according to the students' interests.

Activity 3: TIC TAC TOE ⁹⁶

- **Estimated Time**

15 minutes

- **Warm Up**

The teacher displays flashcards to students. The teacher elicits the grammar structure that he wants to practice with the class. Students describe what they see on the pictures.

- **Development of the Activity**
- The teacher divides the class in two groups: Circles (O) and Crosses (X)
- The teacher draws a 3x3 table of squares on the board
- Each square has a number so the teacher will know where the students want to place their symbol.
- Students choose a square in order to have three of his team's symbols in a row.
- In order to get the symbol on the table, a student will have to describe correctly what the teacher is showing to him. In case he doesn't succeed, the team doesn't get the symbol on the table and it will be the other team's turn.
- The players take turns describing pictures in order to put their symbol on the table.
- The first group to have 3 of their symbols in a row, whether it is horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, is the winner.

⁹⁶ Holderness, Jackie; Hughes, Annie. 100+ Ideas for Children. Athenaeum Press. 2004.

a.

1	9	3
7	2	8
4	5	6

b.

X	9	3
○	X	○
4	5	6

c.



d.



- He is riding a bike.

- **Concluding the Activity**
- This game can be adapted to whatever grammar and form (affirmative, negative, question) the teacher would like to practice.
- The teacher can also change the numbers and make them more difficult for the students, this way two areas are practiced by the students.
- There is a self-evaluation by the student when they don't get to symbol for their team. This is when they analyze the mistake they made and try not to make it again.
- The teacher corrects any mistakes and reinforces the target structure in each part of the game.

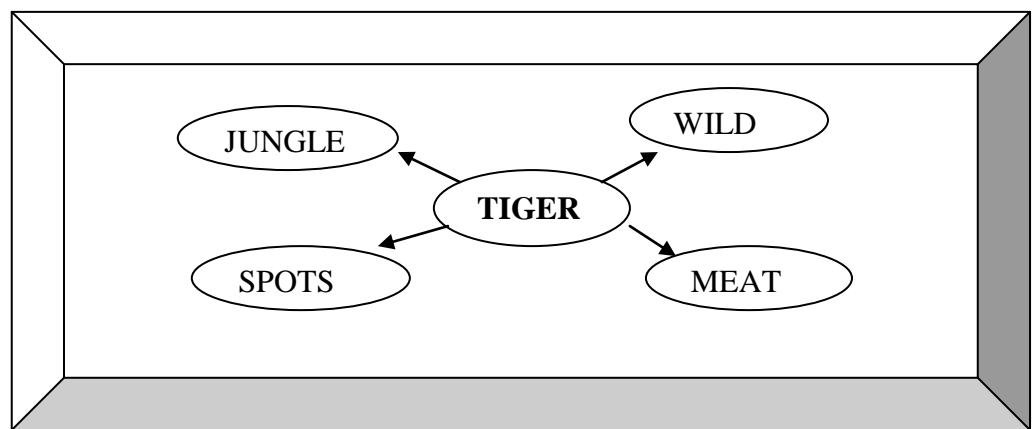
Activity 4: TABOO ⁹⁷

- **Estimated Time**

20 minutes

- **Warm Up**

- The teacher writes a word on the board and asks the class to give him any thing that they relate to that word. For example:



- The teacher uses these words to describe “TIGER”.
- Now, the teacher explains that he is going to describe the word “TIGER” but he *cannot* use any of those words:
“It’s a beautiful animal. It kills other animals when it’s hungry. It lives far away from here.....”
- The teacher explains that this is what students are about to do and the name of the game is Taboo because they will not be allowed to use the given words.
- **Development of the Activity**
- The teacher divides the class in three teams.
- The teacher has a pile of cards which one student per team is going to come to the front and describe.

⁹⁷ Vernon Shelley Ann <http://www.teachingenglishgames.com>.

- The students have 1 minute to describe the word and to guess the word. In case the team doesn't figure out the word, the teacher gives the opportunity to the other teams to call out an answer.
- The teacher writes on the board the points for each team.
- The team with more points is the winner.

MALL
Stores
Shopping
Saturday

MUSIC
Sound
Listen
radio

EAR
Listen
Earrings
Hear

SWEATER
Warm
Wool
Cloth

DOCTOR
Profession
Stethoscope
People

SCHOOL
Teacher
Student
Study

DOG
Faithful
Happy
House

TV
Program
House
Rectangle

PIZZA
Delicious
Salami
Restaurant

SOCCER
Sport
Players
Stadium

COMPUTER
Internet
Mouse
Write

PIANO
Instrument
Keyboard
Music

EGG
Chicken
Hen
Delicate

FROG
Jump
Mouth
green

POOL
Swim
Water
Summer

TABLE
Legs
Wood
Round

ICE CREAM
Cream
Cold
Cone

LOVE
Heart
Feelings
Couple

PYRAMID
Wonder
Big
Egypt

BIRTHDAY
Cake
Friends
Month

- **Concluding the Activity**

The teacher reinforces and corrects any recurrent mistake that he could have heard during the activity.

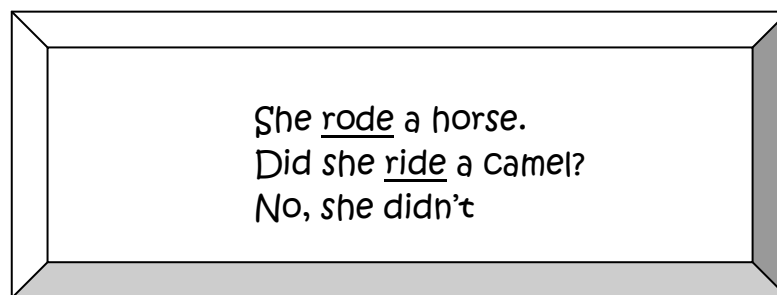
Activity 5. LOOK, MIME AND GUESS ⁹⁸

- **Estimated Time**

10 minutes

- **Warm Up**

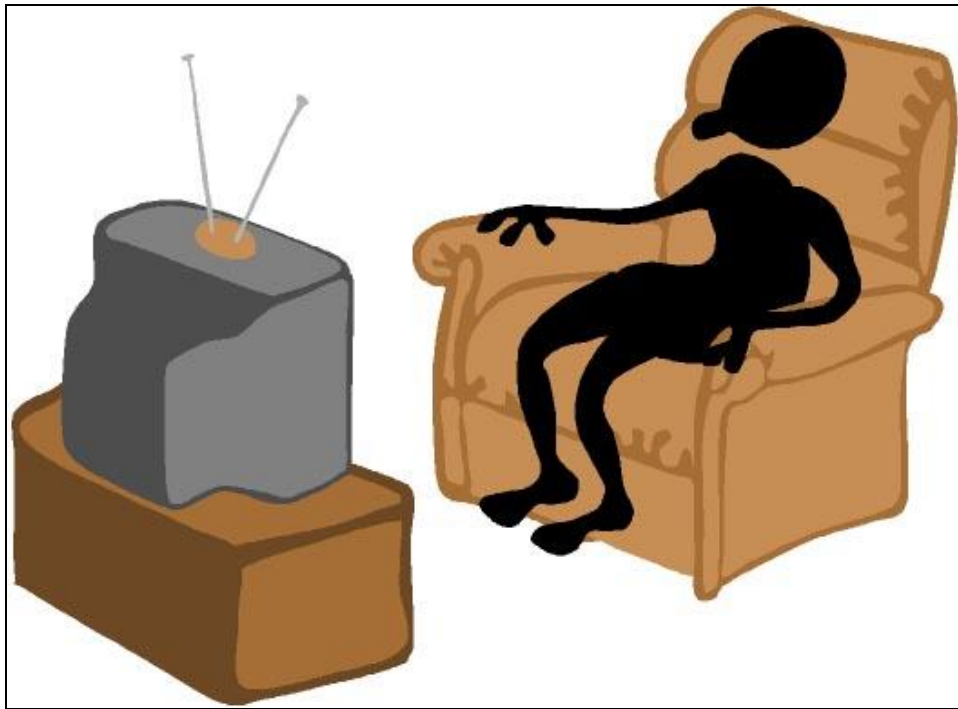
- The teacher displays some pictures of activities that were done **yesterday**.
- The teacher elicits the descriptions in past tense form from the students with the use of the flashcards.



- **Development of the Activity**

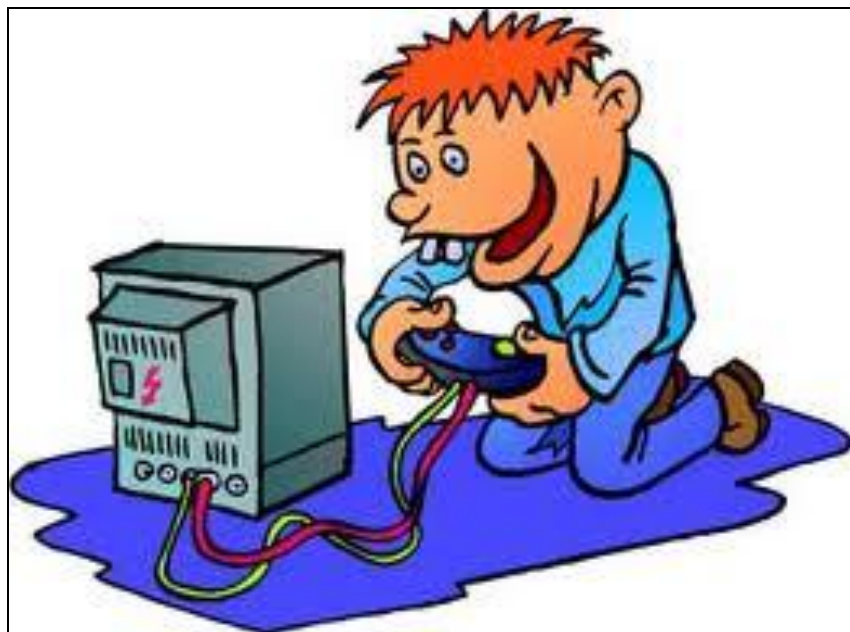
- The class is divided in two groups.
- A student from a team at a time comes to the front and picks a card of an action. The student has to do the mimics of the action.
- The student's teammates ask questions in order to find out the activity that their classmate is doing.
- The other team is not allowed to guess until the time of the other team has run out.
- Once a team guesses, the student shows the corresponding picture to the class and they all describe it, so they reinforce their knowledge.
- Each team gets a point if they were able to guess the mimics. The winner group is the one who got more points on the board.

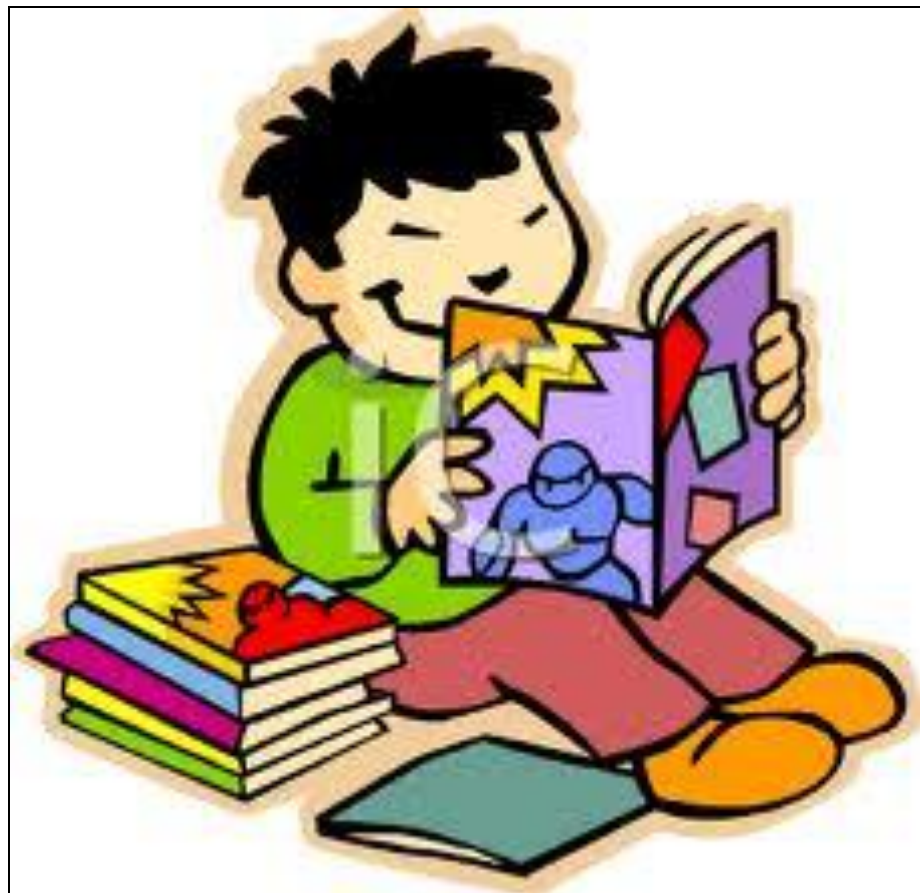
⁹⁸ Teaching Skills. Shane English Schools. London. 2001.



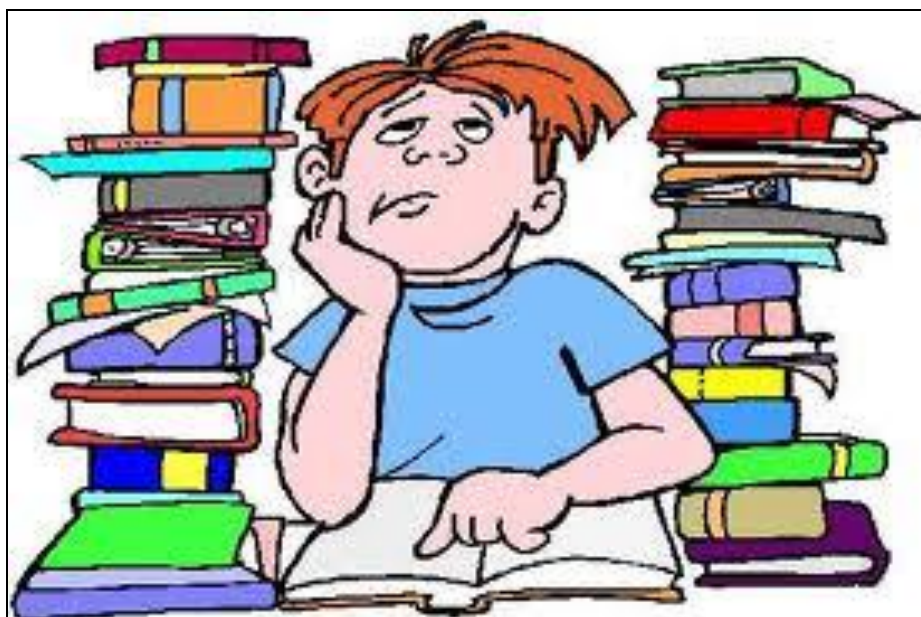












- **Concluding the Activity**
- This game can be adapted to any grammar structure that the teacher may want or need.
- The teacher corrects any recurrent mistake that students may have made during the guessing time.

CHAPTER IV

VALIDATION OF THE PROJECT

4.1 PROJECT APPLICATION

In order to validate this project, some of the activities and suggestions described in the previous chapter were applied in the Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School classes.

During these classes, the students responded with interest and felt motivated to participate and express their ideas in the target language.

It is important to say that due to time limits in the institution, it was not possible to apply all of the activities that were proposed in the previous chapter. Nevertheless, the ones that were applied are considered a model to the rest of activities so they all become valid.

The activities that were applied within the classes are the following:

- a.** Information Gap: Spot The Difference
- b.** Information Gap: Talk About Your Routine
- c.** Jigsaw Activity: Picture Description
- d.** Jigsaw Activity: Find Out Information
- e.** Improvisation: Real Photos Description
- f.** Language Games: Find Someone Who....
- g.** Language Games: Submarine
- h.** Language Games: Tic Tac Toe

These activities were correspondingly described in Chapter III.

4.2. PROJECT VALIDATION: STUDENTS AND TEACHERS.

Students and teachers were surveyed to know the level of satisfaction that the demonstrative classes. The answers of sixty students and the teachers were analyzed and taken into account for the validation of this project.

The questionnaires are at the end of the thesis (annex 07 and 08).

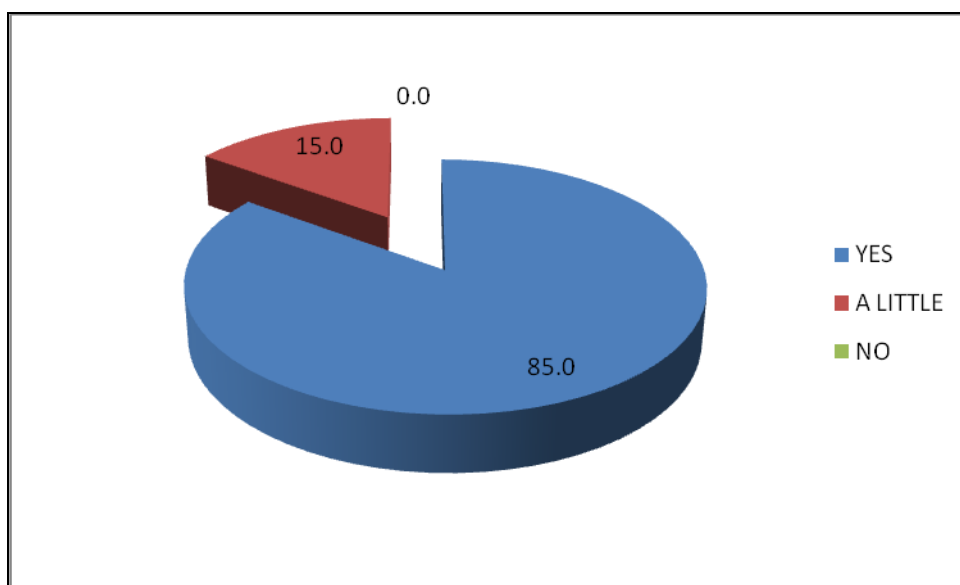
4.2.1 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.2.1.1. Students' Validation

The students' answers are detailed in the following charts and graphics:

1. Did the activities motivate you to speak in English?

Answer	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	51	85
A little	9	15
No	0	0
Total	60	100%



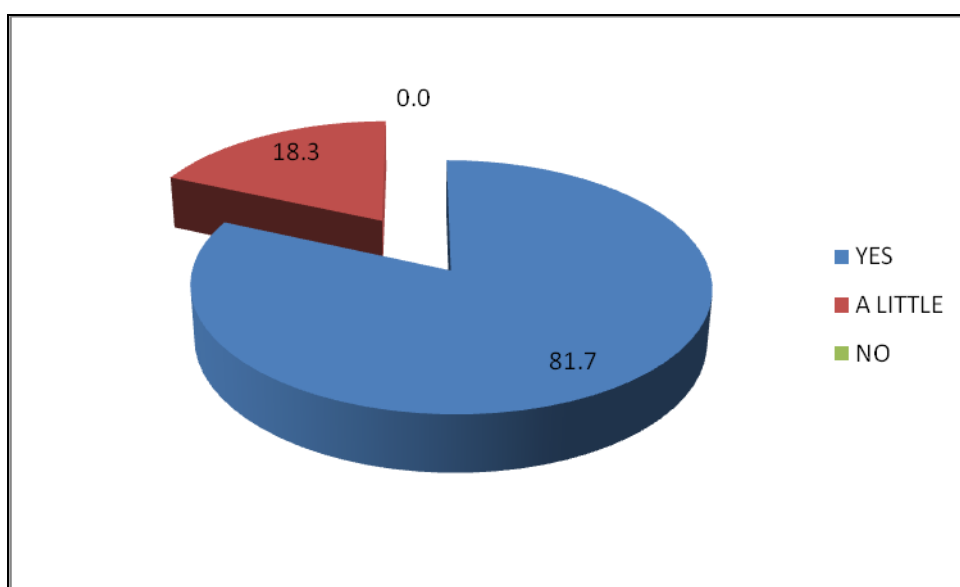
GRAPH 19

A total of 51 students, that is 85% of the students consider that the activities applied in the class were motivating enough for them to speak in English. On the other hand, 9 students, that is 15% of the students considered that the activities motivated them a little to speak in English.

We can say that the majority of the students were well motivated to speak in English.

2. Did you feel comfortable in the class when speaking in English?

Answer	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	49	81.7
A little	11	18.3
No	0	0
Total	60	100%



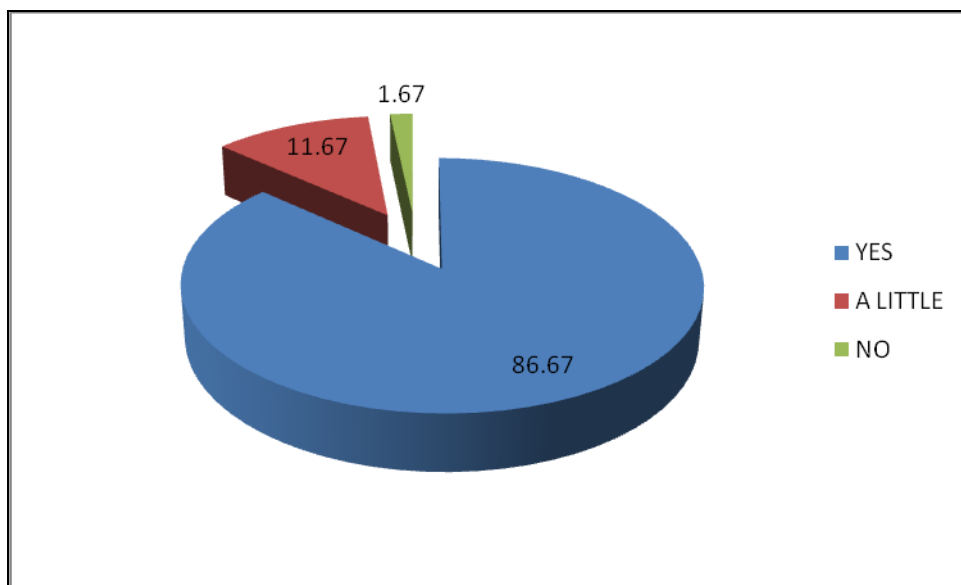
GRAPH 20

A total of 49 students, that is, 81.7% of them considered they felt comfortable when speaking in English during the classes, 11 out of the 60 students were a little comfortable when speaking, and none of the students felt uncomfortable when developing the activities.

It can be said that the majority of the students felt comfortable when they spoke in English.

3. Did you enjoy your English classes with this kind of activities?

Answer	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	52	86.67
A little	7	11.67
No	1	1.67
Total	60	100%



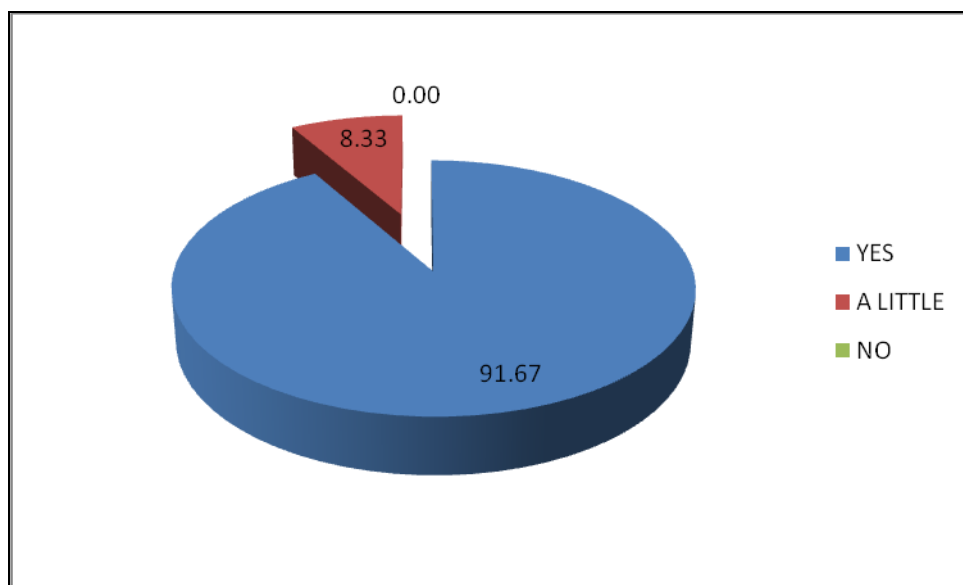
GRAPH 21

A total of 52 students (86.67%) enjoyed the demonstrative classes, 7 students (11.67%) liked them a little, and 1 student (1.67%) didn't enjoy the class.

We can conclude that the majority of the students liked the classes and demonstrated it in their level of participation when the activities took place.

4. Do you think the organization and presentation of the activities were clear and useful for you to develop the activities?

Answer	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	55	91.67
A little	5	8.33
No	0	0
Total	60	100%



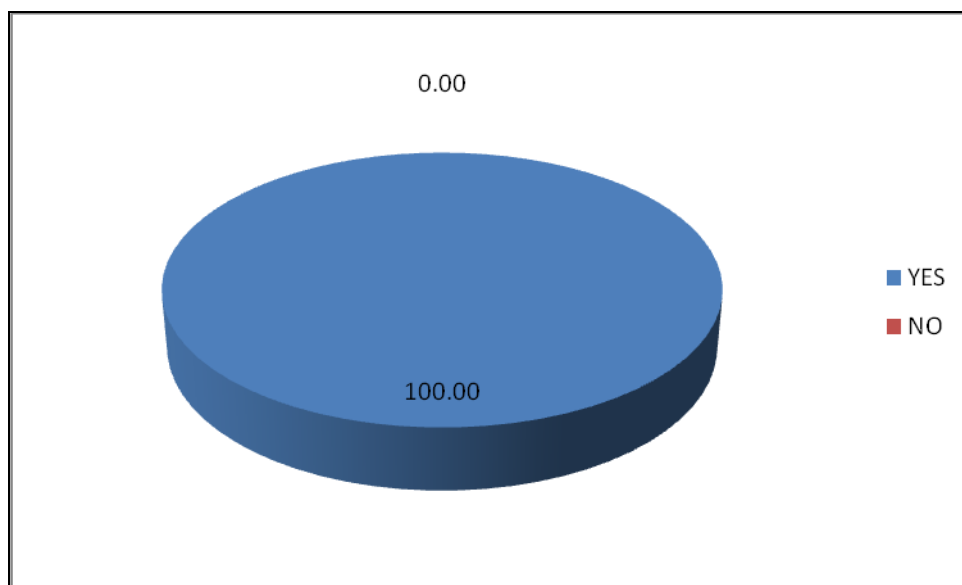
GRAPH 22

As it's possible to see in the graphic, 91.67% of the students considered that the organization and presentation of the activities made it possible for them to develop the activities with no difficulty, 8.33% of the students (5 students) thought it was a little help, and none of the students disagreed with the presentation and organization of the activities.

We can conclude that the organization and presentation of the activities helped the students deal with their English knowledge in order to express their ideas.

5. Would you like your teacher to apply this kind of activities in the English class more often?

Answer	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	60	100
No	0	0
Total	60	100%



GRAPH 23

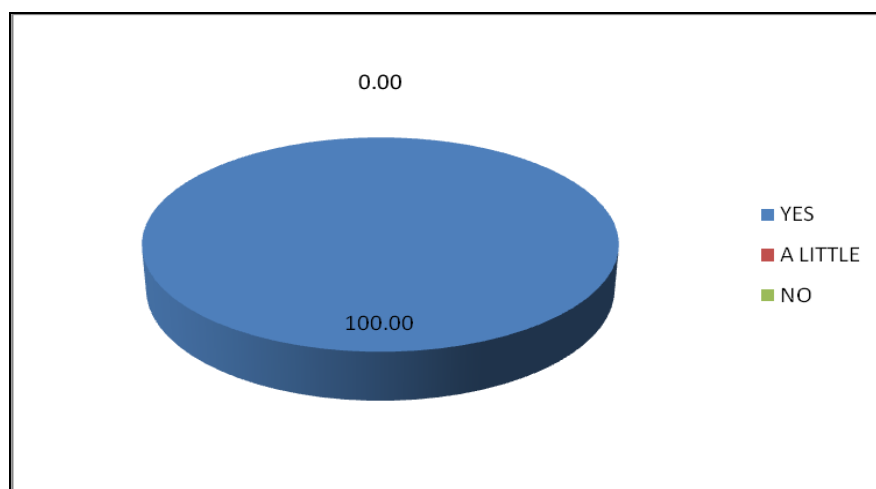
All of the sixty students answered positively to the application of this kind of activities more often in their classes. This demonstrates that all the students approve the innovation of activities that would help them apply what they know in a verbal way which would improve their speaking skill.

4.2.1.2. Teachers' Validation

The teachers' answers are detailed in the following charts and graphics:

1. Do you consider the activities and suggestions of this project are clear and easy to apply?

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	3	100
A little	0	0
No	0	0
Total	3	100%



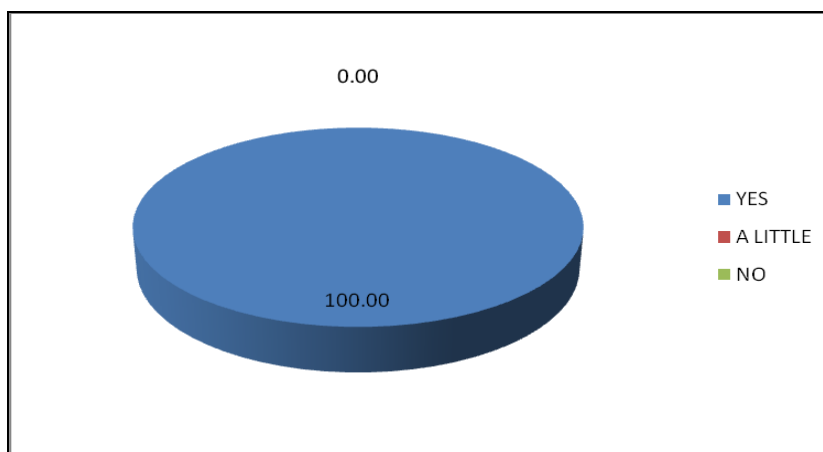
GRAPH 24

As it's possible to see in the graphic, all of the teachers considered the activities and suggestions of this project are clear and easy to apply in their classes at Miguel Merchán High School.

This aproval demonstrates the applicabilty of the proposed activities in the target classes.

2. Do you consider the activities are well disposed according to the students' needs?

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	3	100
A little	0	0
No	0	0
Total	3	100%

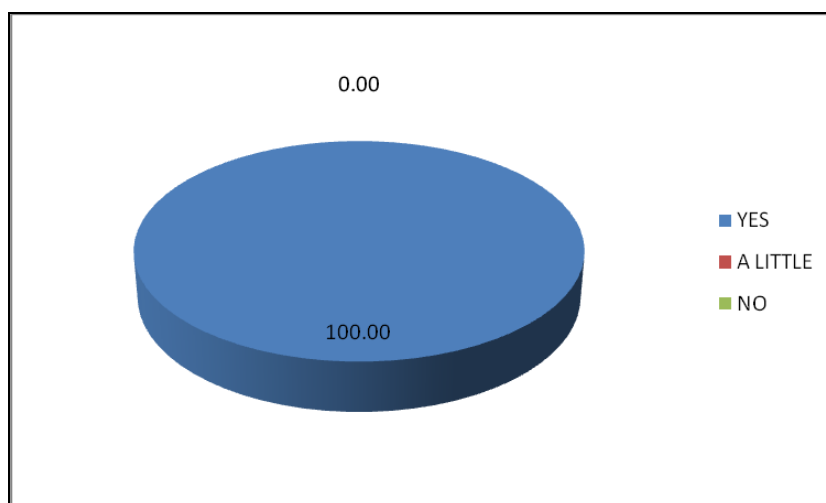


GRAPH 25

All of the teachers consider that the suggestions and activities presented in this project are well disposed according to the students' needs. They also know that they can adapt the activities according to their classes and needs depending on grammatical issues and specific topics that they would like to practice in class.

3. Do you consider that the application of these techniques will help your students develop their English oral skill?

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	3	100
A little	0	0
No	0	0
Total	3	100%

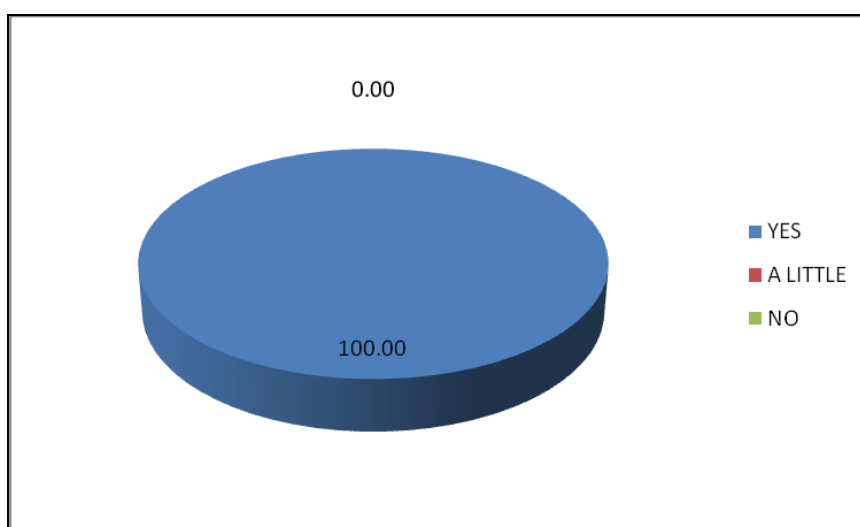


GRAPH 26

All of the teachers consider that the application of the proposed techniques will help their students develop their English oral skill. This approval demonstrates that these activities will help them achieve the main objective of the English National Program.

4. Do you think it's possible to apply in your classes the activities, techniques and suggestions presented in this project?

Answer	Number of Teachers	Percentage (%)
Yes	3	100
A little	0	0
No	0	0
Total	3	100%



GRAPH 27

Teachers consider that it's possible to apply the presented activities in order to practice and improve the English oral skill of their students. They say that they don't apply this kind of activities in their classes since they are attached to their book propositions. The demonstrative classes showed the teachers that they can adapt these activities to their book's proposals and therefore, it is not a waste of time but a way to motivate their students to apply what they've learned before.

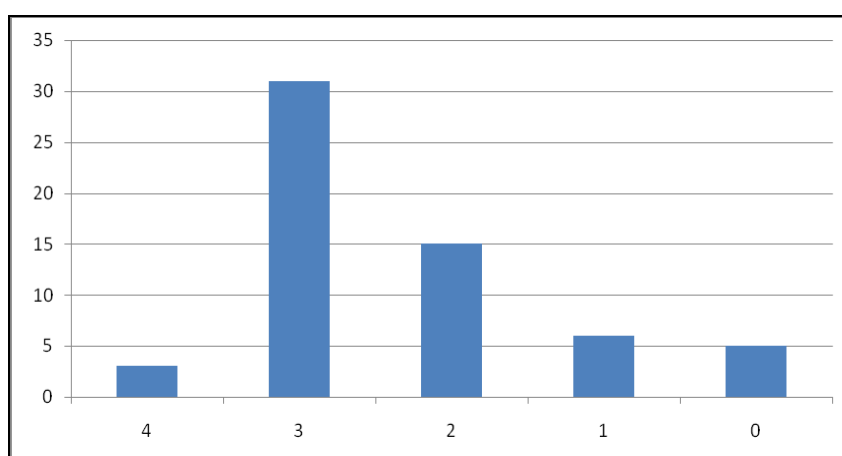
After the project validation of the teachers, their opinion was put into consideration of Lic. Celso Merchán, Principal of the Institution. His positive opinions and approval to the application of the activities within the English classes were expressed in a document which is at the end of this project (see Annex 09).

4.3. ACTIVITIES EVALUATION

In order to see the students' results of the application of these kinds of activities in a quantitative way, two activities were evaluated.

A total of 60 students were graded based on the same criteria proposed for the diagnostic interview, this is: *fluency and coherence, comprehension, grammatical and lexical accuracy and pronunciation*. Each of these items was graded over 1 point and the addition of them gave us the result over 4 points. The results of the evaluation are described in the following chart:

Number of Students	Grade	fx.n
3	4	4
31	3	99
15	2	28
6	1	7
5	0	0
Σ		141
Average		2,35



As it is possible to see in the chart, the average that students obtained over 4 points in the speaking activity is 2,35 out of 4. It's important to say that students

haven't been practicing these kinds of activities, so when their teachers apply them more often, this average can get better.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSIONS

- Students of the Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School have difficulties in expressing themselves in English. Therefore, teachers need to apply different techniques and activities like the ones that have been used in this project, in order to give their students confidence and knowledge to use the target language within the classes and in real life.
- Warm up activities to introduce the topic or to get students involved in the oncoming class are not used by the teachers.
- All the goals set at the beginning of this research have been achieved.
- The application of this project demonstrates that students are willing to learn and participate with more motivation whenever the teacher proposes less predictable classes more attractive to the students.
- During the application of the activities, students were interested and confident to express themselves in English. Even if they found difficulties, their attitude was more positive and they were willing to apply the target language.
- Teachers showed interest in and approval to the activities proposed in this thesis.
- Authorities and teachers consider important the application of new activities and techniques that allow students to put in practice and reinforce what they learn in the English classes.
- The application of these techniques demonstrates that the communicative approach gives better results on students than the one based on translation.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The good experience obtained from the demonstrative classes with the students and teachers of the Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School allows us to recommend the use of the activities proposed in this thesis within the English classes. Students liked these kinds of activities since they are motivating and flexible for them.
- Teachers can use these activities to introduce, complete or reinforce any topic. They can also use them just for fun with their students.
- A more frequent use of these speaking activities will make the English classes more interesting and less predictable for the students. They would be more exposed to the target language and will use it in a more natural and unstressed way.
- The activities described and proposed in this research are adapted to the level needs. They were given to the institution's English area in both, digital and printed form. This way, teachers can have free access to the activities at any time. The material can be printed or copied so the teachers don't have to spend much time in preparing it for their classes.
- The Principal's approval of the project's application guarantees support for the teachers to redistribute their time and not only base their classes on the textbook's activities.
- The use of these activities at any other level of the institution is also recommended. These activities are easily adaptable to any grammar structure, vocabulary or need that a teacher may have, so they can be adjusted to other classes and teachers of the institution.
- Teachers should be conscious that completing and finishing the textbook doesn't mean that students are learning meaningfully. Teachers should be willing to apply new activities as the ones presented in this thesis to help their students achieve goals in a more practical way no matter the time that the book is not being used.
- The use of a warm up activity is necessary to get students involved in the class that is about to start.

- Translation should be the last resource used by the teacher in order to explain the class. Teachers should use flashcards, realia, miming or any other actions or resources before they translate any statement into Spanish.
- The use of an overhead projector or the computer lab for the English classes can make them more interesting and amusing for the students.

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Annexes

ANNEXES DESCRIPTION

Number	Description
01	Thesis Design
02	Approved request to the authorities of the institution to do the research
03	Oral Skill Diagnostic Interview
04	Survey applied to the English teachers
05	Survey applied to the students
06	Pictures of the application of the project
07	Validation of the project: Survey applied to the students
08	Validation of the project: Survey applied to the teachers
09	Authority's approval and validation of the project

Annex 01

FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA, LETRAS Y CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN
INFORME ACADÉMICO DE TRABAJOS DE GRADUACIÓN

JUNTA ACADÉMICA DE:
PROFESORES QUE INFORMAN:

Mst. Nancy Criollo
 Lda. Tammy Fajardo
 Lda. Nónica Abad

ALUMNOS/AS: Srta. Diana Vazquez

TÍTULO ACADÉMICO AL QUE ASPIRAN: Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación Mención Inglés

TEMA: "Application of techniques to develop the English Oral Skill in students of the third year at Miguel Merchan High School"

Una vez realizado el estudio del diseño. Se procede a la aprobación correspondiente por los siguientes motivos académicos:

	SÍ	NO	Reformular
1, ¿El tema propuesto es factible de realización?	X		

2, Esquema metodológico: (correlación del tema con los objetivos y marco teórico).	SÍ	NO	Reformular
¿Hay correlación de la metodología con el tema?	X		
¿Existe correlación de la metodología con los objetivos?	X		
¿Hay correlación del tema con los objetivos?	X		
¿Se nota la correlación del tema con el marco teórico?	X		
¿Se advierte la correlación de los objetivos con el marco teórico?	X		

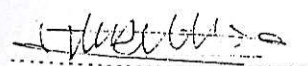
	SÍ	NO	reformular
3, ¿La formulación de los objetivos es adecuada?	X	X	

4, Las técnicas que se utilizarán para el desarrollo de la investigación son:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

	SÍ	NO	reformular
5, ¿Las referencias bibliográficas son suficientes y adecuadas al tema?	X		

	APROBADO	REPROBADO	APROB. CON MODIFICAC.
6. APRECIACIÓN FINAL:			X


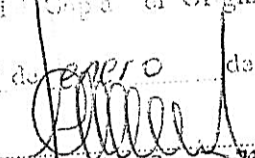
Cuenca, 7 de Octubre de 2000.


 DIRECTORA


 MIEMBRO DEL TRIBUNAL


 MIEMBRO DEL TRIBUNAL

OF: 472-10

 CERTIFICÓ: Que este Documento es una copia del Original
 Cuenca, 17 de Enero del 2012

 Dra. Lourdes Erazo M.
 SECRETARIA



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Cuenca, 8 de Noviembre del 2010

Máster

Edgar León Reyes

Decano de la Facultad de Filosofía

Su Despacho

De mi consideración:

Yo, Diana Eulalia Vázquez Paredes, con código 42362, solicito la aprobación de mi diseño de tesis denominado "Application of Techniques to Develop the English Oral Skill in Students of the Third Year At Miguel Merchán High School", previo a la obtención del título de LICENCIADA EN CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN MENCIÓN INGLÉS.

Por la atención que se digne dar a la presente, anticipo mis sinceros agradecimientos.

Atentamente

Diana Vázquez Paredes

Cod: 42362

Tel: - 2810764

- 084 812 705

- 4024834



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GRADUATION THESIS

APPLICATION OF TECHNIQUES TO DEVELOP THE ENGLISH ORAL SKILL IN STUDENTS OF THE THIRD YEAR AT MIGUEL MERCHAN HIGH SCHOOL.

Tesis previa la obtención del título
de Licenciada en Ciencias de la
Educación, mención Inglés

AUTORA: DIANA VÁZQUEZ PAREDES

DIRECTORA: Mst. NANCY CRIOLLO

CUENCA- ECUADOR

2010 - 2011





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FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA, LETRAS Y CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN

Theme:

APPLICATION OF TECHNIQUES TO DEVELOP THE ENGLISH ORAL SKILL IN STUDENTS OF THE THIRD YEAR AT MIGUEL MERCHAN HIGH SCHOOL.

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

What are the main causes that affect the development of oral communication in the English language? From experience as a teacher and student, and, from what is observed in language classes and in the results of oral exams, it seems that the lack of oral communication in English is due to a series of factors such as:

- Emphasis on oral repetition rather than oral communication. Teachers use oral exercises that are mechanical and meaningless for the students in the class practice.
- Lack of methodology when asking questions. This is a tendency to ask questions that require short answers rather than to lead a real conversation. These kinds of exercises do not contribute to the development of more advanced thinking skills on students.
- Tendency to translate into Spanish all that the teacher says in English and even the use of Spanish to present explanations and guidance to students. This practice doesn't help to develop listening skills since the student is waiting for the ongoing explanation in Spanish.
- Teachers don't dedicate enough time for practicing the oral skill, so their students are not able to communicate and use what they learned in class in an oral way. Also the

development of speaking is limited to the classroom context and not to communicative solutions inside and outside the classroom.

- There is too much time dedicated to teach grammar structure which is, for sure, necessary but it doesn't have to be the only class aim. Students are led to practice word spelling and sentences that are built in a mechanical and organized way.

Now that the main factors of the problem have been recognized, this thesis proposes the use of different techniques whose application will end up in interesting activities in order to improve the oral skill in the students of Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School.

OBJECTIVES

General

To develop the English oral skill through the correct application of different techniques. This way, students will be able to use English to express themselves on different issues related to their program and their own lives.

Specific Objectives

- ❖ To diagnose the materials, techniques, methods and topics of the English program used by the teachers in the Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School.
- ❖ To collect and select activities that develop the English oral skill in the students of Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School.
- ❖ To apply the techniques in order to develop the English oral skill in the students.



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Significance of the Study

Nowadays it has become imperative to communicate not only in our mother tongue, but also in some others. That is why learning the English language has become important in today's society. It has become a real need that is justified by various reasons, whether they have to do with a job, profession, culture, exchange of information and knowledge; furthermore English is an aspiration of a large sector of society.

It is known that the basis of student learning should not lie exclusively on the content of a lesson, but also in the process of interaction, that means, oral communication of students in the classroom and beyond.¹

This research aims at providing a tool to improve the English oral skill in the third year of High School at Miguel Merchán High School. This process has been presenting conflicts since students show poor handling of this skill, which doesn't allow them to interact spontaneously within or outside the classroom in different contexts. This proposal will be focused on achieving a better application of what is learned in class by students whatever situation they are in.

CHAPTER II – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Education is a process that tends to enable the person to act consciously facing new life situations, using past experience and taking into account the integration, continuity and social progress¹.

According to constructivism, knowledge is actively constructed by the person and not passively received from the outside. Learning is functional, that is, you learn about

¹ ORTIZ Alexander, CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS PEDAGÓGICOS Y DIDÁCTICOS. CEPEDID. BARRANQUILLA. 2005

² AUSUBEL, David. PSICOLOGÍA EDUCATIVA. Pgs. 36-42



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something for some reason. Knowledge comes from socializing activities and the student is the protagonist of his own learning process.³

Ausubel considers meaningful learning as the one where knowledge, skills, values and habits that have been acquired can be used in any circumstances and situations that occur or may come in the future of the person. Such learning has a substantial relationship between new information and prior information. It becomes part of the cognitive structure of a man and can be used at the right time to solve problems that may come.⁴

It's through the implementation of significant learning that the person constructs meanings that enrich his knowledge of physical and social world, thereby enhancing their personal growth. The three key aspects that should support the instructional process will be: the achievement of meaningful learning, comprehensive memorization of the classroom content and functionality of learning. Meaningful learning will also allow the student to better understand many facets of one's environment, will facilitate the awakening of intellectual curiosity, will stimulate critical thinking and enable the person to decipher reality.⁵

Meaningful learning is the one suggested in education, because it allows the student to understand learning by using the new knowledge in different situations, both for solutions of a problem and for supporting future learning.

It is necessary that teachers develop strategies to enable their students to acquire the new language not only in theory but through practice.

That is why teachers should use techniques that help their students generate

³ COLL, César y otros: El Constructivismo en el Aula. Biblioteca de Aula. Barcelona, (1995).

⁴ AUSUBEL, David. PSICOLOGÍA EDUCATIVA. Pgs. 36-42

⁵ AUSUBEL, David. PSICOLOGÍA EDUCATIVA. Pgs. 36-42





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attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to become more independent in their thinking and acting.

According to Dell Hymes, the Communicative Competence refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately.⁶

Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence in terms of three components:⁷

- Grammatical competence: words and rules
- Sociolinguistic competence: appropriateness
- Strategic competence: appropriate use of communication strategies. It is associated with the interlocutor's ability in using communication strategies⁸
- Discourse competence: cohesion and coherence

The communicative competence should be the goal of language education due to the big influence of the Communicative Language Teaching in the teaching process⁹.

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. It is also referred to as "communicative approach to the teaching of foreign languages" or simply the "communicative approach".¹⁰



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⁶ HYMES, D.H. (1966) "TWO TYPES OF LINGUISTIC RELATIVITY" In W. Bright (ed) Sociolinguistics pp. 114-158. The Hague: Mouton.

⁷ Canale, M. and Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. Applied Linguistics 1, 1-47.

⁸ Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Lin, 2009

⁹ Savignon, S.J. (1997). *Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill. 2nd edition.

¹⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org:80/wiki/Communicative_language_teaching

David Nunan describes the five features of CLT:

1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
2. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the Learning Management process.
4. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
5. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.

Communicative Language Teaching responds to the needs and desires of their learners as well as the connection between the language as it is taught in their class and as it is used outside the classroom. In the classroom, CLT often takes the form of pair and group work requiring negotiation and cooperation between learners, fluency-based activities that encourage learners to develop their confidence, role-plays in which students practice and develop language functions, as well as judicious use of grammar and pronunciation focused activities.¹¹

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This research project will be descriptive and exploratory in order to identify the problems that students have in their English oral skill and the reasons for this to happen. It will take place in the Third Year of Miguel Merchán High School of Cuenca, therefore, these 32 students will be the direct recipients of the fulfillment of this research. The indirect beneficiaries will be the respective High School, its English teachers, the students' families and the society in general.

¹¹ Idem 11



Instruments of the research

Techniques

The survey will ask direct questions that apply to students and teachers.*The research work is based on the technique of observation

Methodology

The methods that will be used are:

- * **Observation Method.** It will allow to make a diagnosis of the English language used in the Third Year of High School.
- * **Deductive Method.** It will allow to deduce the conclusions of the way teachers use techniques and activities for teaching English in the classrooms.
- * **Analytical Method.** An analysis of the application of the new language in a verbal way in the classrooms will be made.

Research Questions

- What do English teachers do to solve the difficulty that their students have to express themselves orally?
- Which techniques and strategies should the teachers use so their students communicate successfully in English?

Techniques and Data Collection Instruments

Technique	Whom / What	What for
Observation	Classes	To identify the methodology applied into the class
Inquest	Teachers and students	
Interview		
Bibliographic	Techniques for oral skill	To get information

Inquest	Students and teachers	To validate the proposal

Processing and analysis of results

The information will be presented in tables, columns and percentages on base 100.

The results will be supported by the theoretical framework and the personal argument of the researcher of the problem

Resources

Human resources

Students of Third year at Miguel Merchán high school

Researcher

University Tutor

Material Resources

Desk supplies

Videos

Recorder

Computer

Technical Resources

Specialized files

University tutor's advices

Bibliography





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CONTENT OUTLINE

CHAPTER I: DIAGNOSIS

- 1.1. Observation guide
- 1.2. Interview to teachers and students
- 1.3. Results of research
- 1.4. Data interpretation

CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL CONCEPTIONS IN ENGLISH TEACHING

- 2.1. Ausubel's meaningful learning
- 2.2. Communicative Language Competence
 - 2.2.1 Linguistic Competence
 - 2.2.2 Sociolinguistic Competence
 - 2.2.3 Discourse Competence
 - 2.2.4 Strategic Competence
- 2.3. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

CHAPTER III: TECHNIQUES FOR DEVELOPING THE ORAL SKILL

- 3.1 Role-Play
- 3.2 Simulations
- 3.3 Improvisations
- 3.4 Problem solving
- 3.5 Narration

CHAPTER IV: VALIDATION OF THE PROJECT

- 4.1. Project presentation
- 4.2. Project validation: students, teachers, authorities.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1. Analysis of results
- 5.2. Conclusions
- 5.3. Recommendations

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BUDGET

EXPENDITURE	DOLLARS
Computer and office supplies	30
Copies	10
Bookbinding	15
Books and files	50
Computation and web services	50
Transport	40
Other materials	20
Contingencies	50
Total	\$ 265

This research will be costing around \$265 dollars, which will be financed by the researcher.



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5. ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK CHRONOGRAM

2 0 1 0 2 0 1 1

TIME IN WEEKS ACTIVITIES	April				May				June				October				November				December				January				February				March				April				May			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4								
1 Selecting the Thesis Theme																																												
2 Bibliographic collection																																												
3 approach to the problema																																												
4 Determination of Objectives																																												
5 theoretical framework																																												
6 Research techniques																																												
7 Research Universe																																												
8 Bibliography																																												
9 Chapter 1 Development																																												
10 Chapter 2 Development																																												
11 Chapter 3 Development																																												
12 Chapter 4 Development																																												
13 Chapter 5 Development																																												
14 Preparation of draft																																												
15 Teacher Evaluation																																												
16 Final draft																																												
17 Bookbinding																																												
18 Contingencies																																												
19 Filing Date																																												



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- www.aldeaeducativa.com
- www.laondaeducativa.com



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Annex 02

Cuenca, 15 de Noviembre del 2010

Licenciado
Celso Merchán
Rector del Colegio "Miguel Merchán Ochoa"
Su Despacho

De mis consideraciones,

A través de la presente, me permito solicitar muy comedidamente se me autorice la realización de mi tesis de grado "Applications of Techniques to Develop the English Oral Skill" para la obtención del título de Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación con mención Inglés.

Este trabajo de investigación colaborará a un desarrollo y mejoramiento de técnicas aplicadas en el aula para el aprendizaje y aplicación del idioma Inglés.

Por la favorable acogida que se digne dar a la presente, anticipo mis más sinceros agradecimientos.

Atentamente,




Diana Vásquez Paredes
Estudiante Egresada de la Universidad del Azuay

*Recibido: 15-11-2010
se autoriza la solicitud.*



*Para inspectar de
la misma colaborar
con la información
Cuenca, 16 de Marzo 2012*



Annex 03



MIGUEL MERCHÁN HIGH SCHOOL
ORAL SKILL DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW

Name: _____

	Fluency and coherence /5	Comprehension /5	Grammatical and lexical accuracy /5	Pronunciation /5	Total /20
1. Greetings					
2. Introduce yourself. Giving personal information.					
o Name					
o Age					
o Nationality					
o City where you live					
o Describing likes and dislikes					
3. Making suggestions					
- What do you like the most of your city?					
- Why do you think people should come and visit Cuenca?					
4. Expressing opinion					
- Who is the person you admire the most and why?					
- What are your plans for the future?					
Total					

Observations: _____

Annex 04



**SURVEY APPLIED TO THE ENGLISH TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN THE THIRD
YEAR OF MIGUEL MERCHÁN HIGH SCHOOL**

Name: _____

The following survey is directed to determine strengths and weaknesses inside the English classes.

1. Do your students demonstrate an interest in learning English? YES ____ NO ____
2. Do you believe that your students enjoy the activities that are taught in the English class? YES ____ NO ____
3. How much do you think your students participate in class?
A lot ____ Not much ____ A little ____
4. Do you consider that the activities provided by the book are sufficient for your students' English learning?

YES ____ NO ____
Write a little explanation

5. How often do your students speak English to communicate in class?
ALWAYS ____ USUALLY ____ SOMETIMES ____ RARELY ____ NEVER ____
6. Throughout this year, how much class time did you spend in: reading, listening, writing, speaking, grammar?

a. Reading:	A LOT ____	A LITTLE ____	NONE ____
b. Listening:	A LOT ____	A LITTLE ____	NONE ____
c. Writing:	A LOT ____	A LITTLE ____	NONE ____
d. Speaking:	A LOT ____	A LITTLE ____	NONE ____
e. Grammar:	A LOT ____	A LITTLE ____	NONE ____
7. The activities applied in class were done:
In the book ____ on the board ____ in the notebook ____ Other
resources ____:
Specify _____
8. In order to do the activities in the English class, your students:
 - a. Do the activities on their own ____
 - b. Listen and understand the explanation ____
 - c. Wait for the teacher to translate the activity into Spanish ____
 - d. Others ____Specify: _____

Annex 05



**SURVEY APPLIED TO THE STUDENTS IN THE THIRD YEAR OF MIGUEL
MERCHÁN HIGH SCHOOL**

Name:_____ **Class:**_____

**The following survey is directed to determine strengths and weaknesses inside
the English classes.**

1. Do you consider that learning English is important for your future?

YES____ NO____

2. Do you enjoy your English classes?

YES____ NO____ SOMETIMES____

3. How much do you participate in the English class?

A lot____ A little____ Do not participate____

4. Do you consider that the activities proposed by the book and the teacher are
sufficient for your English learning?

YES____ NO____

Write a little explanation _____

5. Do you feel motivated to speak in English with the activities developed in class?

ALWAYS____ SOMETIMES____ NOT AT ALL____

6. What kind of activities do you do more in class? Tick. (there could be more than one
answer):

Writing____ Reading____

Speaking____ Listening____

Grammar exercises____

7. Tick your answer: The activities in class are developed mostly (there could be more than one answer)

in the book_____ on the board_____ in the notebook_____ Others_____:

Specify please_____

8. Choose your answer: In order to do the English activities in class you:

- a. Don't need any help from the teacher _____
- b. Listen and understand the English explanations_____
- c. Wait for the teacher to translate the commands_____

THANKS A LOT FOR YOUR COOPERATION!!

Annex 06









Annex 07



Validation of the Project.
Survey Applied to the Students

1. Did the activities motivate you to speak in English?

Yes_____ A little_____ No_____

2. Did you feel comfortable in the class when speaking in English?

Yes_____ A little_____ No_____

3. Did you enjoy your English classes with this kind of activities?

Yes_____ A little_____ No_____

4. Do you think the organization and presentation of the activities were clear and useful for you to develop the activities?

Yes_____ A little_____ No_____

5. Would you like your teacher to apply this kind of activities in class more often?

Yes_____ No_____

Annex 08



Validation of the Project.
Survey Applied to the Teachers

The teachers answered the following questions:

1. Do you consider the activities and suggestions of this project are clear and easy to apply?

Yes_____ A little_____ No_____

2. Do you consider the activities are well disposed according to the students' needs?

Yes_____ A little_____ No_____

3. Do you consider that the application of these techniques will help your students develop their English oral skill?

Yes_____ A little_____ No_____

4. Do you think it's possible to apply in your classes the activities, techniques and suggestions presented in this project?

Yes_____ A little_____ No_____

Annex 09



Colegio Nacional Mixto "Miguel Merchán Ochoa"

TELEFONO: 2810-048

TELEFAX: 2886-215

colmiguelmerchan@gmail.com

AVDA. RICARDO MUÑOZ 3-43
Y GONZALO CORDERO

CUENCA - ECUADOR

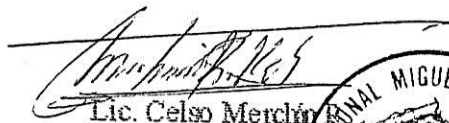
LIC. CELSO MERCHAN ROBLES, RECTOR DEL COLEGIO "MIGUEL MERCHAN OCHOA" A PETICION DE PARTE INTERESADA.

C E R T I F I C A:

Que luego de haber observado y analizado las actividades propuestas en la tesis. "TECHNIQUES FOR DEVELOPING THE ENGLISH ORAL SKILL IN THE THIRD YEAR OF MIGUEL MERCHAN HIGH SCHOOL", considero que son aplicables y útiles en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje en los Terceros años de bachillerato del Colegio Miguel Merchán Ochoa, como técnicas de motivación para que los estudiantes hablen y apliquen los temas aprendidos en clase.

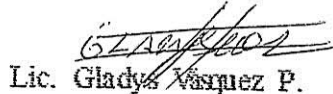
Que, la estudiante Sra. Diana Vásquez Paredes aplicó estas técnicas de una forma muy apropiada a los estudiantes, obteniendo resultados excelentes en actitud y desarrollo de sus habilidades del Inglés

Es todo cuanto podemos Certificar en honor a la verdad.


Lic. Celso Merchán Robles

RECTOR




Lic. Gladys Vasquez P.

PROFESORA

Cuenca, 30 de marzo 2012