

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTONOMA DE NICARAGUA-LEON



Contribution to the increase of English Students ' interaction and participation at the Año Comùn, UNAN-León

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I. INTRODUCTION

The education in Nicaragua presents a common problem which is the low interaction and participation of the students in the language classroom. In Nicaragua practically there is not work about these concepts or topics, the only investigation related to this is the work done by the Luxons, 1993. For this reason, this topic is very important because it contributes to the increase of interaction and participation by using both of them as a base for the other years of university study when getting into the majors.

This research had three specific objectives: one focused on causes of low interaction, the other focused on identifying the possible causes of the low participation in class and the last one concentrated on a validation of communicative dynamics and activities that increase classroom interaction and participation of the students at the *AÑO COMUN* at UNAN-Leon.

For this research, 4 guided questions were included in relation to students' characteristics and knowledge, teachers' characteristics, classrooms' characteristics and conditions that all influence the students' interaction and participation in the classroom, and specific interactive and participative dynamics that could be used in the lessons at the *Año Comun*. Derived from these guided questions some indicators were elaborated related to students, teachers, classroom conditions and dynamics.

As a base for this work, a theoretical framework was elaborated taking into account the opinions of the following authors: Merce Bernau, R. Ellis, Ausubel, Wagner, Ann Malamah-Thomas, Gilbert and Moore, Luci Nussbaum, M.Droblyer, Leticia Ekhaml, Agre, and Jacobs/Ward, among others. These authors took into account the topics of motivation, interaction and participation.

The methodology of investigation was of qualitative type that took into account the use of a communicative and participative methodology based on interaction. It used the following techniques, such as classroom observation, discussion sessions, data collection from direct source, review of literature, and dynamics. It also made use of these techniques: open observations, register of relevant aspects from the class sessions, students' journals and teacher's feedback, diagnostic test, reference indexes, problem solving activities, information gap, ranking, and role plays, among others.

Strategies used in this investigation were divided in these stages: verification of the relevance of the problem, design of the investigation, development of the investigation, identification of appropriate dynamics and activities to stimulate students' interaction and participation of the two groups of students at the *Año Comun*.

The results were presented through a diagnostic test in the first semester, there was also a questionnaire given to the students in the first semester, too and a second questionnaire in semester II. Data collection was also taken from students' journals, peer observation and classroom dynamics used to improve students' interaction and participation in the classroom. All of this was done taking into account students, teachers, classroom conditions, materials and activities used.

The conclusions and recommendations were done according to the given objectives so that other educational institutions, programs, teachers and all involved in the teaching and learning process could get benefits from this research

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Low Interaction and Participation of the Students in the Classroom

Few students' efforts-low learning of the majority

As many other students in different levels of the education in Nicaragua, students from the *Año Común* at UNAN-León evidenced a low interaction and participation in the classroom. The effects of this limited interaction and participation were a poor correlation between the grade gotten from individual students and the one gotten from group work activities. A typical example of this was what usually happened when a few students were the ones who took advantage of interaction and participation when they made major efforts in determined group work that was assigned in the classroom and generally, these same students were the ones who had better domain of English language.

Typical environment of a group of students with a low interaction and participation of the English language

This was a group of 42 or 43 students at the *Año Común* from UNAN-León. There was a traditional distribution of the students in the classroom setting in which chairs were ordered in straight lines. In the majority of the cases in which students' participation in the classroom was demanded, the same students were practically the ones who repeatedly participated answering or giving their points of view about the topics discussed. In contrast to the first, there existed another passive group with poor participation in class that also manifested boredom, yawning, distraction in other activities and even total abandonment in the tasks given.

In some assigned tasks, the students who manifested major availability to work, and at the same time interaction and participation, interacted with their friends or those they felt more confident with. However, the passive ones and of low participation talked about topics not related to the lesson, using cell phones to chat or got distracted doing tasks of other subjects.

Another situation that was usually presented was that students with a good level of English were the ones who participated most of the times, the ones without inhibition participated, too. In addition, when a student who did not have a good level of English participated, some students mocked with laughs or ironic phrases to their participation provoking inhibition to the students with low level of English.

Something else observed in the classrooms was that the great majority of students with good proficiency of the language preferred to sit down at the front row whereas the others with less or little proficiency of the language usually sat at the back distracted doing or talking about topics not related to the class. It was also observed that such students did not have their handouts to work in class, so they were trying to copy the answers from other students.

On the other hand, it was confirmed that low level students' grades in the English language were considerably lower when they worked individually than the grades gotten in pairs or in groups what made to suppose easily that strong students had done most of the work.

For the situations already exposed, this investigation proposed to reach broader knowledge about the problem posed.

III. BACKGROUND

**CONTRIBUTION TO THE INCREASE OF ENGLISH STUDENTS' INTERACTION AND PARTICIPATION
AT THE AÑO COMUN, UNAN-LEON**

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This research presents the background of the topics of motivation, interaction and participation from two perspectives: the international perspective and the national perspective. In the first, there exists very few cases of investigations done about such topics; even at the world level, there is not enough information that focuses deeply on interaction or participation. The national perspective presents the results from a unique investigation done in the country showing evidence, from the very beginning, of the gaps that exist in the education in Nicaragua in relation to these topics.

1-International Perspective:

One interesting investigation done in 1994 by Nadia Ahmed Toubia, associate professor of English Language Methodology in the Faculty of Education, Alexandria University, Egypt, in the article “ Large classes using groups and content” pointed out the importance of group work in the bilingual education. Toubia mentioned the factors of success that helped interaction and participation in the university she worked.

She showed that her classes were successful because of the students’ preferences to have group work activities in class. Specifically, she emphasized that the “secret of students’ success probably lies in the fact that they help each other in groups.” She also mentioned the importance of “the teacher’s skills in classroom management “ and how it could give classroom success when having the students work in groups.

Another case study that was related to this research was the one about large classes in Pakistan. Such investigation was done in 1996 by Shamim in six state secondary schools in Karachi, Pakistan. He researched large groups of students in such secondary schools describing how classroom setting, country’s culture, and the traditional view of teaching had many elements that could be recovered and that their application favored success in motivation, interaction and participation of the students in the language classroom.

He also highlighted that the class was teacher-centered with passive students in which he mentioned what is called the “action zone, which refers to the students sitting at the front row of the class who participated more than the ones at the back. Such students were those highly motivated ones, and they interacted with the teacher most.

Shamin also emphasized that “the success of a given methodology does not, therefore, arise out of the methodology itself, but rather from its potential to engage participants’, and the first instance students’ active participation in the learning process.”

2- National Perspective:

Interaction was first analyzed in Nicaragua by Michéle and Tony Luxon by the year 1993 in the work done about the English language. They adapted the so known Flanders system into their investigation to get more information about classroom interaction because it pursued better knowledge about the national perspective. The Luxons showed that language learning was affected by different factors and they coincided that a class without interaction and participation in the classroom could not be successful enough. Some of the factors were the following:

Factor 1: there were not student-centered activities.

Factor 2: lack of trained teachers.

Factor 3: students' knowledge of the language.

Factor 4: lack of materials.

The Luxons also pointed out that participation was very low in that context. Students participated when they were asked to do so, and they did it in English. As it can be seen, classes were focused on the Grammar Translation Method, which as it is known, is very traditional, teacher-centered and there are always translations and grammatical rules during the class.

The Luxons Research was the first kind of investigation about the English context in Nicaragua. It was done in different high schools, and some universities of the country. Such research was not merely focused on Interaction and participation, but what they mentioned about these two last give an idea on how the education in English was by the year 1993. Their main interest was the teacher's context, the amount of students in the classroom, the curriculum, and the teacher's levels of English, among others.

There were other aspects affecting students' learning, such as: students' conditions, motivation, size of the classroom, level of English (both from the teacher and from the students), types of setting, materials used, teachers' knowledge of communicative activities, and classroom management, among other factors.

Meanwhile the national investigation done by the Luxons as the ones done in other countries attract the interest of other researchers. Most of the investigations above show how language learning is affected by many factors, but they coincide that a lesson without classroom interaction and participation can not be successful enough. As it can be seen, this problem of classroom interaction and participation comes from many years ago, and it can happen in any country of the world.

It can be analyzed from this that although the problem still exists, in this research it has not only been analyzed the students' problems concerning interaction and participation, but also the work on a remedial plan in which different activities were used to help students overcome this problem.

IV. RATIONALE

“ During the past five years, interest in classroom interaction has spread to all parts of the globe as teacher trainers and researchers discovered the potential value of this field”¹. Logically for the case of the education in Nicaragua and more of the universities, these topics are very important to improve the levels of learning. However, such topics here in Nicaragua were not given their importance because not many people worry about investigating about it.

This investigation tries to recover the importance of recuperating interaction and participation for the *AÑO COMUN* from the Universidad Autonoma de Leon. This *Año Comun* is an educative program of the university that pursues the following:

To brush up the acquired knowledge in secondary school.

To level the students’ knowledge in diverse fundamental subjects as base for the following years of study of their major.

To provide studying techniques for better learning results.

To have students adapted to the new demands the university asks for.

To facilitate the best knowledge of the different majors that students opt.

To have a highly competitive program for the students to classify in the majors of their preferences.

At the *Año Comun*, it was identified that as long as interaction and participation were improved, the language learning was improved, too. What it was expected to do with this research was to contribute to the increase of participation and interaction by using both of them as a base for the other years of university study when getting into the majors.

Motivation, interaction and participation are appropriate topics to know about their use in the education of the universities due to the fact that a great number of students, most of them young, from different places of Nicaragua and with limited resources come to study to the universities. All of this, plus the lack of resources obliges teachers to look for alternatives and learning strategies in which the human factor compensates, in the majority of the possibilities, the lack of material resources that day to day are evidenced at UNAN-Leon; moreover, it tries to get successful results in the students’ learning and formation.

The university advances as a total, not through individuals. Therefore, with this research, students’ development is tried to improved, not only at the university or professionally, but also in the country and for the whole world. If there is an increase in interaction and participation, the students will become better professionals. In addition, the teacher will save resources, and the class will be more successful.

¹ Moskowitz, Gertrude “Interaction Goes International.” *Tesol Quately*. Vol. 6, No. 2 (1972)

“A person who is present in a speech event...He or she may actually take part in the exchange of speech...”² In relation to participation, It can be said that whenever there is a communicative class, there is also participation; moreover, this work tries to be focused on this aspect of communication due to its importance in the language classroom.

This investigation is an opportunity to help students learn although they come with passive ways, they are hierarchical, individualists, and they create their own learning spaces. The current world has many technological advances, it is obvious that this problem of interaction and participation exists more in Nicaragua since is a developing country and lacks a lot of resources.

The goal of this research is to try to give a contribution to the increase of students' participation and interaction, mainly at the *AÑO COMUN* –UNAN, Leon. This will help to the teachers' worryness to promote the students' involvement in activities, actions and reactions, cooperation, socialization, communication and even the conflicts that could have benefits for the development and implementation of the learning theories or methodologies related to participation and interaction.

This research hopes to contribute to the university' development for this to take both interaction and participation into account in order to have a successful class. As everybody knows, the university is aware of the problem of interaction and participation, but teachers do not take it into account when planning the lessons. The students come to the university from high school with a different way of thinking, they are used to the Grammar Translation Method, to a teacher centered class, so they copy what the teacher dictates in the classroom whereas teachers are usually teaching in a traditional way.

V. OBJECTIVES

² Gardener and Lambert, “Further Reading”, 1972

V.1 General Objective.

To contribute to the development of communicative teaching and learning methodologies at the university level through an increase of knowledge and domain of techniques that stimulate students' interaction and participation.

V.2 Specific Objectives.

- 1- To know the possible causes that originate the low interaction in class of the students at the *AÑO COMUN* at UNAN-Leon.
- 2- To identify the possible causes of the low participation in class of the students at the *AÑO COMUN* at UNAN-Leon.
- 3- To validate communicative dynamics and activities that increase classroom interaction and participation.

VI. GUIDED QUESTIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION

This investigation has focused on identifying the aspects that can be considered as obstacles of students' interaction and participation in the language classroom. Aspects that are really manifested closely related. These guided questions were based on the objectives of this investigation.

To work on this investigation, 4 guided questions were elaborated:

- 1- How do the students' characteristics and knowledge influence interaction and participation not only individually, but also in groups in the classroom?
- 2- How do the teachers' characteristics influence students' interaction and participation in the classrooms?
- 3- How do the classrooms' characteristics and conditions influence the students' interaction and participation?
- 4- Which specific interactive and participative dynamics could be used in the lessons at the Año Comun?

VII. INDICATORS RELATED TO QUESTIONS 1, 2 , 3 AND 4

The following chart presents the indicators related to the guided questions.

Students	Teachers	Classrooms' conditions and characteristics	Interactive and Participative Dynamics
Students' inhibition for their low level of English. Students' fear when talking in public. Students' confidence and domain of the topic. Group jokes to the students who participate . Students' interest for the class. Apathetic characteristics of the groups. Low level of commitment of the leaders with the participation of the members of their group.	Low level of confidence from the teacher to the students. Lack of communicative and motivating activities from the teachers in the classroom. Inappropriate didactic material used by the teacher. Grading inflexibility for the students' assigned work	a)Inappropriate conditions of the classrooms: a1. Lightning a2.Hot weather a3. Lack of ventilation a4.Lack of chairs a5.Lack of cleanliness b) Difficult access to the classroom.	-Problem Solving activities -Guessing games -Information Gaps -Ranking -Hangman -Ball Games to practice the language -Role Plays -Dialogs -Short presentations about a certain topic -Debates -Competition games Others

VIII. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research was based on three main concepts which were motivation, interaction and participation. In Nicaragua, especially in the universities, researches or investigations related to these types of concepts are practically nonexistent. One of the few cases in which these concepts were taken into account was the one done in 1993 by Tony and Michele Luxon³ which in some part of their investigation briefly used such concepts of motivation, interaction and participation without giving deep information about them, nor defining them.

The theoretical framework taken into account for this investigation involves the following concepts:

1. Motivation
2. Interaction
3. Participation

1. Motivation

According to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, *motivation* is “the factors that determine a person’s desire to do something.” Applied to Nicaragua’s reality, in the two groups observed, the main motivation, and at the same time the most general, lied in the desire to classify in the major they wanted to study, and they had to have a high average of their grades in all subjects. There were other factors that had to be taken into account in the students’ motivation, they were their level of knowledge of the English language and that those students who knew more English were more highly motivated than beginners.

Such dictionary also explained that *motivation* was divided by instrumental and integrative *motivation*. This study considers that students were more concerned about the first, instrumental *motivation* because of the motivational factors already mentioned. However, the students remarked that they had more problems with integrative *motivation* because they didn’t want to interact with students they didn’t know or they didn’t have affinity.

As Merce Bernau in the article “El profesor y el alumno como agentes del proceso de Aprendizaje”⁴ *motivation* “se puede definir como un sentimiento producido por una causa interna o externa, que lleva a una persona a actuar o a iniciar una acción con el fin de alcanzar una meta.”

This concept is very similar to the concept from the dictionary because it describes *motivation* as a feeling produced by an internal or external factor, in this case a desire to learn is an internal feeling. Those types of feelings can push a person into act or initiate an action with the purpose to reach a goal. This last part is also similar to the dictionary’s concept in that the external factor is classified as instrumental *motivation* that students used to reach their main objective which was to get into the majors of their preference.

³ Luxon, Michele and Tony. Baseline Study Report for ELT Project: Nicaragua. (May to August 1993), Vol. I, 61-64.

⁴ “Teachers and Students as agents in the Learning Process.”

Another definition given by Bernau is : “*motivación* es el esfuerzo que una persona pone en la consecución de un objetivo final.” As it was defined in this other concept, *motivation* is the effort a person makes to get to a final objective. As it can be seen, there is a close connection with the concepts presented, but they are too general to relate them to the learning situation, and they do not go deeply in how interaction and participation are part of such concepts.

Schumann describes *motivation* “ as an affective factor alongside ‘culture shock’” (Schumann, 1978) in (R. Ellis, 1994). “ This concept focused on the relationships of students from diverse countries and from different languages in which cultural shock could affect their intrinsic feelings that at the same time affects the learning of a second language. In the case of the two groups of students that were object of study, the majority did not practice English outside the classroom because students were afraid that others’ laughed at their mistakes

Another factor linked to the effect of cultural shock was the deficit that existed between the knowledge of the English language reached in secondary school that differed a lot from the quantity of knowledge and the rhythm that was transmitted at the university; furthermore, difficulties were presented in relation to interaction at the beginning of the given course because there was a diversity of students who came from different parts of the country. As time passed by, the lack of confidence was overcome favoring a little group work.

Ausubel (1968:227) destaca la importancia del interés y la *motivación* con estas palabras: “ Doing, without being interested in what one is doing, results in relatively little permanent learning, since it is reasonable to suppose that only the material can be meaningfully incorporated into cognitive structure on a long term basis, which is relevant to areas of concern in the psychological field of the individual.” (Motivación en el aula de lengua extranjera, Maria Elvira Barrios Espinosa, Universidad de Málaga). In this case, students’ learning was fostered by doing, by working on the activities presented by the teacher . There was an individual intrinsic interest that helped the students learn without being forced to work on the activities in the classroom or learn more about the language. It can be seen that this concept comes from a psychological point that does not relate too much to the language learning in the classroom; but to mental processes it describes more deeply what *motivation* is.

Motivation according to this investigation

From all of these concepts, it can be concluded that *motivation* is mainly affective factors , desires, feelings, efforts, interests that can be intrinsic or extrinsic and that help students to reach a final goal which in this case is to get into their majors. The intrinsic desires, feelings or interests students have will keep them motivated enough to get better grades, and in order to get this, they have to not only interact with the teacher, but also with their partners, and participate more in class.

In relation to extrinsic *motivation*, it can be said that students can get better motivated if there is a good environment, good relationships among the classmates, teacher’s attitudes in relation to the students’ efforts, for example when the teacher praises the students; in addition, students are motivated to learn a foreign language if

they have a good attitude towards the language, if they make a lot of efforts to continue improving, and if they have other interests to learn the language as for example: to go to other English speaking countries, to get a scholarship to visit such countries, to learn the language because it is a job requirement, and even because it is part of their hobbies as it is to listen to music in English.

2-Interaction.

Another concept that is very important in our research is the one about *interaction* that was defined in different ways by many authors. The first concept that was gotten from the review of literature was the following described by Wagner in 1994. He described “*Interaction* as an attribute of the educational process and rely heavily on the interactive properties of 3rd Generation network technology for delivering teaching to learners(technological function) .” Although it is known that this concept relates to technology, the most important aspect was the one about *interaction* being an attribute of the educational process. This definition focused to some extent on the objective of this study which is to get a complete definition of what *interaction* means in the educational process. Such attribute gives quality to the type of learning and teaching process.

Wagner (1994,1997) also gave another definition that is not so related to technology , but it described interaction as “an interplay and exchange in which individuals and groups influence each other”. Thus, *interaction* is when there are “reciprocal events requiring two objects and two actions”. Interplay can be the mutual support from one student to the other. When having group activities, the main goal is that students cooperate by interacting with other classmates; consequently, there is a positive influence that makes the students learn in a comfortable environment.

It is clear that reciprocal events among students help *interaction*; however for this investigation (Wagner) is not appropriated because it reduces itself to two objects and two actions. In this case when working in groups, there could be more than two subjects involved in the activity, especially when talking about large classes. As a result, in the case of UNAN-Leon the use of a broader concept is needed in which it tackles more than two objects.

- 1- “ Interaction: a process in which people/things have a reciprocal effect upon each other through their actions... the interpersonal aspects of the communicative event..” ⁵ This concept was similar to the previous definition about *interaction* given by Wagner in relation to the role that reciprocal events play in order to produce *interaction*.

Students shared information by doing the activities in the classroom influencing one to others through the exchange of knowledge, topics and learning. It can be criticized from these two concepts (Wagner and Malamah) seem too general to be taken into account in this case study. They relate to something broader which is social interaction without taking into account the educational goals which are more specific.

⁵ Malamah-Thomas, Ann. Classroom Interaction: “Defining Classroom Interaction.” (Oxford New York: Toronto,1987), p.3.

- 2- “*Interaction* means acting reciprocally, acting upon each other”⁶. This short definition describes how reciprocal actions, activities and practice are interrelated in the classroom. This concept is very similar to the two the concepts mentioned before that show how two subjects had a certain effect or influence on other individuals. As it was said before, to describe classroom interaction is needed more specific information that closely relates to this context.
- 3- From the same author, *interaction* was defined as “a two-way process”(p.8) which it can be positive or negative for learning because such process takes into account the potential for “cooperation” and “conflict.” In the case of the classes, it is very important to take into account students’ attitudes because depending on their actions, discussions, and even interests or intentions, the results can be positive if they have good reactions as enjoying group work, or having better classroom relationships. In contrast, such attitudes could be negative as in this research in which students did not agree and were not tolerant enough to accept others’ opinions, so they started arguing and started disliking group work activity; there was also too much tension and the class did not progress as it was planned by the teacher.

Gilbert and Moore (1998) noted that an accepted definition of interactivity in the literature on computer-mediated instruction was a reciprocal exchange between the technology and the learner, a process which he said was referred to as “feedback.” From this definition, it can be said that *interaction* is the exchange between technology and the learner; however, as it was said before about the definition given by Wagner, such a concept does not relate too much to this research because it was focused on technological aspects. But there is a concept that can be taken out from the definition which is “ feedback” because it does relates to the topic of investigation in that it is an action and reaction process among the individuals involved in the activity.

Taken from chapter V:” El Discurso en el aula de lenguas extranjeras” by Luci Nussbaum, interaction was defined as: “ conjunto de influencias mutuas que ejercen entre si los participantes a lo largo de un acontecimiento de comunicación. A veces se usa el termino para referirse a cualquier tipo de acontecimiento comunicativo(una conversación, una entrevista, los intercambios entre docente y alumnos).”⁷ Nussbaum says that interaction occurs when there are mutual influences among the participants in order to have communication. Although it is agreed with Nussbaum when she refers to foreign language learning and to education, this concept is also too general to describe classroom interaction because it does not specify what kind of influences occur in the language classroom. In the classroom different kinds of influences can happen, beyond mutual influences, there can also be peer or pressure group, special interests, or single issues group that are part of the communicative process.

⁶ Malamah-Thomas, Ann. Classroom Interaction: “Defining Classroom Interaction.” (Oxford New York: Toronto,1987), p.7.

⁷ Nussbaum, Lucy. “El Discurso en el Aula de Lenguas Extranjeras,” Didáctica de las Lenguas Extranjeras en la Educación Secundaria, Barcelona, p.139.

M. Droblyer and Leticia Ekhaml say that interaction serves an important function as it is to encourage reflection and discussion on course topics and concepts.”⁸ This article gives some ideas of the usefulness of *interaction* in the learning process which are to reflect and discuss about the topics or concepts in the classroom. Of course, it is not a complete definition of interaction, but it mentions some important characteristics in the language classroom which are the considerations, deliberations and debates or arguments given in the classroom. In this investigation, students worked on different discussion activities that they really enjoyed because they were exchanging ideas about their own experiences and this is what *interaction* aspires to.

“*Interaction* as an element capable of reducing the distance between learners beliefs and ‘the contexts of relevance in relation to which educational goals and methods are formulated and put into practice’ (Agre, 1999), must be seen as an inseparable part of the teaching/learning process.” This concept coincides with the definition that interests in *interaction* and it is more complete because it is more specific than the other definitions. If there is a reduction of distance among the students’ beliefs and the educational contexts, it is because communication is improved among the students’ learning by having them engage in conversations with others and, at the same time, to motivate them. To reach this, teachers prepared a set of communicative activities and organized a triangulation of the relationships among teachers, students and materials used. Students had a purpose to cooperate one another and put the language into practice, so it was taken into account in order to get better results in the foreign language class

. “*Simultaneous Interaction* : Many students in the class are speaking at the same time, as opposed to sequential *interaction* in which only one person in the class- either the teacher or a student the teacher has called on- is speaking. Small groups facilitate this, because with groups of four, twice as many students are potentially speaking than with groups of 2; this doubles again with groups of 4.”⁹ This definition was taken into account for this research because it describes what happened in the group work activities occurring in the classroom in which teachers asked students to get into groups of 3 or 4 and discuss or debate about a certain topic for 10 minutes . There was a simultaneous *interaction* because students spoke for those minutes about their experiences and there was socialization about the topics in each group. In this way, getting better results in the learning process.

In order to describe something more specific as it is the students themselves, *interaction* is classified as learner-learner *interaction* which is “inter-learner *interaction*, between one learner and other learners, alone or in group settings, with or without the real-time presence of an instructor” (Holmberg, 1986) in (Lynn Stirling, Deborah, 1997). It is relevant to mention that this is the most important aspect in classroom *interaction* because students’ relationships increase the learning situation, and the teacher can be a facilitator without being the center in the class.

⁸ Droblyer, M and Leticia Ekhaml. How interactive are your distance courses? Callaway, Georgia, June 7-9, 2000, p 1-7. Online Source: lekhaml@westga.edu

⁹ Jacobs, George and Christopher, Ward. Analysing Student-student Interaction from Cooperative Learning and Systematic Functional Perspectives. Electronic Journal of Science Education, June 2000, V 4 No. 4.

Interaction according to this investigation

These three last concepts are considered of paramount importance in relation to this research because they describe aspects that contribute to a complete definition of what *interaction* in the language classroom is. So as a summary of them, it can be said that *interaction* is an element that produces communication by practicing speaking, discussions, debates or reflections about certain topics of interests that can occur with different groups of students speaking or sharing opinions at the same time or from learner to learner to be successful in the teaching and learning process.

3-Participation:

According to the Oxford University Press, Advanced Learners Dictionary(1995) to participate “ is to take part or become involved in an activity”. It can be said that in this case students take an active part in contributing to the development of the class by expressing their ideas orally . From the investigation’s point of view, this concept is general because it does not focus on classroom participation which can be described as a whole part in the learning process in order to have a more communicative class.

Equal Participation: “All group members have opportunities to take part in group activities” (Jacobs/Ward, June 2000). This concept is close to the topic of investigation because it is related to what teachers usually intend to do with the students’ participation although it is something that sometimes is not achievable due to the big number of students in the classroom in which because of the time some students are the ones that always participate whereas others stay quiet and do not like to participate for many other reasons, as for example their level of English, fear to speak in public, or because the others make jokes or laugh at them.

Student to Student *participation*: Students can interact with one another by discussing ideas in small groups, or by helping one another during labs when the professor is busy with others.[∞] In this case, there is *participation* because students discuss ideas in their groups without having the teacher’s assistance; however, in this investigation it did not occur like this because most of the students were beginners and required most of the time their facilitator’s help.

“*Participation* is ‘being there’ in more ways than just attending by: coming to class on time and staying the entire period, participating in experiments, and getting to know the instructor. ”[∞]For this investigation, it can be said that this is the most applicable concept for the objectives of this investigation about *participation* because it describes the students’ values and attitudes in relation to class. It means that students’ responsibilities are necessary not only when they come to class on time, when they are present or pay attention, but also when they are doing something in the classroom activities as discussing, arguing, or debating about certain topics.

[∞] “Large Class FAQ: Student Involvement/ Participation.” Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. The Pennsylvania State University. Online Source: celt@psu.edu

Participation according to this investigation:

To conclude, it can be said that *participation* in the classroom is taking part or being involved not only individually, but also in group activities in which students give their opinions or ideas either as sub-groups or as a whole class. It is a lot convenient to have students take an important role in having active exchanging of ideas because the main perspective of this investigation is that the university advances as a whole not through individuals in order to improve students' participation and learning of the foreign language. Therefore, with this research, students' development is tried to improved, not only at the university or professionally, but also in the country and for the whole world. If there is an increase in interaction and participation, the students will become better professionals. In addition, the teacher will save resources, and the class will be more successful.

To show a better outline of the review of literature, a chart with the names of the authors, concepts and the researches' opinions are presented below:

Chart about Motivation.

Authors and Concepts	Critical Opinion of this investigation
Motivation:	
Similarities: Longman Dictionary Instrumental Motivation : types of feelings that have individuals reach a goal. Merce Bernau Integrative Motivation : students' involvement in the activities.	Opinion for this case study: Too general definitions because they are not deeply related to language classroom motivation.
R. Ellis cited Schumann Extrinsic Motivation It refers to the impact of cultural shock and affective factors that influence students' motivation.	Still too general to the context of this investigation.
Maria E. Barrios cited Ausubel Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Learning by doing can have positive psychological results in motivation contributing to permanent learning.	It describes more deeply what motivation is. It does not relate too much to the language learning in the classroom

Chart about Interaction.

Authors and Concepts	Critical Opinion of this investigation
Interaction	
Technological concept: Wagner- Gilbert and Moore Technology broads the areas for the development of interaction in the educational process.	It does not apply to the context of the classrooms at the Año Comun, totally because of the technological limitations already known.
Ann Malamah-Thomas Acting reciprocally, acting upon each other: Process in which people/things have a reciprocal effect upon each other through their actions. In the case of students in the classroom, he points out that interaction is a two-way process that can result in cooperation or conflict.	This is still a general concept which does not go deeply into classroom interaction, much.
Luci Nussb Group of influences: Conjunto de influencias mutuas que ejercen entre si los participantes a lo largo de un acontecimiento de comunicación.	Too general to describe classroom interaction.
M. Droblyer, et al Space for reflection and discussion in the classroom	It gives ideas for the good use of the discussion and reflection in learning in the classroom.
Agre Distance Reduction for learning Reduction of distance between the students' beliefs and the educational contexts in which it participates.	A lot approximated concept to the context of the investigation.
Jacobs/Ward Simultaneous Interaction: Many students in the class interacting at the same time.	Approximated concept for the broad interaction that occurs in the classroom.
Deborah Lynn Stirling Learner-learner interaction: Inter-learner interaction between one learner and other learners.	It takes into account the role of the students for their own learning.

Chart about Participation.

Authors and Concepts	Critical Opinion of this investigation
Participation	
Oxford Dictionary To take or become involved in an activity	Too general because it does not focus on classroom participation
Jacobs/Ward Equal Participation: All group members have opportunities to take part in group activities.	It relates to the topic for the importance of equal participation.
Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (FAQ Internet) Student to student participation: Students can interact with one another by discussing ideas in small groups, not only being there just attending by, or being in on class on time and staying the entire period.	Important concept that is approximated to the concept of participation in the context of this case study.

IX. METHODOLOGY AND STRATEGIES OF INVESTIGATION.

This research tries to collect data focused mainly on the use of qualitative and experimental research through the use of a communicative and participative methodology based on interaction.

Context of Research and data collection:

The AÑO COMUN is a basic year with a duration of two semesters. It intends to balance the students' knowledge of English (basic language), Counseling, Spanish, Mathematics, Sports, and Eje. Before the students get into their majors of preference during one year, students get different skills and strategies to use them when they get into the university. Also, they get adapted to the university system.

Every year the Año Comun teachers were up-dating information, topics or contents to use different materials in the classroom. In the case of English teachers, they had to adapt and relate the topics to those taught in the subject called "Eje". For these reasons, there was not a specific textbook to be used in the classroom and it was also too expensive for the students to afford to buy one book. In addition, English teachers needed to look for different materials from different resources such as. Internet, textbooks, magazines, dictionaries, newspapers, tapes and others.

There were two semesters; each semester consisted of three blocks, in the first semester, researchers identified the problem whereas in the second semester, the plan of action was applied to solve the problem students had in relation to interaction and participation. For each block, teachers divided themselves in different sub-groups the syllabi, look for materials related to the topic, plan and evaluate the different lessons. So what students got the students got at the end was a pamphlet or handout for every block, contents and topics to study. Each handout had a general topic, which was sub-divided in different titles or topics that were five lessons students were going to receive. For example: Environment, sub-topic: Natural Resources in Nicaragua.

The students were evaluated in every block. They had two kinds of group work that could be 15 points each, then an individual quiz that could be 20 points. Also, students had 10 points for attitudes and values that referred to their responsibilities, honesty, punctuality, attendance, participation and respect. There is also a mid-term test, which was 40 points total.

By the year 2003, the Año Comun consisted of a population of 1,935 students. There were 9 teachers of English who had 5 groups of 43 students each one. From those 10 groups, the researchers chose 2 groups that showed problems with interaction and participation.

The instruments used in this case study were two questionnaires applied to the students, a diagnostic test, students' journals, and teacher's observations, dynamic and communicative activities to solve the problem when it was identified.

Questionnaires: This technique was used because the information gotten was more reliable and more effective to carry out this research. It also helped to identify the weaknesses and strengths not only from the teacher, but also from the students from which it was gotten a general schemata of their situation in the classroom in relation to their relationships in class and their participation. The first questionnaire was done in the first semester. It consisted of multiple-choice and yes-no questions(see appendix #)

The diagnostic test was done the first day of class and it was designed for all the students at the Año Comun. Such test was classified in four types of criteria (see chapter X and appendix #)

Researchers' observations were focused on the guided questions already mentioned. They were used to analyze students' behaviors or reactions in their learning process not only individually, but also at the group level. It also analyzed students' difficulties and advances in the process.

The students journals were designed to ask all students to write individually on the same journal and to get into groups and discussed their ideas or comments about anything they wanted to write about.

Dynamic activities were used to get students involved in the learning process by doing activities students could enjoy to lower their fear and had them share their ideas, so that they took risks to interact cooperatively and participate in class.

The different techniques used to get relevant information in a clear way are presented in this chapter.

IX.1 Stages of the strategies used in the investigation.

The following information presents a specific outline that shows the stages that this research followed in the process which at first was qualitative and used communicative and participative methodologies in the classrooms based on the students' interaction.

Stages:

1-Verification of the relevance of the problem

- Checking the existence of the problem in the university classrooms from the researchers' perceptions.
- Polled information about the topic with teachers from the Año Comun.
- Review of some theoretical documents that talk about the importance of this topic.

2-Design of the investigation

Identification of the problem

Selection of the object of study (two groups of students at the Año Comun)

Determining objectives

Selecting strategies, methodologies, techniques and instruments

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Calendar of activities

Identification of financial resources and materials for the investigation

3-Development of the Investigation

Applying Instruments

Systematization of the information

Analysis and Interpretation of the results

Selecting presentation formats of the document

4-Identification and validation of appropriate dynamics and activities to stimulate students' interaction and participation of the two groups of students at the Año Comun.

- Problem Solving activities
- Guessing games
- Information Gaps
- Ranking
- Hangman
- Ball Games to practice the language
- Role Plays
- Dialogs
- Short presentations about a certain topic
- Debates
- Competition games
- Others

The chart below shows the matrix with the strategies the process followed

Stages	Description of the Stages
1. Verification of the relevance of the problem	Existence of the problem Polled information about the topic Review of some theoretical documents
2. Design of the investigation	Identification of the problem Selection of the object of study Determining objectives Selecting strategies, methodologies, techniques and instruments Calendar of activities Identification of financial resources and materials for the investigation
3. Development of the Investigation	Applying Instruments Systematization of the information Analysis and Interpretation of the results Selecting presentation formats
4. Checking the results of the use of communicative dynamics and activities in the classroom	Problem Solving activities, Information Gap, Ranking, Role Plays, Dialogs, Ball Games to practice the language, debates, Ranking, competition games, Role Plays, short presentations, Hangman, Guessing games, and others.

IX.2 Research techniques and Instruments Used.

Classroom Observation:

These observations were classified as *open* observations in which two researchers that will be characterized as teacher A and B in the investigation used to identify problems with interaction and participation in the classroom. Each of the researchers had 5 groups of class from which they chose one they considered the groups with major problems in interaction and participation.

This way of collecting data is called by Wallace (1998) as “real time observation” because through this technique, the observer takes notes of the teaching and learning situation taking place in the language classroom. Such technique uses an impressionistic approach to analyze the data gotten from the observation in which there is flexibility to take the most important information about actual moments in the classroom session, this method of analysis is called *unstructured*.

There was also the exchange implementation of the groups of study. Researcher A observed researcher B, vice versa. On April 30th, 2003 peer-observation was started. Particular aspects were observed of students' behavior when they were asked to work in groups and also when they were asked to participate, with this it was just pretended to identify the problem. It is very important to mention that students were not aware of the research, they did not know why they were observed; it was done because the researches did not want the students react differently or get influenced by the investigation. So students were acting in natural ways.

Such observations were mainly focused on the students' interaction and participation. The teacher's motivation in relation to the students was also taken into account. The data of the results were written on a work notebook. A sample of the result is presented in the appendix number.

Discussion Sessions:

Discussion sessions were implemented about the topics related to the students' interaction and participation in the language classroom. These sessions were focused on the following types of discussion:

1-From teacher to teacher

2-With the group of teachers

The discussion sessions were done after the open observation (1). First, the researchers involved in the observations got together after classes and discussed about relevant aspects of what happened in the lesson. To remember such aspects each researcher read the notebooks and analyzed the specific parts related to interaction and participation. And second, every fifteen days, more specifically on Mondays, all *Año Comun* teachers, the coordinator of the English area, and the coordinator of the *Año Comun* met in order to discuss openly different issues related to the teaching and learning process among which the topic of investigation was one of the points to be discussed.

Information from direct source:

Data from the direct source -the students themselves- were collected using the instrument of academic journals and feedback. In such journals, students wrote on a notebook their impressions and reflections about the day class and the researchers gave written feedback when reading the journals.

Journals were really useful instruments for the investigation. Students were asked to write their opinions, feelings and complains in a free way about the class and classmates without the researcher's influence. As long as students were intended to practice the language, they were asked to try to write their journals in English, but if they could not do so, they could write it in Spanish. Honestly, students were asked to work on their journals in their groups, and choose a secretary to write every body's opinions; however, at some part of this journal writing the researcher realized that the only student who wrote was the only one working on it. This student was the one who knew

English. For this reason, they were asked to continue writing on the same notebook, but individually (see a sample of journal writing in the appendix number:)

In the first day of class of the first semester, researchers applied a diagnostic test to know students' background and level of English. One of the reasons the test was applied was in order to know if their knowledge of the language inhibited them of interacting and participating in the classroom.

Such diagnostic test consisted of choosing the best title for the text and a reading about “ The seven Modern Wonders of the World.” This reading had multiple choice questions and also students had to complete some statements about the text. There was also another reading about occupations called “ find the job that is right for you!.” This reading also had two types of exercises in which the students had to choose their type of personality and explain their answers to a partner, and also they had to answer some questions that they had to discuss the next day of class. This diagnostic test was focused more on reading comprehension, speaking and listening (see appendix number)

Review of Literature:

At the beginning of this research, it was very difficult to find enough literature related to the case study, but then different sources were gotten to get more information. Literature was usually collected from Internet, TESOL Quarterly and Journal Quarterly. Some libraries from different universities were visited to get more books, but the researchers had to make copies of them because they were borrowed for 10 days. copies of the Luxon's Research, FORUM Magazines and some books from the Laboratory were made. With this technique, researchers were trying to investigate about interaction and participation dynamics, and also collecting data about studies related to the research.

Classroom Dynamics:

During the second semester, researchers started using this type of instrument in order to try to solve the problem of interaction and participation of the students in the classroom through the use of a series of communicative dynamics and activities, such as Problem Solving activities, Guessing games, Information Gaps, Ranking, Hangman, Ball Games to practice the language, role Plays, Dialogs, Short presentations about a certain topic, Debates, Competition games, and others.

Below, the summary of the techniques and instruments used in the investigation is shown:

Research Techniques

This research collects data related to our topic of investigation mainly based on the use of qualitative research through a series of communicative and participative methodology focused on interaction. This topic of interaction and participation is very important for our situation in Nicaragua, especially for our universities because there is not too much research done concerning this area; in addition, people have not given the necessary importance to

this topic. By knowing its relevance in the language learning contexts, teachers not only from the universities, but also from other institutions can improve their language conditions, so that their teaching and learning processes can be successful.

Due to the lack of resources or materials, it is necessary to look for alternatives that take advantage of the potential that human resources have and that can be taken from teachers and students in the classroom.

Research Techniques and Instruments Used

Research Techniques	Instruments Used
Classroom Observation	Open observations Register of relevant aspects from the class sessions
Discussion Sessions	Open discussions
Data collection form direct source	Students' journals and teacher's feedback. Diagnostic Test.
Review of literature	Pre-determined formats Reference Indexes
Dynamics	Problem Solving activities, Information Gap, Ranking, Role Plays, Dialogs, Games, and others.

X. PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA.

The information presented below shows the results gotten in the process carried out in this research with its analysis.

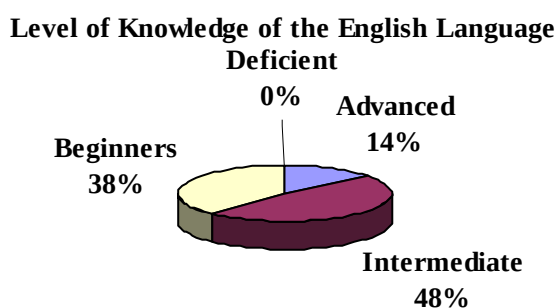
X.1 Diagnostic Test Results

The diagnostic test was done the first day of class for the students at the Año Comun. Such test was classified in four types of criteria: students who got 16 - 20 got an A that can be considered as advanced level; those who got 11 -15 got a B which is classified as intermediate; those who got 6-10 got C that is denominated as beginner; and students who got from 1-5 got D which is considered deficient.

Table No. 1 Level of knowledge of the English language from Group 1.

Level of knowledge of the English language	No. of students	Percentage
Advanced	6	14%
Intermediate	20	48%
Beginners	16	38%
Deficient	0	0%
Total	42	100%

Graphic 1



In order to interpret the data, it could be observed that a good majority of the students was in an intermediate and an advanced level (62%). This made the researchers think that such 62% of students did not have problems with English knowledge which could inhibit success in interaction and participation in the classroom. However, it could also be observed that almost 40% of the students had a beginner level that alerted to the possible obstacle that could mean this low level of knowledge that could increase this problem.

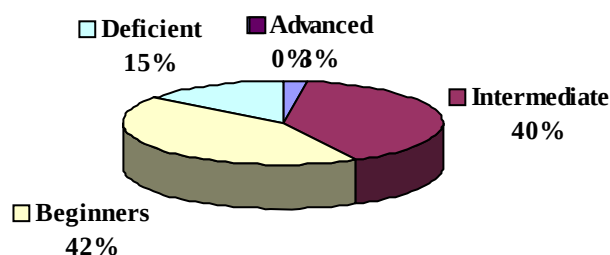
The conclusion of the diagnostic test for the first group is that it could be said that this group was divided between the ones who had a low level of English and the ones who had an acceptable or higher level of the language (38% vs. 62%). Therefore, the identification of each one of the students' level that belonged to these two groups resulted very important to the implementation of communicative and interactive methodology that could expect that those students with a higher level of English could contribute to increase the level of the students with low level.

Table No. 2. Level of Knowledge of the English Language from Group 2.

Level of knowledge of the English language	No. of students	Percentage
Advanced	1	3%
Intermediate	16	40%
Beginners	17	42%
Deficient	6	15%
Total	40	100%

Graphic 2.

Level of Knowledge of the English Language



In the interpretation of the data from the second group, it could be observed that a 3% of the students in the group had an advanced domain of the English language. Also, there were also two very similar groups: the students with an intermediate level of 40% and the beginners (42%), and a last percentage of students with a deficient knowledge of 15%. In contrast, a high percentage equivalent to 57% shows a beginner or deficient level, which could be a barrier for interaction and participation.

To conclude about this second group, it could be said that it was divided between students who had an acceptable or high level and those who had a low level. Furthermore, the recognition of these two groups' level was of paramount importance to the use of communicative and interactive methodologies to be implemented in the classroom, so that students shared knowledge, especially those with a higher level that could help the ones with a lower to increase their level.

Comparative Results from Groups I and II

In order to interpret the similarities between the two groups, it is important to mention that both groups had a division of advanced/intermediate students and beginners/deficient students. The first division of advanced/intermediate students showed that they did not have any trouble with knowing the language whereas the second division showed that these students could have obstacles in interacting with others and participating due to their poor knowledge of English

In another similarity between group I and II, it can be said that group I did not show any condition of deficient knowledge of the language whereas group II showed a small percentage of students with a deficient level of English.

As a conclusion of this analysis, it is necessary to mention that although there was a short difference between groups A and B, the distinction saw about the two groups of students with acceptable or high level and low deficient level could be enjoyed by a group of students that interacted with specific groups while for the others could be an obstacle for their low involvement in group activities and low participation when asked to do so caused by their low level of English.

Comparative Chart of the Results of the Diagnostic Test for groups I and II

Groups	Similarities	Differences	Conclusions
Group I	Combination of students with acceptable/high and low level of English	0% of deficient knowledge of English	Students with high level of English could enjoy group activities and their participation. Student with lower level could be restrained to do so.
Group II	Mixture of students with acceptable/high and low level of English	15% of deficient knowledge of English	There was a minimum percentage of students with deficient knowledge who can be inhibited to interact and participate in class.

X.2 Interaction and Participation from the Students' points of view

Choosing this type of instrument, which was the questionnaire, was much easier to do because it was just applied to the groups of students simultaneously. It saved time because it was faster. Students were given this questionnaire with 6 Yes-No, Information and Multiple Choice Questions. They were given the questionnaires at the end of the class, so that they could write their answers with more time and in a more comfortable setting.

Because of the importance of having students' opinion about group interaction and participation in the classroom, the questionnaire was designed to gather information about their relationships in the group activities. Such a questionnaire given to the two groups of students selected from the *Año Comun* revealed the following results:

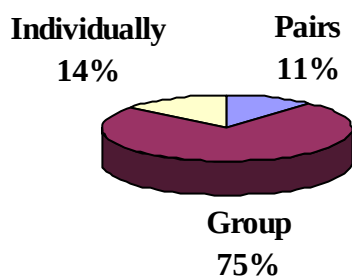
Students' study choices in the classroom from Semester I, Group I

Table 3. Students' study choices in the classroom.

Answers	No. of students	Percentage
Pairs	4	11%
Group	26	75%
Individually	5	14%
Total	35	100%

Graphic 3.

Students' study choices in the classroom



In relation to the students' availability to work in groups, group I presented the following results. 26 students that were an equivalent of 75% preferred to work in groups when having a task in class. 4 students(11%) opted for doing work in pairs, and a minority of 5 students, that is 14%, chose to work individually.

The analysis represents the following: from the beginning, it is identified that a potential of students chose the implementation of group activities given to the situation that almost 86% of students preferred to work in groups or in pairs. Nevertheless, 11% of the students that preferred to work in pairs did not exactly opt one group

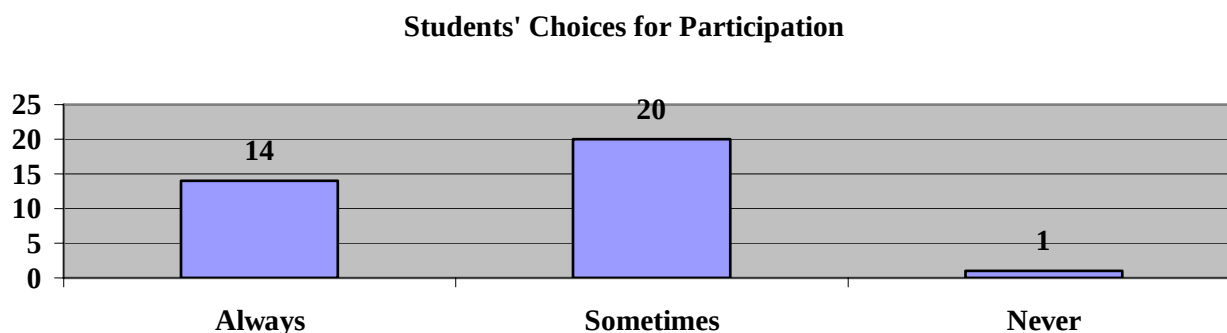
modality; however, this allowed them to interact in direction to a better learning that permitted them to increase their knowledge and be better prepared for the presentation in the classroom.

Group # I mentioned as their main reason why they liked to work in groups the easiness of working like this, their second reason was that they could help more in groups and understand better. Other less important reasons were that working in groups was more comfortable, there was better work, it was interesting; students worked faster, they did not like to work individually; there was more concentration, and more ideas.

Table 4. Students' choices for participation

Answers	N° of Students	%
Always	14	40
Sometimes	20	57.14
Never	1	2.86
Total	35	100

Graphic 4.



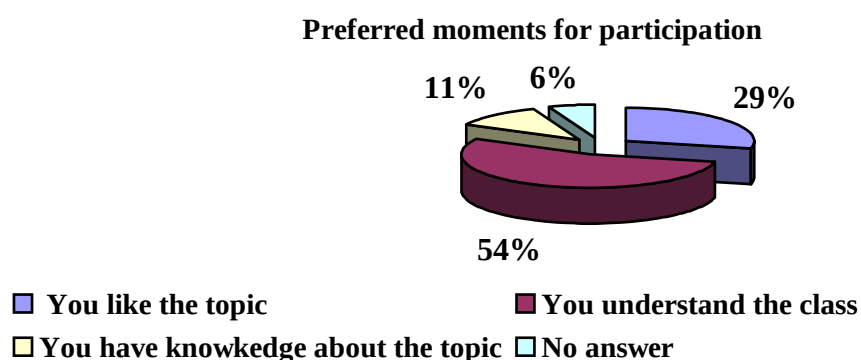
In this group, it was observed that 20 students that were equivalent of 57.14% answered that they sometimes liked to participate in class; however, 14 students that were 40% said that they always liked to participate in class and one student that was 2.86% answered that he never participated in class.

In conclusion to the previous answers from the students of this group, it seems that there was a high availability to participate in class activities (97.14%). Therefore, for each teacher, it was important to know from the beginning, the students' potential for participation and take advantage of this.

Table 5. Preferred moments for participation

Options	N° of students	%
You like the topic	10	28.57
You understand the class	19	54.29
You have knowledge about the topic	4	11.43
No answer	2	5.714
Total	35	100.00

Graphic 5.



The data from this group showed the following results: 19 students that were an equivalent of 54.29% answered that they liked to participate in class when they understood the lesson. 10 students that were 28.57% said that they liked to participate when they liked the topic. Other 4 students who were the 11.43% answered that they liked to participate when they had background knowledge about the topic and the last 2 students that were the 5.71% did not answer the question.

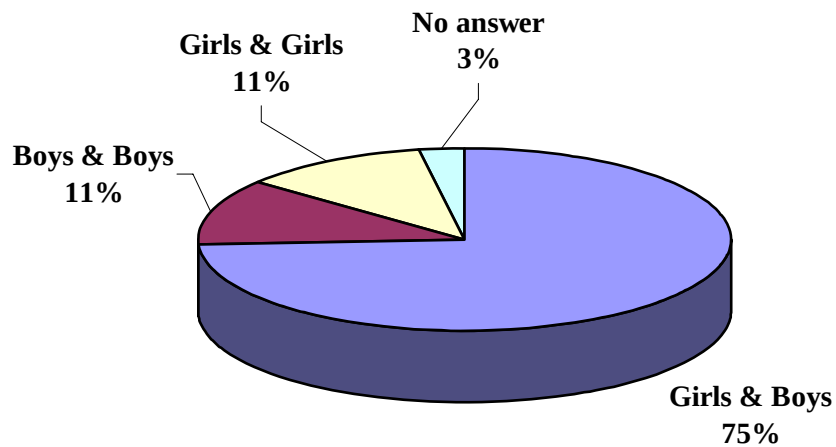
For the teaching situation, it is very important to observe that the results demanded teachers to work deeply in class comprehension when teaching and stimulate the autodidactic practices in students that allowed them increase their general levels of knowledge helping them to be better prepared for the participation in the language classroom.

Table 6. Preferences of the type of classmate for class study

Options	N° of students	Percentage
Girls & Boys	26	75%
Boys & Boys	4	11%
Girls & Girls	4	11%
No answer	1	3%
Total	35	100%

Graphic 6.

Preferences of the type of classmate for Class Study



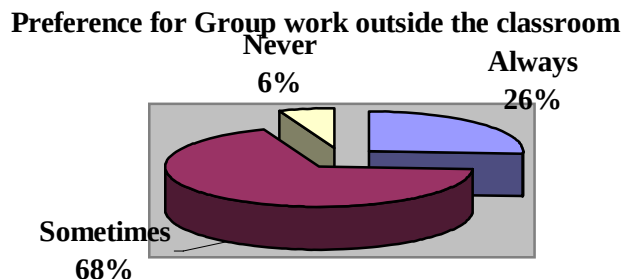
The information gathered from this data showed that 26 students that were an equivalent of 75% answered that they liked to work in mixed groups. Other 4 students who were 11% said that they liked to work with boys whereas other 4 students that were 11% answered that they liked to work with girls. One student that was 3% did not give any answer to the question.

An analysis of this data revealed that the most accepted way to work in groups was the modality of mixed groups of boys and girls. 22% of the students chose to work either with only girls or only boys, so it could be seen that the minority of students had only one choice for group work activities.

Table 7. Preference for group work outside the classroom

Options	N° of students	Percentage
Always	9	26%
Sometimes	24	68%
Never	2	6%
Total	35	100%

Graphic 7.



The following information showed that 24 students that were an equivalent of 68% answered that they sometimes liked to work in groups outside the classroom while 9 students that were a percentage of 26% answered that they always did so. Other two students that were 6% said that they never liked to work in groups outside the classroom.

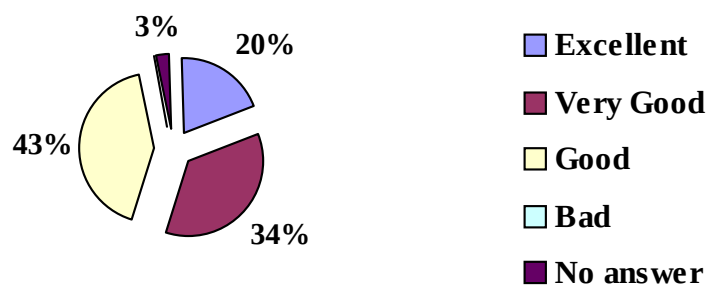
With this data, it could be observed that almost 96% of the students had some or a lot of preference for group work outside class; therefore, this modality of group work stayed as evidence of teaching techniques to reinforce learning not only in the language classroom, but also outside. But there was also a minority of students that did not like to work in groups outside class.

Table 8. Students' perceptions of their participation.

Options	N° of Students	Percentage
Excellent	7	20%
Very Good	12	34%
Good	15	43%
Bad	0	0%
No answer	1	3%
Total	35	100%

Graphic 8.

Students' perceptions of their participation



In relation to the students discerning about their participation in class, 15 students that were the equivalent of 43% answered that their participation was good; other 12 students that were 34% answered that their participation was very good; 7 students (20%) said that their participation was excellent; and 1 student did not answer the question.

Practically, almost all students answered that their participation was good and excellent and this was supposed to expect from good to excellent levels of participation from the students.

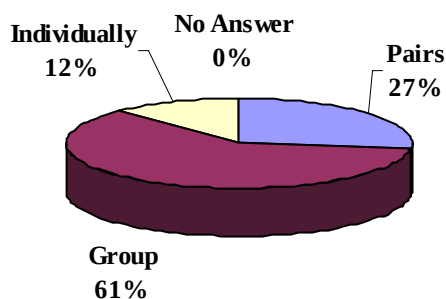
Students' study choices in the classroom from Semester I, Group II

Table 9. Students' study choices in the classroom

Answers	N° of students	Percentage
Pairs	11	27%
Group	25	61%
Individually	5	12%
No Answer	0	0%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 9.

Students' study choices in the classroom



In relation to this data, 25 students (61%) preferred to work in groups; 11 students (27%) opted to work in pairs, and one minority of students (12%) chose to work individually.

It can be observed that students had a high availability to work in groups due to the fact that 88% preferred to work in groups or in pairs; however, 27% of the students that preferred to work in pairs did not exactly choose to work in groups. But they could be available to interact to get better learning, so that they could increase their knowledge of the language and have chances to participate in class.

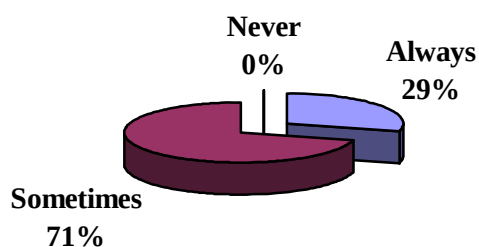
Group II expressed as their main reason why they liked to work in groups the one about the fact that they got more ideas to do their class work. Other less important reasons were : they worked better, they got more help, they understood and learned more, it was easier, it was interesting, dynamic, they worked faster and they did not like to work individually.

Table 10. Students' choices for participation

Options	N° of students	Percentage
Always	12	29%
Sometimes	29	71%
Never	0	0%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 10.

Students' choices for participation



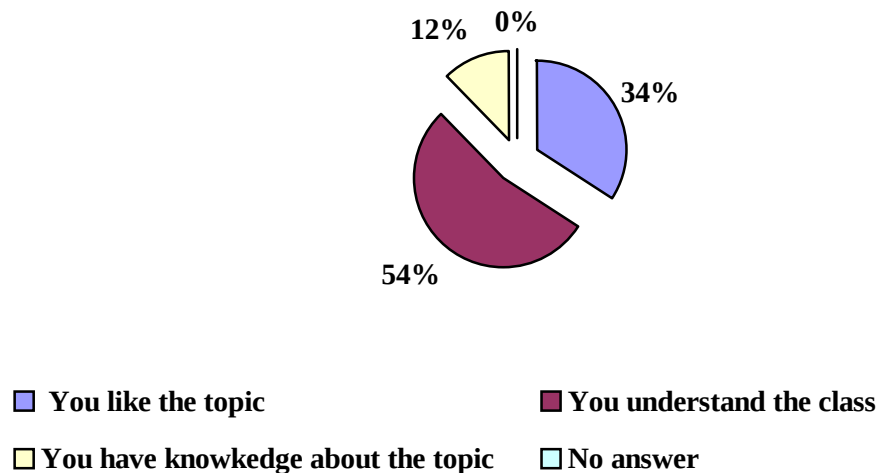
In this group, it was observed that 29 students(71%) answered that they sometimes liked to participate in class. Other 12 students (29 %) answered that they always liked to participate in class. There was not choice for *never*. It seemed that these students had a high availability to participate in the classroom what could be taken into account for foreign language learning success.

Table 11. Preferred moments for participation

Options	N° of Students	Percentage
You like the topic	14	34%
You understand the class	22	54%
You have knowledge about the topic	5	12%
No answer	0	0%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 11.

Preferred moments for participation



The data from this group showed the following results : 22 students (54 %) answered that they liked to participate in class when they understood the lesson; other 14 students (34%) answered that they liked to participate when they liked the topic; 5 students (12%) answered that they participated when they had background knowledge of the topic.

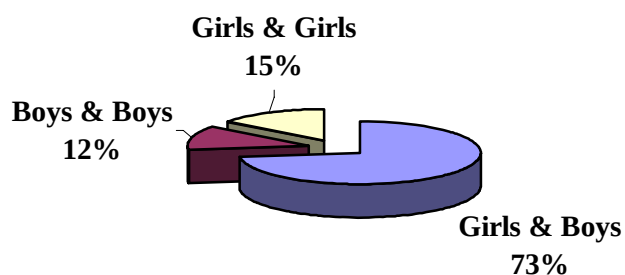
To the language teaching, it is important to observe these results that demanded teachers improve their teaching methods so that students learned better and encouraged students the self study in order to increase their general language knowledge, so that they felt that participation was much easier in the classroom.

Table 12. Preferences of the type of classmates for class study

Options	N° of Students	Percentage
Girls & Boys	30	73%
Boys & Boys	5	12%
Girls & Girls	6	15%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 12.

Preferences of the type of classmate for class study



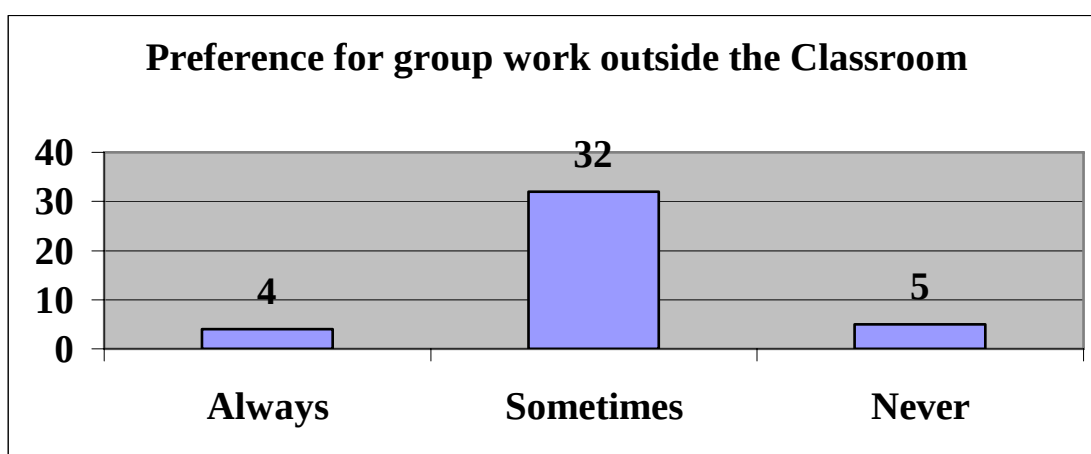
30 students (73%) answered that they liked to work with boys and girls; 6 students (15%) answered that they liked to work only with girls whereas 5 students (12%) said that they only liked to work with boys.

To conclude with this analysis, it could be seen that most of the students liked to work with mixed students, boys or girls, showing in this way that there were not big problems in interacting with students of the same gender whereas a short percentage, it means the minority, liked to work with one of the genders, either boys or girls.

Table 13. Preference for group work outside the classroom

Options	N° of students	Percentage
Always	4	10%
Sometimes	32	78%
Never	5	12%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 13.



This data showed that 32 students (78%) answered that they sometimes liked to work in groups outside the classroom while 5 students (12%) said that they never liked to work in groups when it was outside the classroom, and 4 students (10 %) answered that they always liked to work outside class.

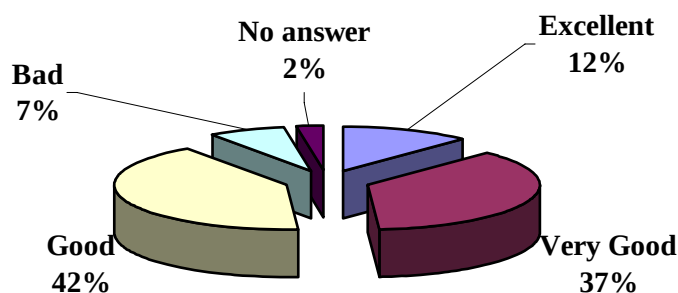
In conclusion to the previous answers given by these students, it was indicated that 88% of students had some or big preference for work outside the classroom, so this teaching technique was still very important for the students' learning of the language.

Table 14. Students' perceptions of their participation

Options	N° of students	Percentage
Excellent	5	12
Very Good	15	37
Good	17	42
Bad	3	7
No answer	1	2
Total	41	100%

Graphic 14.

Students' Perceptions of their Participation



17 students (42%) answered that their participation in class was good; other 15 students, it meant 37% answered that they had a very good participation; 5 students (12 %) said that their participation was excellent; other 3 students (7%) answered that they had a bad participation; and only 1 student that was the equivalent of 2% did not answer the question.

This data showed that students had from good to excellent participation with a percentage of 91 %. With this, it could be expected from good to high levels of participation from students.

Types of Preferences of Interaction and Participation in the Language Classroom

In order to interpret the similarities and differences between the two groups, it is of paramount importance to describe that in the interaction of group I, there was an 86% of the students who liked to work in groups and pairs whereas in group II the 88% liked to work in groups and pairs. The most important reason for choosing these two choices in group I was that they had better work if they did it in groups and pairs while group II had a different choice which was the one that they had more ideas.

In relation to the students' preferences of the type of classmate they liked to work in class activities, these results were gotten: 74.29% from group I preferred to work either with boys and girls whereas in group II, there was a 73% of students that chose this mixed students to work with.

Talking about students' preferences for group work outside the classroom, students answered that the 95% had some or big preference for group work outside class while in group II, there was a percentage of 90% who referred to this choice.

Related to the students' preferred moments for participation, group I had a percentage of 54% of students who liked to participate when they understood the lesson whereas in group II got also a percentage of 54%. It could be seen that the two groups were very similar in their choices of moment for participation.

In relation to students' choices for participation, there was a 97% of students who always or sometimes liked to participate in class while in group II, a 100% answered that they always or sometimes liked to participate in class activities. Both groups showed a high availability for participation in class.

The last result was the one about the students' perceptions of their participation in class in which group I answered that they had an excellent, very good and good participation with an average of 97%. In addition, group II answered that they had an excellent, very good and good participation with a percentage of 91%.

It was supposed that students had a good interaction and participation in class activities at the beginning of the first semester. It meant that students seemed to have a high level of motivation that was reflected when they worked with other students and when they were involved in the lesson activities.

Comparative Chart about interaction and participation from students' points of view

Group	Similarities	Differences	Conclusion
Group I	Students liked to work in groups or in pairs.	86% of the students liked to work in groups or pairs.	It seems that students had a lot of similar characteristics concerning their interaction and participation in the classroom. It was supposed that they did not have any problem with these two areas of the teaching and learning process.
	Students liked to work with boys and girls.	Students worked in groups to improve their work.	
		95% liked to work outside the classroom.	
	Students liked to work in groups outside the classroom.	97% of the students always or sometimes liked to participate in class.	
Group II	They liked to work in groups outside the classroom.	Students had a perception of their participation from excellent, very good to good with a 97%.	However, there were slight differences between the two groups when presenting their reasons why they interacted or participated in class.
		90% of the students liked to work outside the classroom	
	They liked to participate when they understand, both with 54%.	88% liked to work in groups or in pairs	
	They always or sometimes liked to participate.	Students worked in groups to have more ideas.	
		90% of the students always or sometimes liked to participate in class.	
	Most of the students had an excellent, very good or good level of their participation.	Students had a perception of their participation from excellent, very good to good with a 91%.	

X.3 Interaction according to Students' opinions for Semester II. Group I.

The following instrument was Questionnaire # 2 which was used in the second semester on October 28th, 2003. At that time, there were 29 students in group I from researcher A and 41 students in group II from researcher B. Most of the students missing in group I was because such students did not pass one or two subjects at the *AÑO COMUN*, for example: Mathematics or Eje*.

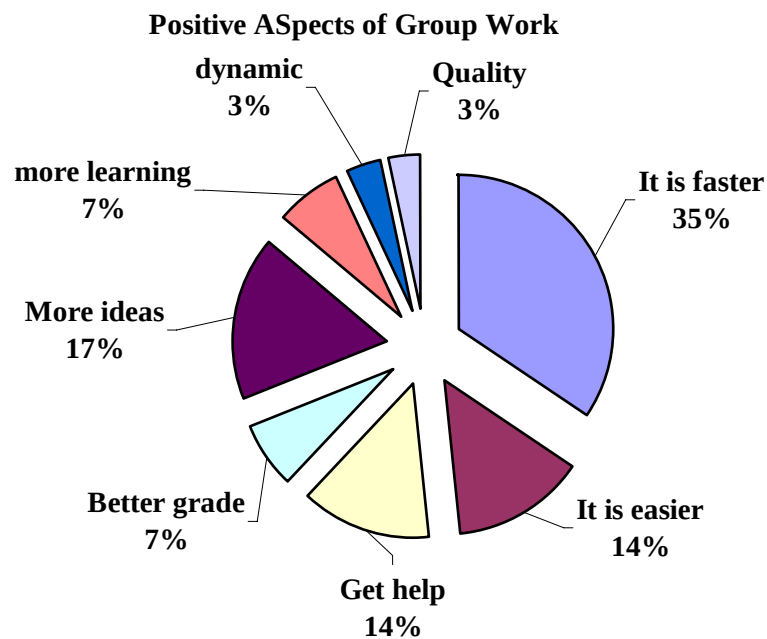
This questionnaire was done because it tried together more information not directly observable. So an open questionnaire was used in which students had to answer the questions in a free way in order to get data about students' opinions, comments about their feelings in class. The advantages of these questions were that the questions were easy to design, but it was difficult to analyze the answers, and to categorize them in relation to *interaction*. The information presented below shows the results gotten from the students' answers to the open questionnaire

Table 15. Positive Aspects of Group Work

Answers	N° of students	Percentage
It is faster	10	35%
It is easier	4	14%
Get help	4	14%
Better grade	2	7%
More ideas	5	17%
more learning	2	7%
dynamic	1	3%
Quality	1	3%
Total	29	100%

* It is one of the subjects in which students discuss and analyse relevant topics about the current situation in Nicaragua. Other subjects have to related to this subject area.

Graphic 15.



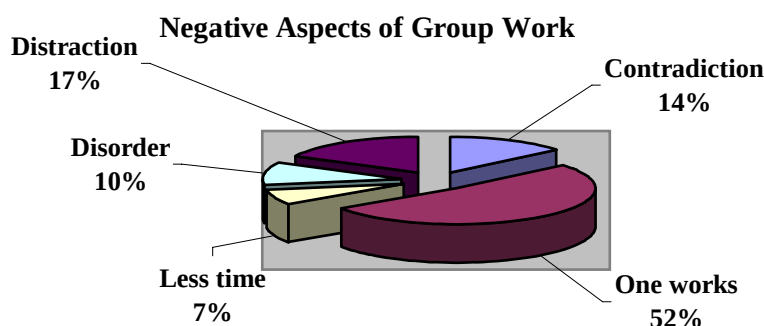
According to the students' results about the advantages of group work, this is the information gotten: 35% of the students answered that one advantage of having group work was because it was faster; other 17% of students said that they got more ideas; 14% answered they got help from other students while other 14% said they liked it because it was easier. 7% of other students answered that they got a better grade and 7% of more students said that they worked in groups because there was more learning whereas a 3% of other students said that they liked it because it was more dynamic and other 3% of students said they did it to get more quality with group work.

Analyzing the advantages of having group work activities in the classroom, it can be said that 87% of the students liked it because they worked in less time with more ideas because they helped each other and learned more. It was a good strategy to use in the language classroom because the weak students learned from those who knew more, so there was a necessity to interact one another to fulfill the work requirements making the exercise much easier for them. Other reasons for the 13% of students said that working in groups had them get a better grade. In addition, other said they liked to do it because it was more dynamic and motivated them to have more quality in the type of assignment asked by the teachers through the interaction among themselves.

Table 16. Negative Aspects of Group Work

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
Contradiction	4	14%
One works	15	52%
Less time	2	7%
Disorder	3	10%
Distraction	5	17%
Total	29	100%

Graphic 16



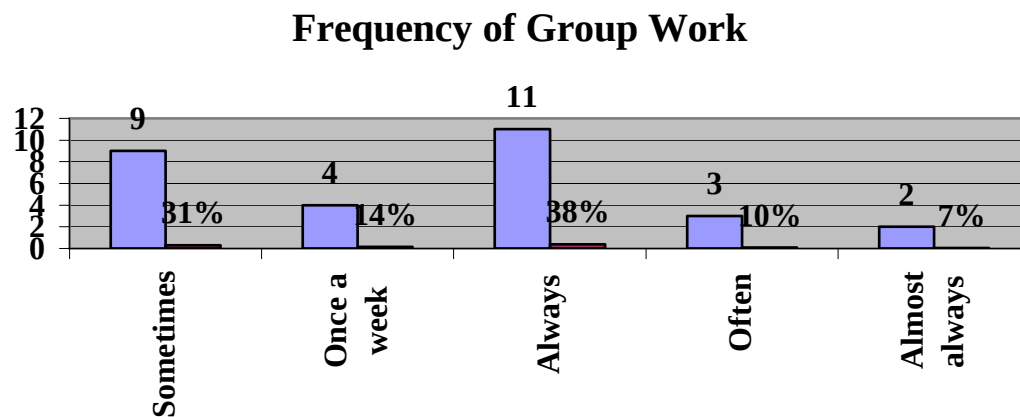
In relation to this group's answers about the disadvantages of group work, the answers were the following: 52% of the students said that they did not like it because only one person worked; other 17% did not like it because there was too much distraction; 14% of other students answered that there was contradiction; 10% said they did not like it because there was disorder and a 7% said they did not like group work because they had less time.

The interpretation of this data showed the importance of paying attention to group work activities just to see if all of the students worked because as it could be seen, 52% of the students said that they did not like to work in groups because only one student was the one doing all the work while the others did not do anything. Maybe the reason why they did it so was because such student who worked was the one who knew more about the language. Other reasons why students disliked this type of work were because there was too much distraction and contradiction that was described as the students' discussions, arguments in which students did not agree with what others expressed in the group activity. It happened because there was not tolerance to accept others' ideas what caused that students had less time to finish the class work assigned.

Table 17. Frequency of Group Work

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
Sometimes	9	31%
Once a week	4	14%
Always	11	38%
Often	3	10%
Almost always	2	7%
Total	29	100%

Graphic 17.



The results gotten from this data were the following: 38% of students answered that they always liked to work in groups in class; 31% said that they sometimes liked to work like this type of work whereas other 14% liked this interactive activity once a week. 10% of other students said that they often liked group work and a 7% answered that they almost always liked group work.

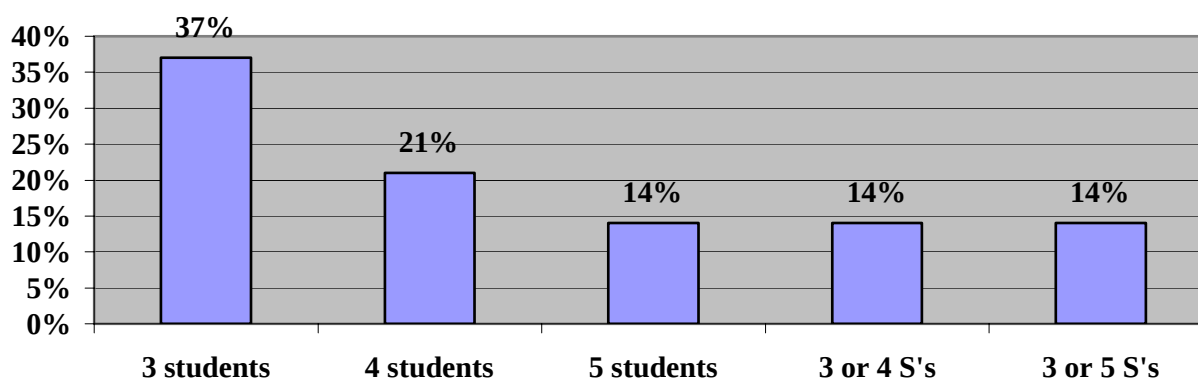
The analysis about the frequency students liked group work showed the following percentages: 55% of the students said that liked to work in groups for the advantages already mentioned and that they liked it always, often and almost always; in contrast, 45% of the students said that sometimes or once a week they liked group work because of the disadvantages already described. As it could be seen, this group seemed to show a slight division by those students who approved group work whereas the others could enjoy individual work because they did not like to work in group too often in class.

Table 18. Amount of Students in a group

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
3 students	11	37%
4 students	6	21%
5 students	4	14%
3 or 4 S's	4	14%
3 or 5 S's	4	14%
Total	29	100%

Graphic 18

Amount of Students in a Group



The results showed that 37% of students answered that they liked to work in groups of 3 students; other 21% said that they preferred groups of 4; other 14% answered that they liked groups of 3 or 4 students; and other last 14% of students liked 3 or 4 students in their groups.

In the analysis, it could be observed that 72% of the students liked to work in groups of 3 or 4 students whereas a minority of 28% of students liked to work with 3 or 5 students in class activities. It seemed that when there was a less amount of students, it was much easier the type of group work because there was more organization not only for group work, but also for the time given to work on the activity.

Table 19. Choice of Students to work with

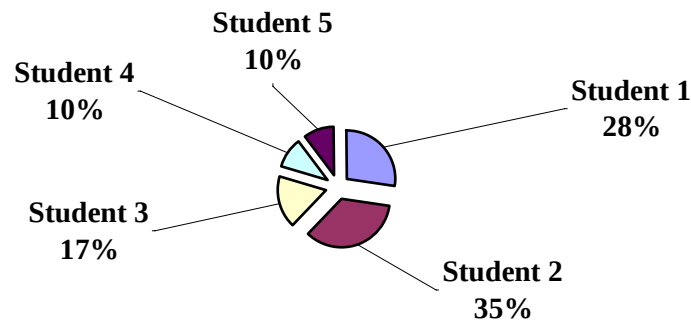
Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
Student 1	8	28%
Student 2	10	35%
Student 3	5	17%
Student 4	3	10%
Student 5	3	10%
Total	29	100%

Table 20 Positive Characteristics of the Students chosen

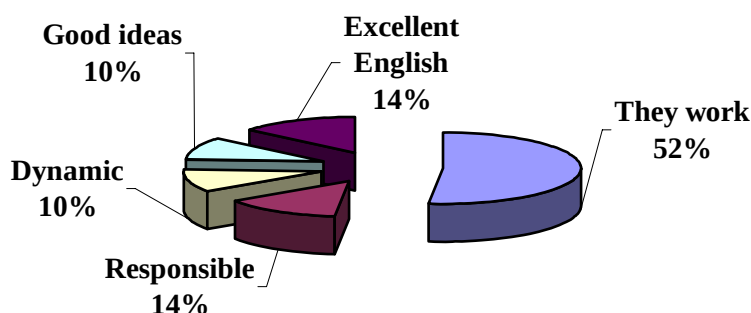
Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
They work	15	52%
Responsible	4	14%
Dynamic	3	10%
Good ideas	3	10%
Excellent English	4	14%
Total	29	100%

Graphic 19

Positive Characteristics of the Students chosen



Graphic 20.



When asking the students who was the person they liked to work with, 35% of the students answered that they liked to do it with student 2; 28% liked it with student 1; 17% liked to work with student 3; 10 % liked student 4 and 10% of other students liked to work with student 5.

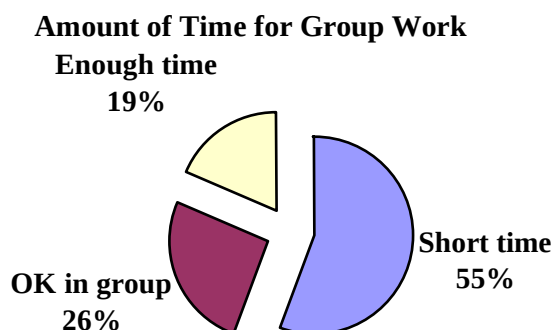
In relation to the results about the qualities the chosen students had, students answered that 52% of them said that these students chosen liked to work; other 14% answered that they had excellent English; 14% of other students said they chose them because they were responsible; 10% said that they chose them because they gave good ideas and other 10% of students said that they chose them because such students were dynamic.

It can be perceived that an 80% of students chose students 1, 2 and 3 because they were interested in working, they had a good level of English and they were responsible with their class work. The good aspect of this was that there was more independence of the students because instead of having one leader, they had the choice of other students to work with at the moment of the given task. There was also more responsibility of these students for their own learning. The other 20% of students that chose a minority group, such as students 4 and 5 said they did it so because they had good ideas and they were dynamic. As it can be observed, most of the good qualities presented in the students chosen had to do with their characteristics in class activities and their personality. In general, it can be said that these students were leaders because most of the group trusted them to work together or to ask a simple question about an unknown word. The others were not highly asked because although they had good ideas and were dynamic, maybe they lacked the other important characteristics the leaders had.

Table 21. Amount of Time for Group Work

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
Short time	15	59%
OK in group	7	24%
Enough time	5	17%
Total	29	100%

Graphic 21



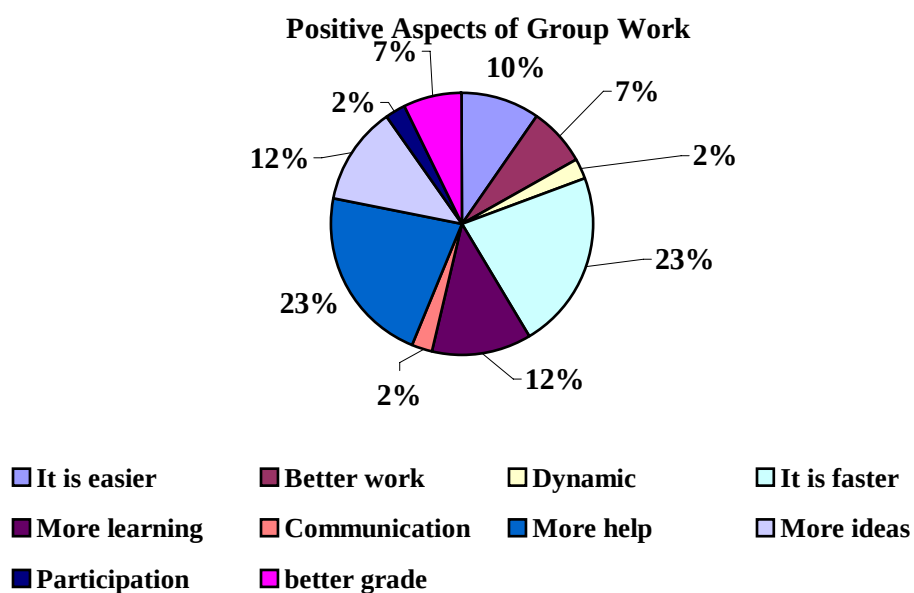
The majority of the students who were a 59% said that they were given a short time for group work activities maybe because they did not have group strategies to work in groups or because there was too much distraction or lack of tolerance among the students as it was said before when talking about the negative aspects of having group work. In contrast, the minority of students which was a 41% said that the time given for this type of work was right because they had a group activity and that such time was enough in order to accomplish the assignments given by the teacher.

Interaction according to Students' opinions for Semester II. Group II

Table 22. Positive Aspects of Group Work

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
It is easier	4	10%
Better work	3	7%
Dynamic	1	2%
It is faster	9	23%
More learning	5	12%
Communication	1	2%
More help	9	23%
More ideas	5	12%
Participation	1	2%
better grade	3	7%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 22

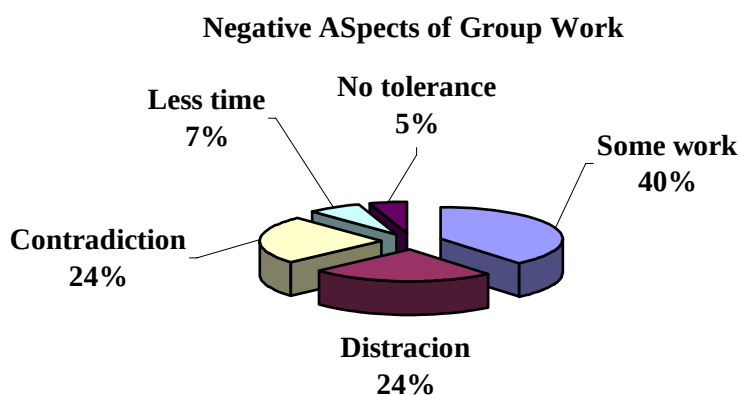


The results showed that the advantages of having group work in the classroom were the following: 10% of the students answered that group work was easier; 7% said that they got a better work; 2% answered that it was dynamic; 23% answered that it was faster; 12% said that there was more learning; 2% said that there was communication; 23% answered that they liked it because they helped each other; 12% said that they got more ideas; 2% said that there was participation; and 7% answered that they got better grade.

The analysis of these results showed that 80% of the students considered that this strategy helped them in their learning because they helped each other when they had difficulties in class, they solved problems, they worked faster and shared their opinions with the other classmates. As it could be seen, interaction among the students could have several positive effects that helped them to be successful in their learning process. In addition, a minority of 20% of students considered that if they worked in groups, they could improve their grades, they could have more communication for the dynamic of group work, and all of them participated to improve their language learning.

Table 23. Negative Aspects of Group Work

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
Some work	16	40%
Distraction	10	24%
Contradiction	10	24%
Less time	3	7%
No tolerance	2	5%
Total	41	100%



Graphic 23

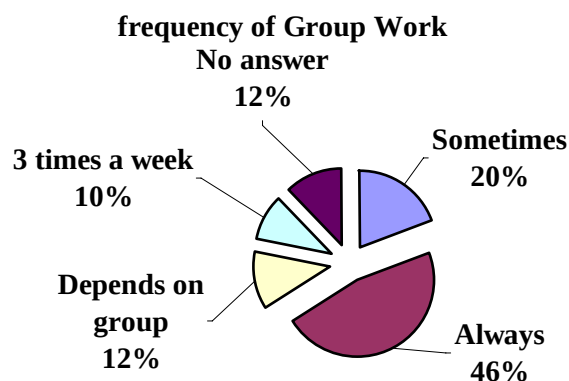
The results gotten from the disadvantages of working in groups were the following: 40% of the students said that when assigned to work in groups, some of them worked; other 24% of the students mentioned that when they worked in groups, there was distraction; other same 24% of them said that there was contradiction from one student to the other; 7% of other students said that there was less time when working in groups; and 5% said that there was not tolerance.

The interpretation of these results is that the majority of the students which was a 64% showed different reasons why group work was a disadvantage, the main reason was that some students worked while the others were distracted doing something not related to class activities, or related to the English class itself. In addition to this, 36% of students thought that when having group work, there were problems of having contradiction among themselves, they did not take others' opinions into account, or they did not respect what the others said; as a result of this, students did not have enough time to finish their class work, it meant they had less time to hand in their assignments.

Table 24. Frequency of Group Work

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
Sometimes	8	20%
Always	19	46%
Depends on group	5	12%
3 times a week	4	10%
No answer	5	12%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 24



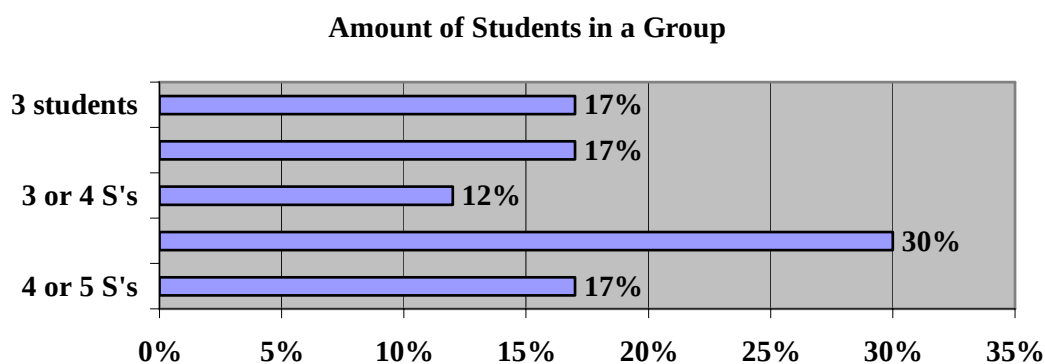
The results showed that a 46% of the students said that they always liked to work in groups; 20% answered that they sometimes liked to work in groups in class activities; 12% of other students said that they liked to work in groups depending on the group they were going to work with; other 12% of the students did not answer the question and the last 10% said that they liked group work only 3 times a week as their frequency for group work.

The analysis of these results shows that 46% of the students always liked to work in groups for the advantages mentioned in the previous results whereas other 42% of students mentioned that they sometimes liked to work in groups depending on the type of students they were going to work with; or they could work in groups 3 times a week. Therefore, students seemed to have other preferences as to combine individual, pair and group work. As it could be seen, there was a division of the students' choices for the frequency for group work because half of the group of students thought that it was important to do group work while the other half liked other types of choices as the ones mentioned before.

Table 25. Amount of Students in a Group

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
4 or 5 S's	5	17%
5 students	12	30%
3 or 4 S's	5	12%
4 students	7	17%
3 students	7	17%
3 or 5 S's	5	12%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 25



The students' opinions about the amount of students in a group activity were the following: 30% of the students thought that they liked to work with groups of 5 students; 17% answered that they liked working with 3 members in a group; other 17% thought that they could work with 4 students in the group; 12% of the students said that they liked to work with 4 or 5 members in the group whereas other 12% thought that they could work in groups with 3 or 4 students and other 12% said that they liked to work with 3 or 5 students.

It can be said that 46% of students answered that the ideal number of students for group work was from 3 to 4 students; other 30% said that it was better to work in groups of 5 students while a 24% mentioned that they liked to work with 3 to 5 members in the group. 3 to 4 students, as it could be seen, could be one good strategy to arrange classroom group settings, so that students could take roles and work in a better way by taking advantage of the given time in order to have less distraction in the activity. They could also share opinions in a better way. A good percentage of 30% of students chose to work with 5 students, but it seems that this could work with large classes, not necessarily these numbers of students due to the fact that some pupils worked while the others could get distracted, also it must depend on the type of assignment given by the teacher.

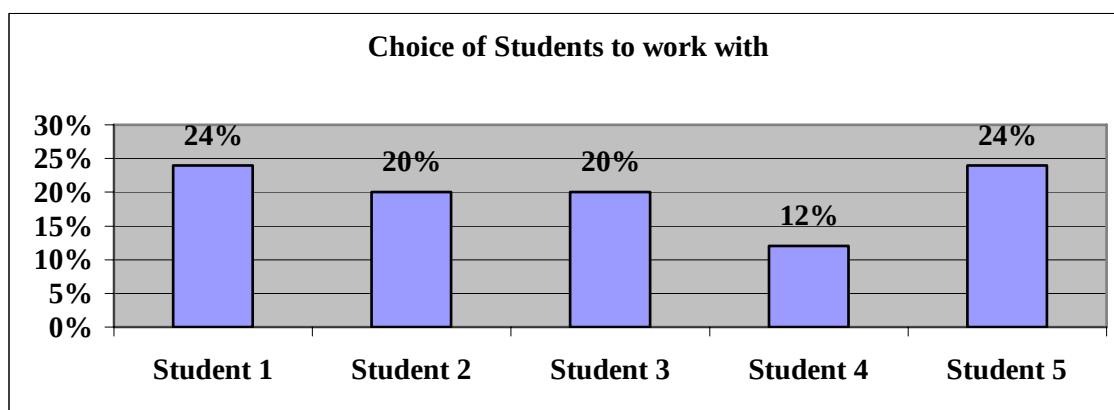
Table 26. Choice of Students to work with

Answers	N° of students	Percentage
Student 1	10	24%
Student 2	8	20%
Student 3	8	20%
Student 4	5	12%
Student 5	10	24%
Total	41	100%

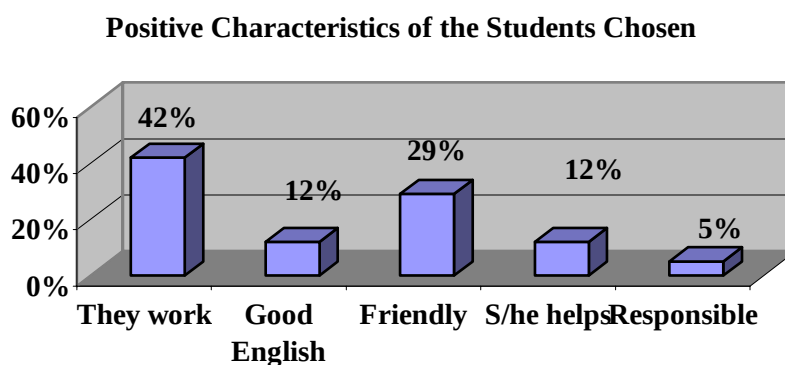
Table 27. Positive Characteristics of the Students chosen

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
They work	17	42%
Good English	5	12%
Friendly	12	29%
S/he helps	5	12%
Responsible	2	5%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 26



Graphic 27



The results about the types of students other students preferred to work with showed that 24% of the students chose student 1; other 24% chose student 5; 20% chose student 2 and other 20% chose student 3; and last, 12% chose student 4.

The most important positive qualities of the students chosen to work with were the following: 42% of the students said that these students chosen liked to work in class assignments; 29% chose the students for being friendly; 12% considered that they had a good level of English; in addition, other 12% took into account that these students helped others when having group work assignments; and the last 5% was because they were responsible.

Analyzing this information, it could be observed that there was a tendency of 48% of students who considered that students 1 and 2 had qualities to be leaders in the classroom for being students who worked more, for having a good level of English and for being responsible. It seemed that because of these students' discipline, responsibility and friendship with others in the group, there were good characteristics for them to be popular enough that most of the students, a 59% of the students, chose these qualities in them for being important for group work activities.

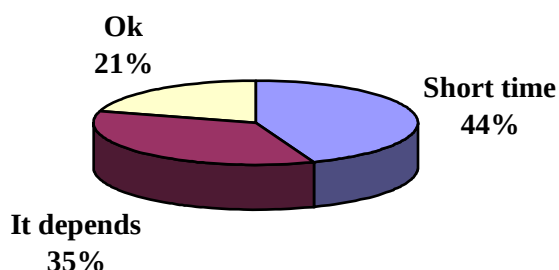
40% of other students chose students 2 and 3 because of their friendship and their enthusiasm to help the other classmates. A tendency of 41% of students said that these qualities were good for the types of students that really liked to work in groups.

Table 28. Amount of Time for Group Work

Answers	N° of Students	Percentage
Short time	15	43%
It depends	12	37%
Ok	7	20%
Total	41	100%

Graphic 28

Amount of Time for Group Work



The results gotten from this data were the following: 43% of the students said that the amount of time given for group work was short; 37% of other students considered that the amount of time given should depend on the type of class assignment; and 20% of the students said that the time given was enough for group work.

The analysis of this data showed that 57% of the students considered that the amount of time given for group work was right depending on the type of assignment given by the teacher whereas 37% of the other students thought that time was too short. It seemed that this amount of students were having problems with their level of English or group organization.

Chart of the summary about interaction according to students' opinions

Groups	Similarities	Differences	Conclusions
Group I	Both groups liked group work because it was faster, and students helped each other.	With group work, they learned more.	With group work, group I and II could be successful in learning.
		87% for group work	
	Both groups said that they disliked group work because some or only one student worked.	52% of students did not like group work.	Group work was a good strategy to use in the language classroom for students' interaction
	Both groups said that they sometimes liked to work in groups.	55% of students said that they always, often and almost always liked to work in groups.	There was more communication.
Group II	There was a division of students who approved to work in groups and those who disapproved to do it.	59% of students said that they were given a short time for group work.	The only student who worked was the one who knew English.
		With group work, they exchanged information.	The others got distracted doing something else.
		80% for group work.	The majority of the students chose to work in groups sometimes because it depended on the groups of students they worked with and because it also depended on the strategies used for group work.
	Both groups coincided in that they liked to work in groups of 3 or 4.	64% disliked group work.	With a small number of students, they could organize themselves better.
		46% of the students always liked to work in groups.	The amount of students should depended on the number of students in the classroom.
	Leader students were chosen for their characteristics of enjoying their work, their level of English and their responsibility.	57% of students said that time was right to work in groups.	Students chose leader students because of their popularity and leadership.
			Students thought that they had a short time because they got distracted or because they lacked tolerance.
			Students with problems in learning English considered that the time given for group work is short.

X.4 Students' Interaction and Participation from their discretion written on their journals

Kathleen M. Bailey defines *diary* as “a first-person account of language learning.” It is very important to recognize that journals could be used to satisfy the need to know students' reflections and feelings towards their learning and their group interaction and participation in the language classroom.

This journal was used from April 28th to October 28th and it was given to students from the *Año Comun* of the groups I and II. It was decided to ask all students to write individually on the same journal and to get into groups and discuss their ideas or comments about anything they wanted to write about. The groups consisted of 43 and 42 students; for this reason, students were asked to get into groups of five students and write their journals, individually. At the end, there were 8 notebooks that were students' journals.

Some of the advantages of this instrument were that it was possible to get not only immediate information from the students, but also to have a direct contact with the students. Another advantage was that they wrote this in class, so students could remember the most relevant information about it. In contrast, there were also some disadvantages, such as : students got desperate to go home or to go to the other class because journal writing took a lot of time.

For the researchers, it was also a disadvantage because it took them a lot of time to check the journals and to write a response, especially when the students received their classes one day after the other, for example Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Another disadvantage was that some students' handwriting was difficult to understand, so they were asked to write with clear handwriting.

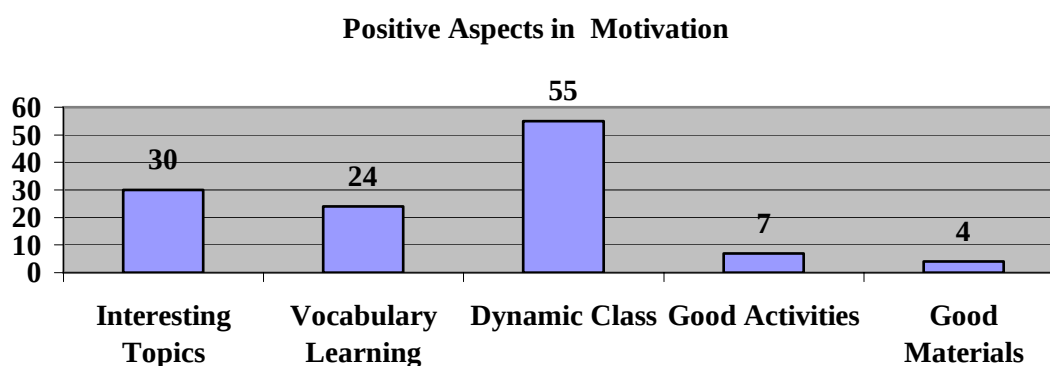
The different data gotten from the students was classified as motivation, interaction, and participation. Then, positive and negative aspects in the research were categorized. The data presented below were the results gotten from students' journals:

Relevant Aspects taken from Students' Journals about Motivation, Interaction and Participation

Table 29. Positive Aspects in Motivation- Semester I

Group I	Frequency
Interesting Topics	30
Vocabulary Learning	24
Dynamic Class	55
Good Activities	7
Good Materials	4
Total	120

Graphic 29



The results gotten from the journals related to motivation were the following: 55 times students mentioned that the class was dynamic in the first semester; 30 times, they said that English class had interesting topics; 24 times, they said that there was vocabulary learning; 7 times, students said that the class had good activities; and 4 times, they mentioned it had good materials.

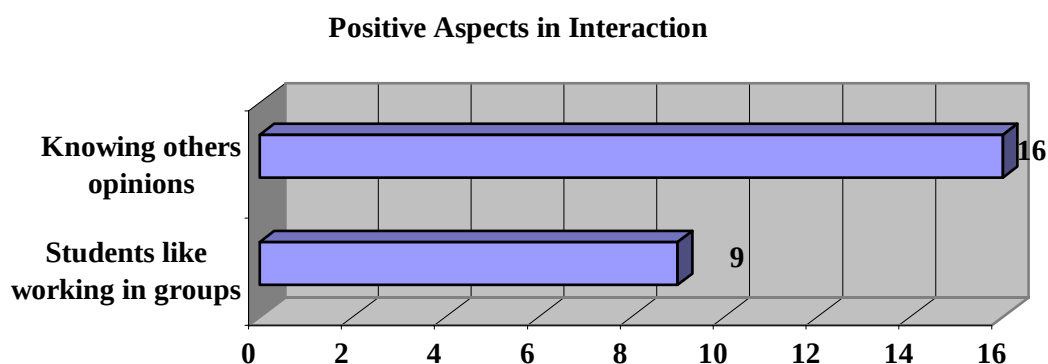
Analyzing these results, it could be seen that 62 times, students felt that there were dynamic classes with good activities because the teacher implemented some activities in the first semester that helped the students get motivated and kept them interested in the activities of the lesson so that they did not get boree when working in class. 34 times that was not considered too much, students said that there were interesting materials and topics. As it could be seen, there were not enough good materials for students to be motivated in class. A minority of 24 times, students considered there

was vocabulary learning, which as it could be analyzed, it was not too much in relation to the other aspects mentioned before.

Table 30. Positive Aspects in Interaction- Semester I

Group I	Frequency
Students like working in groups	9
Knowing others opinions	16
Total	25

Graphic 30



The results showed that in relation to interaction, 16 times students said that they liked working in groups whereas 9 times others mentioned that they interacted to know others' opinions.

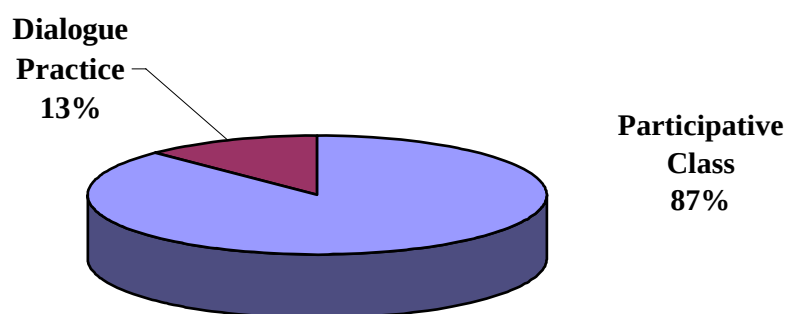
As it could be perceived, the frequency according to interaction was mentioned 25 times in the first semester, so there was a low involvement in group activities because not all students showed enthusiasm to work in groups and know others' opinions.

Table 31. Positive Aspects in Participation-Semester I

Group I	Frequency
Participative Class	35
Dialogue Practice	5
Total	40

Graphic 31

Positive Aspects in Participation



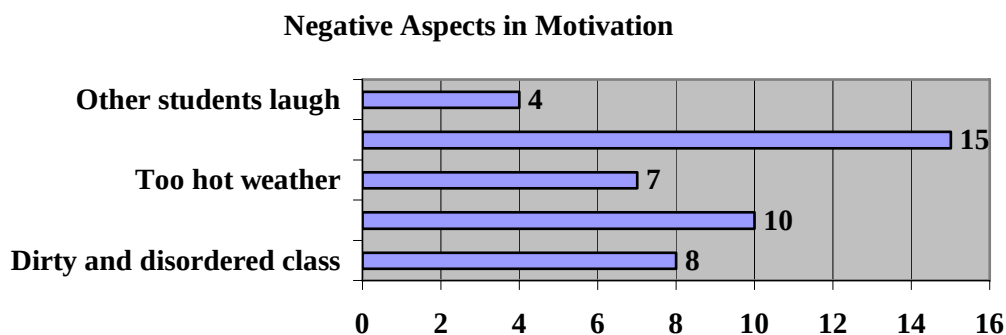
The results demonstrated that 35 times students answered that they had participative classes while 5 times, they said they practiced the language through dialog activities.

Analyzing this data, it seemed that students had problems with participation because they just mentioned their participation 35 times during one semester, so the same students were the ones who were always participating, it meant the students with a good level of English were the ones who participated the most, or the ones who were not shy at all. It could be observed that maybe the reason why most of the students felt a poor interest to participate was because of the lack of enough communicative activities and materials implemented in the language classroom.

Table 32. Negative Aspects in Motivation-Semester I

Group I	Frequency
Dirty and disordered class	8
Students do not have materials	10
Too hot weather	7
No time for the activities	15
Other students laugh	4
Total	44

Graphic 32



In the negative part of the first semester, students wrote 15 times that they did not have time for the activities; 10 times, they said that they did not have materials to work; 8 times, they said that the classroom was dirty and disordered; 7 times, they wrote that the weather was too hot; and 4 times, they wrote as their last negative part that the other students laughed when they got involved in the activities done.

What could be seen in this data was that there was a frequency of 30 times in which the students complained about the bad conditions in the classroom, as finding a dirty and disordered classroom. In addition, they included the problem of not having good conditions in relation to the fans in the classroom because at that time the weather was too hot. Students with a kind of classroom environment like this could not feel motivated to participate in the activities done in the classroom. Some other negative aspects were that 10 times, some students said that they did not bring their material/handout what could also affect their learning process; and this could cause that 4 times,

other students mentioned that some other students laughed when participating due to their lack of materials or not knowing what they were talking about.

Table 33. Negative Aspects in Interaction-Semester I

Group I	Frequency
Students like to work individually	8

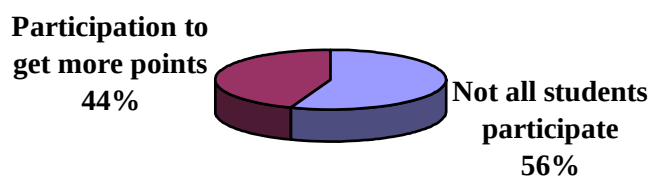
In relation to interaction, the results showed that 8 times students wrote that they liked to work individually. It seemed that some students did not like group work because they felt that their grade could get lower. Probably, these students had a good level of English; that was why, they felt more independent to work by themselves instead of working with other students.

Table 34. Negative Aspects in Participation-Semester I

Group I	Frequency
Not all students participate	10
Participation to get more points	8
Total	18

Graphic 34

Negative Aspects in Participation



The information gotten from the journals showed that 10 times students mentioned that not all students participated while 8 times in the first semester, other students said that they participated if they got points.

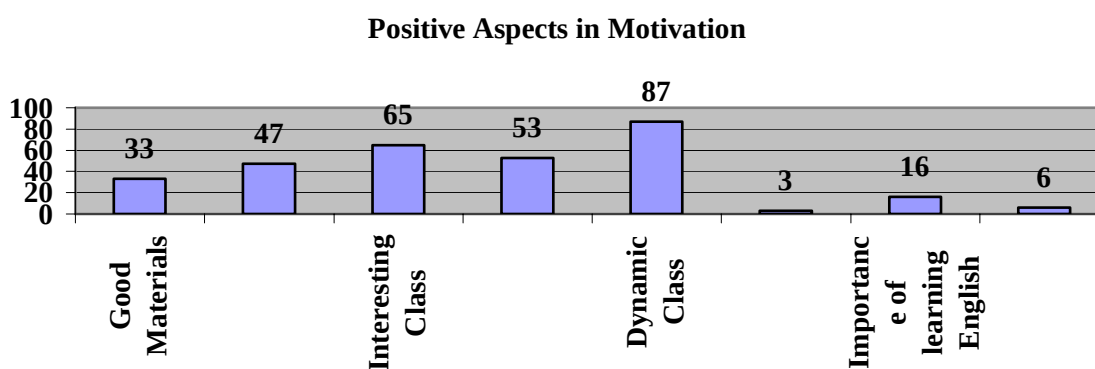
Analyzing this data, it could be seen that the same amount of students participated voluntarily whereas a minority mentioned 8 times that they participated if they got points. It seemed that

students who participated without being asked for the teacher to do so were the ones who had intrinsic motivation because they participated for their own interests to learn; in contrast, the other students participated just when they were given points, maybe they did so because they wanted to raise their grades in order to classify into their major of preference.

Table 35. Positive Aspects in Motivation-Semester II

Group I	Frequency
Good Materials	33
Good Activities	47
Interesting Class	65
Vocabulary Learning	53
Dynamic Class	87
Ss Enjoy the class	3
Importance of learning English	16
Teacher's positive attitude	6
Total	310

Graphic 35



The results showed a frequency of 87 times in which students said that the classes were dynamic; 65 times, others said they had interesting classes; 53 times, students wrote about their learning of vocabulary in class; 47 times, students mentioned that there were good activities; 33 times, some

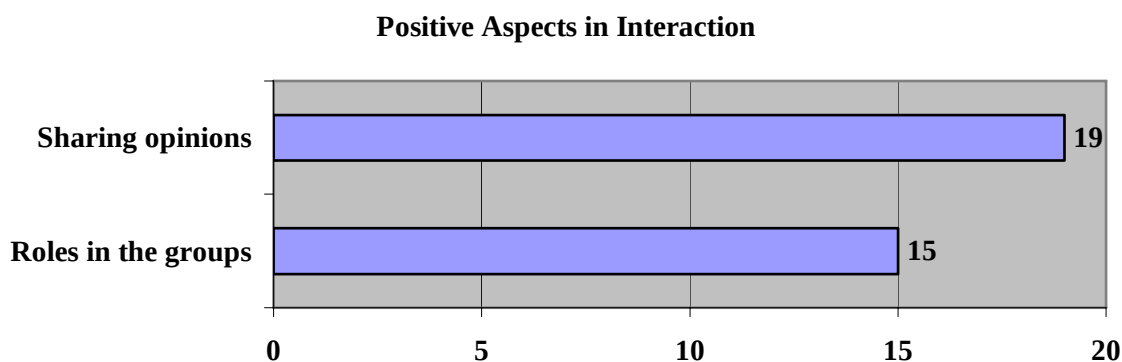
others said they had good materials; 16 times students said that learning English was important; 6 times, students mentioned the teacher's positive attitude; and 3 times in the second semester, students said that they enjoyed the subject.

From this data, it could be analyzed that 137 times students referred themselves in a positive way to their motivation towards learning English because of the good activities presented by the teacher's dynamic classes what caused that the students enjoyed the lessons and felt very happy with them. 98 times other students said that they found the lesson as an interesting one because of the good materials related to their necessities making them feel motivated. 69 times students considered that learning vocabulary made English an important subject because they could use it in their daily lives. 6 times, students mentioned the importance of having a teacher with positive attitudes to the class in order for them to feel more motivated to their learning situation.

Table 36. Positive Aspects in Interaction-Semester II

Group I	Frequency
Roles in the groups	15
Sharing opinions	19
Total	34

Graphic 36



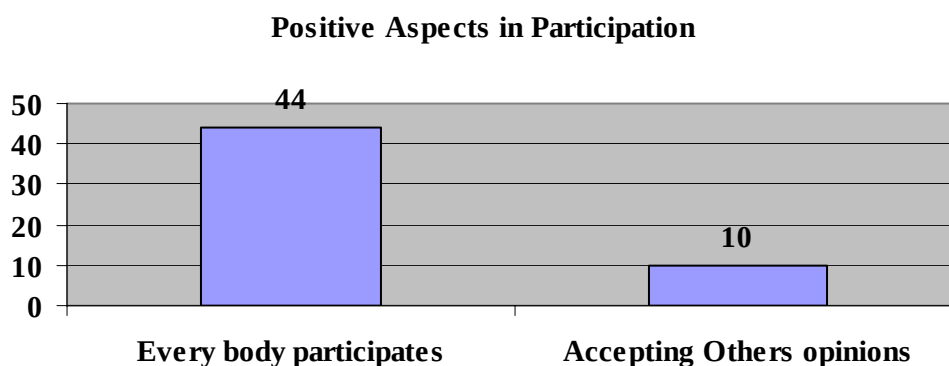
The results showed that 19 times, students mentioned they liked to share their opinions; and 15 times, other students wrote that they liked to have roles in the groups.

It could be seen that 34 times students wrote about their interaction in group activities that they felt good interacting one another when they shared ideas and had roles in the groups. In this way, they showed tolerance because they took into account their classmates' ideas to have a better class work. In addition, the fact of having roles made them feel they were integrated in the activity; as a result, they could have a better self esteem by accepting what others said and they learned by interacting one another.

Table 37. Positive Aspects in Participation-Semester II

Group I	Frequency
Every body participates	44
Accepting Others opinions	10
Total	54

Graphic 37



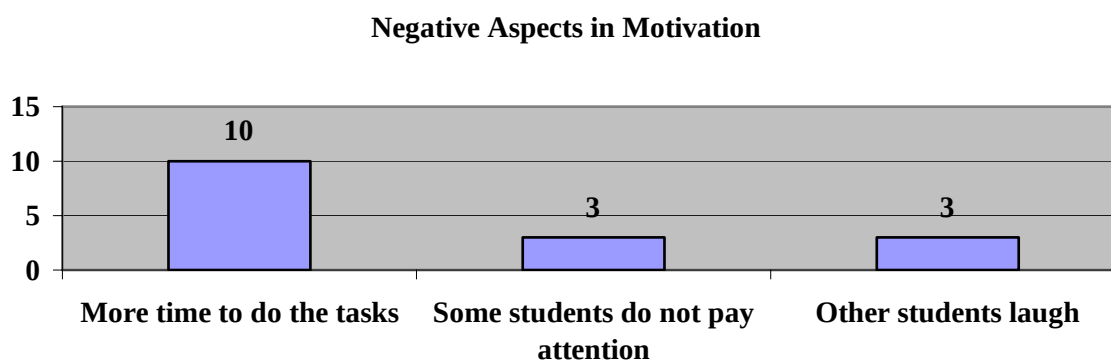
In relation to participation, 44 times students said that everybody participated whereas other students expressed that they participated because they accepted others' opinions with a frequency of 10 times on the journals.

The analysis showed that 54 times students repeated on their journals that they participated because they were more tolerant among themselves because they accepted what others said, and this showed their respect one another, so students showed more academic maturity and with this there was an improvement in their participation and even in the foreign language learning because they learned by doing.

Table 38. Negative Aspects in Motivation-Semester II

Group I	Frequency
More time to do the tasks	10
Some students do not pay attention	3
Other students laugh	3
Total	16

Graphic 38



The results demonstrated that 10 times students mentioned that they needed more time to do their class work; 3 times other students said that they did not pay attention to the class; and other 3 times, they wrote that other students laughed when they were participating in class activity.

As it could be seen, this negative side in motivation about time in which students said they needed more time to do the tasks has decreased in comparison to the first semester to 10 times of frequency. 6 times students showed the negative part of motivation by writing about their distractions due to some students' laughing at the ones who participated in the tasks.

Table 39. Negative Aspects in interaction-Semester II

Group I	Frequency
Students did not like to work in groups	2

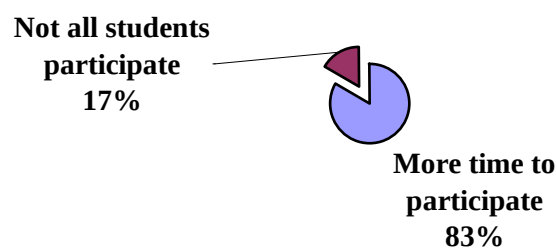
The results showed that in this time students mentioned that they disliked group work in a frequency of two times. It could be observed that the problem of interaction although it was not eliminated totally, it decreased in a big number of fruequencies showing as a result that students enjoyed more group work activities; thus, improving the students' involvement in the activities and their improvement in language learning.

Table 40. Negative Aspects in Participation-Semester II

Group I	Frequency
More time to participate	10
Not all students participate	2
Total	12

Graphic 40

Neagative Aspects in Participation



The information gotten from this part about participation showed a frequency of 10 times in which students needed more time to participate and 2 times they mentioned that not all students participated.

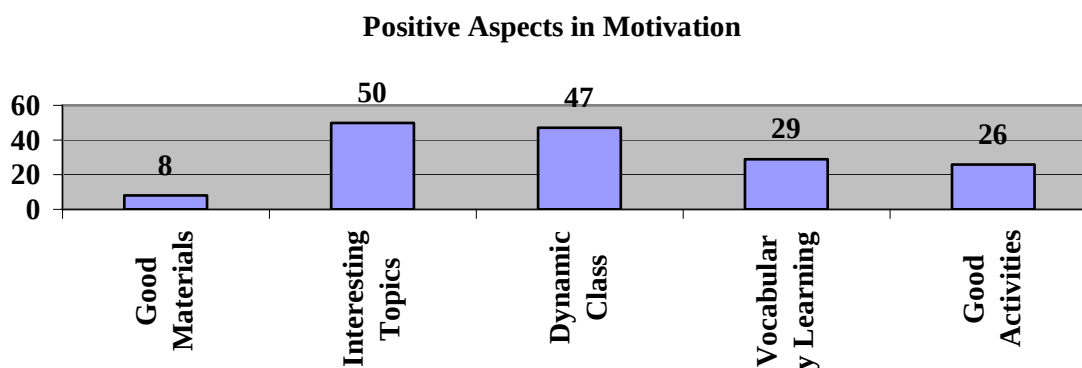
Analyzing this data, it could be seen that 12 times students showed the need of more time to participate in order for all students to be comfortable when participating by having enough or the necessary time to participate. It could be observed a reduction in the frequency of negative aspects

in relation to the first semester what showed an improvement in the students oral participation; therefore, students could also get better learning of the language.

Table 41. Positive Aspects in Motivation for Group II-Semester I

Group II	Frequency
Good Materials	8
Interesting Topics	50
Dynamic Class	47
Vocabulary Learning	29
Good Activities	26
Total	160

Graphic 41



The results showed that 50 times students considered that the topics were interesting in the first semester; 47 times, other students mentioned that the class was dynamic; 29 times, students said that they learned vocabulary; 26 times, they mentioned that they had good activities; and 8 times they wrote that they had good materials.

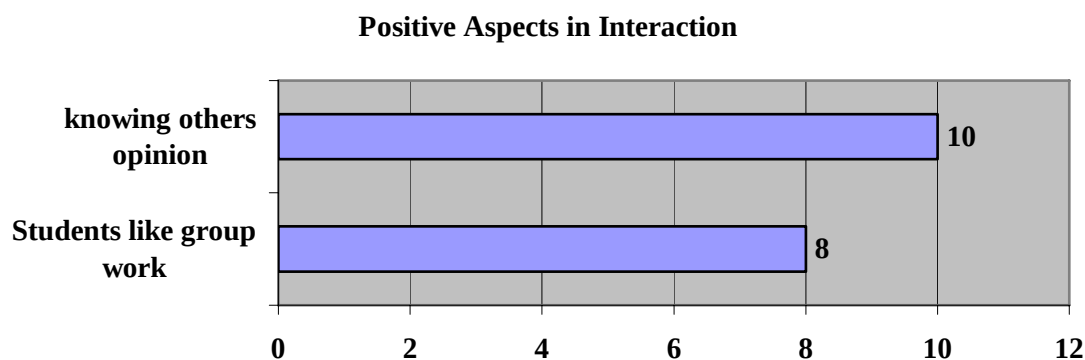
The analysis for this second group in their first semester presented that 73 times, students considered that there were dynamic classes because of the good activities prepared while another

frequency of 58 times mentioned that the topics were interesting due to the good materials given and 29 times, students wrote about their motivation for their vocabulary learning. Although there were not enough communicative activities, students seemed to present motivation towards the class with the materials and activities given.

Table 42. Positive Aspects in Interaction-Semester I

Group II	Frequency
Students like group work	8
knowing others opinion	10
Total	18

Graphic 42



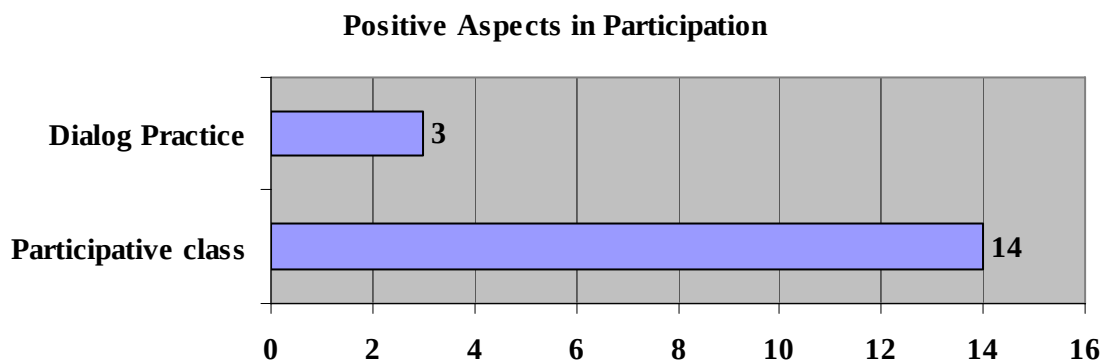
The data presented showed that 10 times students said that they needed to know others' opinions; and 8 times they mentioned that they liked to work in groups.

Analyzing this case, it could be observed that there was a frequency of 18 times in which students wrote that they liked to work in groups because they could know others' opinions. It could be seen that a minority of a frequency of 8 times students mentioned that they liked to work in groups during the first semester.

Table 43. Positive Aspects in Participation-Semester I

Group II	Frequency
Participative class	14
Dialog Practice	3
Total	17

Graphic 42



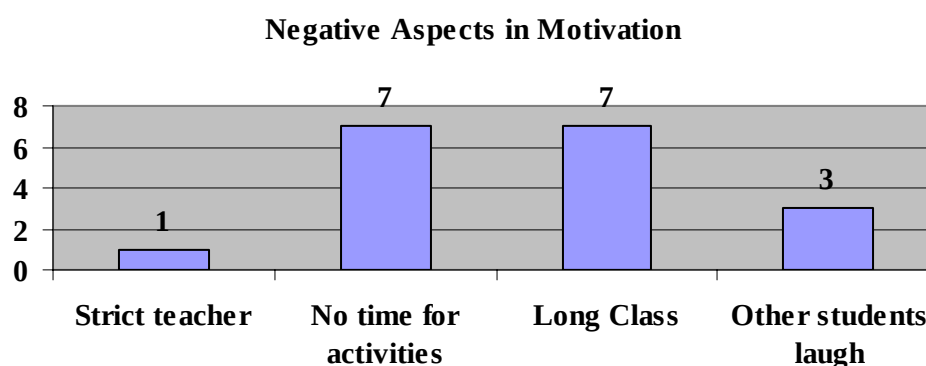
The results showed that there was a frequency of 14 times that students mentioned there was a participative class whereas other students said 3 times that there was also dialog practice.

The analysis of this data showed that 17 times students mentioned that although there was not enough dialog practice, students seemed to participate in the first semester; however, for one semester, it was not enough for a group of 41 students to present a frequency of 17 times. It seemed like the same students participated, with this the teacher could realize about the problems students had with participation so that the teacher prepared more communicative activities to help students with their participation.

Table 43. Negative Aspects in Motivation-Semester I

Group II	Frequency
Strict teacher	1
No time for activities	7
Long Class	7
Other students laugh	3
Total	18

Graphic 43



In relation to the negative aspects in the first semester, the results showed that students wrote a frequency of 7 times in which they felt the lesson was long; other 7 times, they mentioned that there was not time for the activities; 3 times, the students said that other students laughed as a problem ; and one time, they mentioned that a strict teacher was a negative aspect.

Analyzing the data, it could be said that 10 times students felt the class time long due to the fact that it lasted more than one hour and forty minutes, so they got distracted with other students' laughing at each other. This could have been the reason why they got late out of the classroom and they considered that they had a long time class. 8 times, students considered that they did not have time for the activities because they could get distracted with others and also because the teacher was strict and gave a specific time for the activities done in class causing that students felt the need for more time.

Table 44. Negative Aspect in Interaction-Semester I

Group II	Frequency
Talking about something else	1

It seemed that in the first semester, students did not have too many problems with interaction, but when interacting, they got distracted talking about something else. Maybe they did not give too much importance to interaction because they were just focused on getting better grades not necessarily in groups, but individually or in pairs or another reason could have been that they they did not know each other too much.

Table 45. Negative Aspect in Participation-Semester I

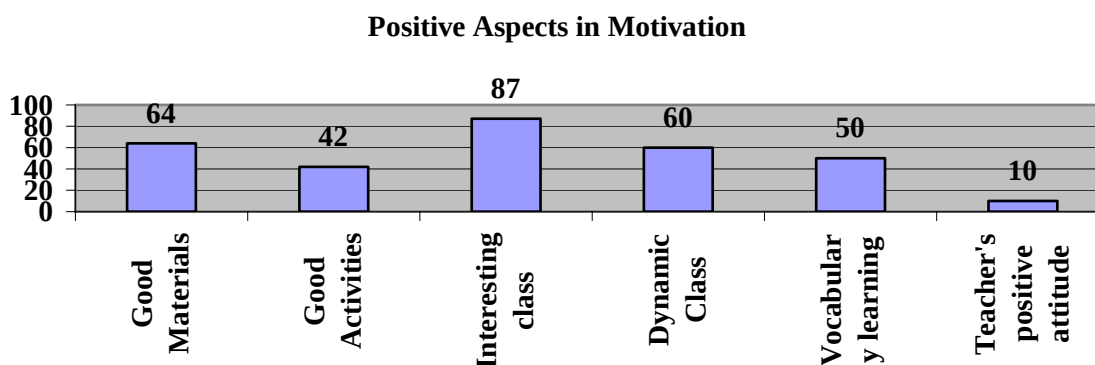
Group II	Frequency
Not all students participate	5

It seemed that students did not show problems with participation because na minority of them did not participate showing a frequency of 5 times. In contrast, the same amount of students were the ones who participated in class activities.

Table 46. Positive Aspects in Motivation for group II-Semester II

Group II	Frequency
Good Materials	64
Good Activities	42
Interesting class	87
Dynamic Class	60
Vocabulary learning	50
Teacher's positive attitude	10
Total	313

Graphic 46



The results showed that there was a frequency of 87 times in which students said that there was an interesting class; 64 times, students repeated that there were good materials; 60 times they said that the class was dynamic; 50 times students mentioned that they learned vocabulary; 42 times, students said that there were good activities; and 10 times, they said that the teacher had a positive attitude.

The analysis showed that 151 times students said that the class was interesting because they studied with good materials whereas other students presented a frequency of 102 times in which they considered that the lesson was dynamic because the teacher prepared good activities using communicative methods that helped them feel motivated. As a result of this, students learned more vocabulary that they repeated 50 times in the second semester. Teacher's positive attitude was

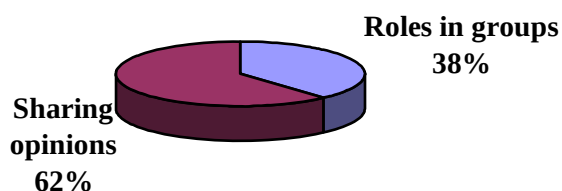
mentioned 10 times to illustrate the importance of having her positivism in class to motivate students.

Table 47. Positive Aspects in Interaction-Semester II

Group II	Frequency
Roles in groups	15
Sharing opinions	24
Total	39

Graphic 47

Positive Aspects in Interaction



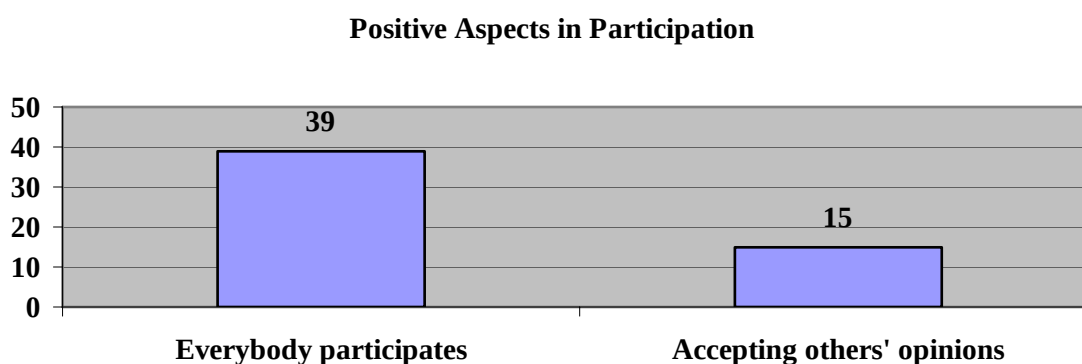
24 times students repeated that they shared opinions whereas 15 times they mentioned that they liked their roles in the groups.

Analyzing this positive data about interaction in the classroom, students showed 39 times that they liked to interact with other students because they shared their ideas due to their roles in the groups. It could be seen that students felt responsible for their own learning by getting involved in the activities with other students.

Table 48. Positive Aspects in Participation-Semester II

Group II	Frequency
Everybody participates	39
Accepting others' opinions	15
Total	54

Graphic 48



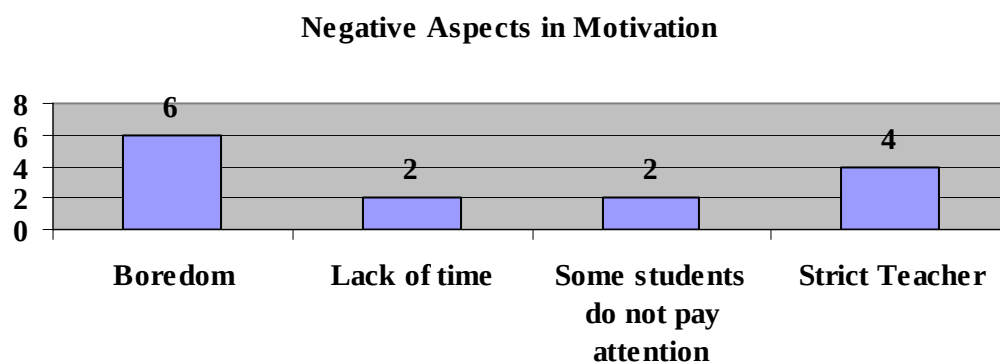
A frequency of 39 times, students said that everybody participated while 15 times students said that they accepted others' opinions.

Analyzing this data, it could be observed that in this part of their learning, students were more tolerant to accept others' opinions and had a more comfortable classroom environment to participate. Students felt highly motivated not only to participate, but also to interact and know others' opinions, and when having the opportunity to participate, they felt more confident to do so.

Table 49. Negative Aspects in Motivation for Group II-Semester II

Group II	Frequency
Boredom	6
Lack of time	2
Some students do not pay attention	2
Strict Teacher	4
Total	14

Graphic 49



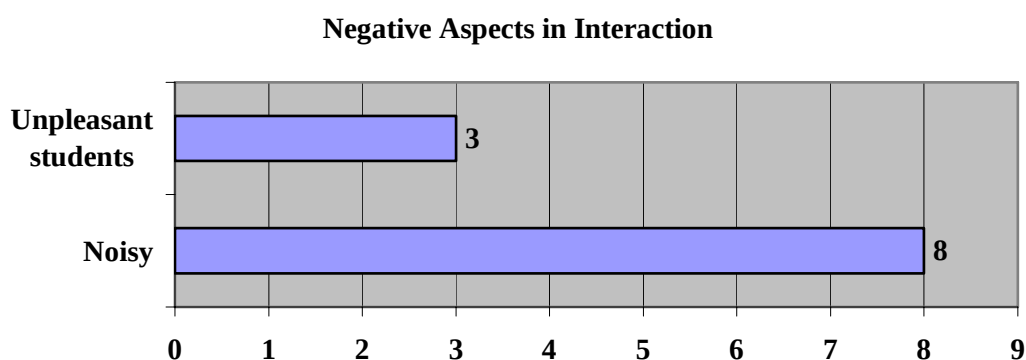
The results show that 6 times students mentioned boredom as a negative aspect in their motivation; 4 times students said that having a strict teacher was also negative; 2 times, students repeated lack of time and 2 times they mentioned that some students did not pay attention.

To analyze this information, it was necessary to say that a frequency of 8 times students said that they did not pay attention because they were bored with the class activities. In addition, students felt that because the teacher was not so flexible with the time for the activities, they lacked of appropriate time to work in the activities; the students' learning styles were slow or took more time than the one given. These negative aspects in motivation alert teachers to identify these types of negative aspects to change activities and tasks motivate these students learn more about the language.

Table 50. Negative Aspects in Interaction-Semester II

Group II	Frequency
Noisy	8
Unpleasant students	3
Total	11

Graphic 50



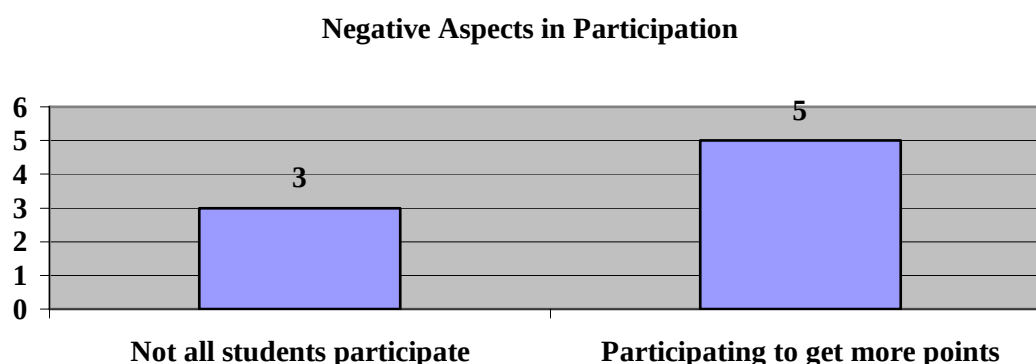
The data showed that students mentioned 8 times the problem of noisy students, and also they repeated 3 times unpleasant students as a negative aspect.

Analyzing this information, it seemed that the problem of interaction increased because students started knowing each other and it was difficult for them to accept others' ideas and work with students they had never worked with although it was perceived that there were not good relationships in the group. Maybe this was not a negative aspect at some extent because if there was noise, it was because there was participation and interaction what also had the teacher look for solutions to this problem of interaction to help students engaged in the learning process.

Table 51. Negative Aspects in Participation-Semester II

Group II	Frequency
Not all students participate	3
Participating to get more points	5
Total	8

Graphic 51



The results showed that students participated to get points what was repeated a number of 5 times and not all the students participated was mentioned 3 times.

To analyze this data, it could be seen that some students participated because of the students' interests to get more points, so that they could improve their grades and pass to their majors of preference. It seemed that students had extrinsic motivation what made them participate just when they received points in the class activities.

Comparative Chart about students' interaction and participation from their discretion written on the Journals (Groups I and II)

Positive Aspects

Semester I				Semester II		
Groups	Similarities	Differences	Conclusions	Similarities	Differences	Conclusions
Group I	Both groups had similar results in relation to motivation.	Group I showed a frequency of interaction repeated 25 times.	Dynamic classes due to the implementation of some activities to motivate students.	Both groups showed an improvement in their motivation.	High frequency in class dynamics due to good activities	More motivation due to learning English through dynamic activities in class.
Group II	Both groups had the same aspects in relation to interaction	40 times students mentioned participative class and dialog practice.	Low involvement in group activities.	There was not too much difference in the frequency and the criteria about interaction	Positive aspects were related to dynamic class and good activities.	Increase in group interaction for sharing ideas and having roles
		There was a frequency of 28 times for interaction.	Problems with participation: same students participated in class.			Increase in participation for students' tolerance.
		17 times students mentioned that there was a participative class.	Dynamic classes due to the group activities, interesting topics and good materials.			Increase of motivation for interesting class and good material.
Group II	The same criteria mentioned in participation for both groups	17 times students mentioned that there was a participative class.	Students liked group work to know others' opinions.	Both groups got 15 times of frequency in role in the groups.	High frequency in interesting class and good activities.	Increase in interaction for students' sharing ideas and having roles.
			Students seemed to participate without too much dialog practice.	Both groups had the same frequency of 54 times for participation and the same parameters.	Students considered that the most important for motivation was to have an interesting class for the materials used.	More tolerance to accept others' opinions.

Comparative Chart about students' interaction and participation from their discretion written on the Journals (Groups I and II)

Negative Aspects

Semester I				Semester II		
Groups	Similarities	Differences	Conclusions	Similarities	Difference	Conclusions
Group I	Both groups mentioned the lack of time for the activities.	They considered that the class was dirty, disordered and too hot.	Students complained about bad classroom conditions what caused low motivation.	Results in relation to motivation in this semester showed a decrease in problems in motivation showing in both groups lack of time.	Some students laughed what caused little motivation	Students needed more time for class work(Showing a decrease in comparison to the first semester).
		Students liked to work individually.	Some students did not like group work due to their possible high level of English.		Low frequency of students who did not like to work in groups.	Minority of students disliked group work.
Group II	The same criteria: not all students participated.	Students participated when they got points.	Volunteer participation.	Students did not pay attention in the classroom was presented in the two groups.	Students needed more time to participate.	Students needed more time to participate (it showed a reduction in comparison to semesterI)
		They considered as negative long class and strict teacher.	Long class, students' laughing.		Students showed as a negative aspect boredom and strict teacher.	Not paying attention for being bored.
		Students talked about something else in class.	Distraction when interacting.		A small increase of unpleasant students and noisy environment.	An increase of the problem of interaction for not having enough good relationships.
			Not all students participated.		Students participated to get points.	Participating for getting more points.

X.5 Teacher's Perceptions taken from Real Time Observations

The technique of peer-observation was used to analyze students' behaviors or reactions in their learning process not only individually, but also at the group level. It was also analyzed students' difficulties and advances in the process.

In March 2003, two researchers observed 5 different groups in order to identify which group had more problems with interaction and participation. From 6 class observations, two groups were chosen, one of them started with 40 students, which was group I, and the other one with a number of 41 students, which was group II.

Peer observation was used because of its effectiveness and reliability to carry out this research and to collect important data related to the topic of the investigation. It also helped to identify the weaknesses and strengths not only from the teacher, but also from the students and their classroom conditions and types of materials used. Furthermore, it was also gotten overall schemata from the students' situation according to their relationships in the classroom and involvement in class activities.

When students received their English class, the researcher observed their relationships, ways of working in groups or interaction patterns of their behavior in the classroom, and their participation to understand and analyze better the different dynamics in class. In this way, the types of activities were studied to know how group activities were done in class and how students' participation was influenced by factors, such as their performance in class, teacher's attitude, classroom conditions, materials used, personality factors, and some others.

The researchers during the observations sat at the back part of the classroom and took notes of relevant information related to the topic of research. Also, the teachers made drawings of the classroom settings, location of the students in the grouping activities, students' interactions and their participation. External factors were also collected as part of the learning process (See appendixes number:)

Discussion Sessions after Real Time Observations

In the same period of time, these types of sessions were used to recall the class as a whole and reach agreement on what was actually happening in the language classroom. The data were also interpreted and decisions were made to implement the use of communicative activities for the second semester, in which the Plan of Action developed its more active part.

Teachers discussed about the information gotten in an informal way after the lessons, but they also fixed a date to meet and talk about the characteristics seen on each group. Tolerance to accept the criticisms made by the observers' feedback and not trying to impose own judgments could sometimes be difficult because of not being used to been observed whenever there was a class session.

This discussion took place in order to reflect on the situations happening in the classroom, especially the students' interaction and participation. The results gotten from Real Time observations and Discussion sessions were the ones presented below:

Semester I-Group I

1- Researchers' perceptions about students' motivation

From 9 sessions of 1 hour and 40 minutes in this period of time, some positive aspects observed were that when a student participated the other classmates clapped giving the volunteer more motivation to continue doing it and that the teacher allowed them to choose who they wanted to work with; however, there were a lot of negative aspects perceived from the observer, such as students making use of cell phones during the class session, students seemed to be very distracted although they were passive at the moment of working in the activities, students worked on other activities at the time they received the English lesson, and they were also talking about things not related to class assignments. Other aspects observed were that they were complaining about the time for the activities and they did not do the homework.

2- Researchers' Perceptions about teachers' Motivation

The results showed that teacher explained the instructions clearly, she also did the same with the homework and was a facilitator walking around the classroom and monitoring the class activities.

3- Researchers' Perceptions about Classroom Conditions

The data gathered from these observations showed that the classroom was hot because students were trying to fix the two damaged fans in order to feel more comfortable. The classroom was really small, so the hot weather made them feel uncomfortable making them ask to change the classroom to a better one.

4- Researchers' Perceptions about Materials used

Some students disagreed with the content of the material or handout they had for class activities, some of them did not make copies of the handout to be used in the class activities at the right moment; and some others found the contents very difficult. When writing, most of the students lacked their bilingual dictionary what was asked from the beginning to be used for the rest of the year whenever they had a certain activity. It seemed that these students did not have a good economic position in order to buy dictionaries or a 15 pages handout required in class activities. Another negative aspects seen was that the teacher did not have an adequate material that could promote students' interaction.

5- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' Interaction

One positive aspect seen in this first semester was that students worked with their friends. In contrast, some negative aspects seen were that when writing their journals, only one or two students worked while the others were distracted just waiting for the answer; others when assigned to work with a specific group, at some part of the activity, they looked for another student which could be the leader in the classroom to ask him or her for the meaning of a new word or the answers of a certain task. Another negative aspect was that students who liked to tease others were usually together making jokes, lost in relation to the class tasks, and they usually did not do the homework (see appendixes number:)

6- Researchers' Perceptions about setting arrangement in interaction

Classroom had a formal setting in which the students were sat down having five straight lines facing to the board what did not allow students' interaction and involvement in the activities due to the distance among the students that could not permit successful communication for the activities. Group work generally took place with 5 or 8 students in every group because the students at the *Año Comun* had to work with the same members from the assigned groups in another subject as it is Eje (see appendixes number:)

7- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' Participation

The same small number of students participated in class activities voluntarily, but she or he was asked by the teacher to choose another student to participate. Some other students participated when they were going to be given points for doing so. In addition to another negative aspect observed in the class, there was the one about teacher choosing students to participate obligatorily by giving them a marker which they were going to pass to the students they wanted in order for such students to participate.

*See appendixes for setting arrangement and group interaction

Semester II-Group I

1- Researchers' perceptions about students' motivation

According to students' motivation, it can be said that students liked the topics; they also enjoyed the activities and competition games, but some students were still distracted working on other tasks.

2- Researchers' Perceptions about Teacher's Motivation

It could be seen that the researcher was a facilitator who walked around the classroom; she also explained the tasks by giving examples about the exercises so that students could understand better what the task was about. In addition, she motivated students to work in groups.

3- Researchers' perceptions about Classroom Conditions

For semester II, the classroom was painted and the ceiling fans were fixed.

4- Researchers' perceptions about Materials used

The use of materials that presented communicative activities took place in this semester to increase students' interests, interaction, and participation because it was focused on the students' needs. Most of the students brought their dictionaries to the language classroom because they borrowed them or bought some of them altogether with the handouts given. For example, students made copies of the few pages they were going to use that specific day of class.

5- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' interaction

Most of the students accepted group work because they liked or enjoyed it more. However, there were 2 students who still disliked working in groups. It can be said that these results were related to the change of activities and materials that were more related to students' interests and needs. It can be observed that although the problem was not eliminated completely, it decreased considerably.

6- Researchers' Perceptions about setting arrangement in interaction

The results showed that students were asked by the teacher to have different ways of group organizations, such as Buzz groups, Onion group, and Market discussions, it means they circled themselves to work not only in groups, but also in pairs to have different ways in order to have better interaction one another, and to be closer to the board and teacher. Researcher specified that the number of students in the groups had to be small, specifically 3 or 4 students in each group; as a result, all these three or four students could have more roles and work more to have a better work. In this way, they were responsible of their own learning and became independent of the teacher. In this second semester, there was a quantity of 29 students as a total in the group who were considered the most disciplined ones, and responsible ones. The others were not in the classroom because they had failed other subjects, such as Mathematics or Eje. As students were usually grouping themselves with their friends, it was decided to group them at random whenever there was an activity.

7- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' Participation

It can be said that the majority of students participated because there was more time for them to have equal opportunities to participate due to the fact that there were less students, and because they were more confident on themselves, and at this time they took risks to participate no matter if they made mistakes or not. Their passive attitude in the class turned to be more active because of the communicative activities and the implementation of new material in the lesson according to their level, needs and learning styles.

Chart from Real Time Observations-Semester I Group I

Focus	Students	Researcher	Conditions	Materials
Motivation	Some Volunteer Participation. Distraction Passive Students. Lack of time for activities. Not doing homework.	Researcher allowed students to choose their classmates to work . She was a facilitator	Hot classroom Damaged fans Small classroom	Lack of appropriate materials from the teacher. Lack of economic resources to buy dictionaries or handouts from students.
Interaction	Working with friends. Only one student worked in a group. Dependent upon the leader in the classroom. Tease students worked together.		Five straight lines facing to the board. 5 or 8 members in a group activity. There were 40 students in the first semester.	
Participation	Same small number of students participated voluntarily. Other students participated to be given points. Teacher chose students to participate obligatorily.			

Chart from Real Time Observations-Semester II Group I

Focus	Students	Researcher	Conditions	Materials
Motivation	They liked topics, activities, such as competition games. Some distraction.	She was a facilitator. Motivating students to work in groups.	Painted classroom with fixed fans.	Materials presented through communicative activities. Students brought their dictionaries and needed pages from handout.
Interaction	Accepting group work, Change of activities and materials	Teacher worked with group organizations	Different ways of group organization. Small number of members in a group. Students having roles. 29 students in the whole group.	
Participation	Majority of students participated. More confidence. More active. More time.			Appropriate use of communicative activities. Implementation of new materials.

Semester I-Group II

1- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' Motivation

From 9 lessons that consisted of 1 hour and 40 minutes, one positive aspect that was perceived was that the majority of the students paid attention to the lesson while the others had different distracters, such as talking about something not related to class assignments, working on another task like doing the homework in class, and teasing other pupils. These students had a lot of distraction because of their hyperactivity in class that did not allow them to be concentrated.

2- Researchers' Perceptions about Teacher's Motivation

Researcher explained the instructions clearly, she walked around the classroom and helped the students, she gave examples about her experience, she promoted the practice of the language, and she reviewed the last lesson. The teacher in this first semester worked as a facilitator.

3- Researchers' Perceptions about Classroom Conditions

When getting into the classroom, students found it dirty, the time for receiving the lesson was from 11:00 to 12:40 what was very tiresome for them because they wanted to go home, they were hungry, it was very hot and the classroom was very small for the group. Sometimes, they could not get chairs to sit down, so they left the classroom to look for some.

4- Researchers' Perceptions about Materials used

Most of the students did not bring dictionaries; some students did not have the handouts which had too many readings that students complained about because they could not understand most of it due to not being adapted to their level of English (see appendixes:)

5- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' Interaction

Students liked to work in groups when they had to work with their friends, some other students could not find classmates to work with, or they had problems with interaction because if they did not want to work with someone they did not like, they preferred to do it individually. The majority of the students asked for help to the ones who knew more English, maybe because they were their leaders. When being asked to write the journals, some students worked while the others did not. Some students laughed when others participated (see appendixes:)

6- Researchers' Perceptions about setting arrangement in interaction

Most of the students sat down near the wall sides of the classroom and although it allowed some close distance to interact, they had their chosen groups, which basically were their friends. In addition, when they were asked to

work in groups, they formed groups of 3 or 4, and even pair work and a lot of them were isolated and could not find with whom to work with (see appendixes:)

7- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' Participation

There were few students who participated voluntarily; just the ones who knew English the most because the others were quiet for being afraid of others' making jokes about the things they said. There were a lot of distracters, such as some students were calling by cell phones, working on other tasks not related to the English class. Another aspect was the one in which students participated just when they were giving points. One positive thing is that they liked to write on the board the answers to the tasks.

Semester II-Group II

1- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' Motivation

In relation to students' motivation about the class, it was seen that students in the second semester liked the topics and the communicative activities done in the class session. There was a decrease of two students who got distracted doing something else, they enjoyed competition activities in the classroom lesson.

2- Researchers' Perceptions about Teacher's Motivation

Researcher walked around the classroom to help students, she explained the tasks to the students. She also motivated students to work together and distributed good tasks in group and individual work. As it can be seen the teacher was a facilitator and students accepted to work more in groups with others. Because the students got bored easily at this time, there had to be a balance in the activities, tasks or times giving to the students due to their learning styles, personalities and relationships.

3- Researchers' Perceptions about Classroom Conditions

Students were in the same classroom, but the ceiling fans were already fixed in the second semester. There were also more chairs for this semester.

4- Researchers' Perceptions about Materials used

Using new materials that presented communicative activities took place in this semester to increase students' interests, interaction, and participation because such activities were focused on the students' needs. The majority of the students brought their dictionaries to the language classroom because they borrowed them or bought some of them altogether with the handouts given. For example, students made copies of the few pages she or he was going to use that specific day of class.

5- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' Interaction

Fortunately, there was some change in students' attitude towards group interaction because they enjoyed the involvement in the activities more. Students specially liked when they were given roles because they felt they had more responsibility, they were more independent of the teacher, and considered her as a facilitator. The problem with interaction seemed to decrease because there was just one group who did not like to work in groups (see appendixes:)

6- Researchers' Perceptions about setting arrangements in interaction

As the class had a number of 41 students, they were asked to work in groups of 4 or 5 students. The distribution of the students in the classroom was that they were sat in semicircles and closer to the teacher and board. Sometimes, depending on the activities, there were different group organizations such as Buzz groups, Onion group, and Market discussions, already mentioned and used with the previous group. As students were usually grouping themselves with their friends, it was decided to group them at random whenever there was an activity.

7- Researchers' Perceptions about Students' Participation

The majority of the students participated in class voluntarily; they also liked to do it in communicative activities. Most of them wanted to participate, but there was not time to have all of them involved, so the teacher decided to choose a certain amount of students each day so that there was a balanced and fair opportunity for everybody. For this reason, some other students disliked the noise caused by the students' excitement to participate.

Chart from Real Time Observations-Semester I- Group II

Focus	Students	Researcher	Conditions	Materials
Motivation	The majority of them paid attention. They had different distracters.	Explanation of the instructions clearly. She was a facilitator	Dirty classroom Hot weather Uncomfortable time for class. Lack of chairs	Lack of dictionaries and handouts from students. Not adapted materials
Interaction	Working just with friends. Preferring individual work. Asking questions to the leaders. Making jokes about themselves.		Sitting down near the wall sides. Forming groups of 3 or 4, or in pairs Isolated students.	
Participation	Volunteer participation. Distraction Participation to get points. They liked to write answers on the board.			

Chart from Real Time Observations-Semester II

Group II

Focus	Students	Researcher	Conditions	Materials
Motivation	They liked the topics and communicative activities. 2 students distracted. Enjoying Competition activities.	She was a facilitator. Showing a balance of the activities and time for each.	Same classroom with fixed fans. More chairs.	Used of communicative activities. Students brought their handouts and dictionaries.
Interaction	Changes in their attitudes. They enjoyed their roles. Reduction of the problem of interaction.	She was a facilitator.	Groups of 4 or 5 students. Different group organizations. Students chosen at random to work in groups.	
Participation	Volunteer participation	Balance and fair opportunity for participation.	Noisy environment.	

Comparative Chart for Groups I and II taken from Real Time Observations

Semester I

Semester II

Group s	Similarities	Differences	Conclusions	Similarities	Differences	Conclusions
Group I	Both groups had some volunteer participation.	Passive Students 5 straight lines facing to the board in class setting.	Not enough participation although teacher was a facilitator.	Students liked topics and games.	Small number of members in groups: 3 to 4 students.	Due to the fact that most of the students could not continue for failing the first semester, it can be said that maybe this could help to solve the problem of interaction and participation because the teacher could help them more and they could interact and participate actively in class for the communicative activities and materials used.
	Both groups had bad conditions in the classrooms.	5 or 8 members for group work.		Teacher as a facilitator.	29 students as a total.	
	Lack of appropriate materials from the teacher and students.	Tease students worked together.	In group I, most of the group was passive and they liked to work in big groups; as a result, they liked to tease when having this type of activity.	Motivated for group work.	More time for activities.	
	Lack of time for activities.	Students were chosen to participate obligatorily.		Classroom conditions improved.	More active students.	
	Working with friends.	Students preferred more individual work.	It can be seen that there was a problem with participation and interaction which were not successful due to the classroom conditions, activities and materials used in class.	Communicative activities and materials implemented.	Balance of activities and time for each.	
	Dependent on the leader to work on task.	Forming groups of 3 or 4, in pairs or individually.		Some distraction in class.		
	40 students in class in both groups.	Students preferred to write answers on the board.	This group of students were very hyperactive, however, they did not like group work too much with students they did not like to work with.	More responsibility to work.	Changes in attitudes towards participation.	In this group although the group was a large one, the same activities were used. Students showed a change in their interaction and participation in the communicative activities and materials used in the classroom.
Group II	Same volunteers to participate.	Uncomfortable time for class.		Students accepted group work.		
	Participation for points.	Sitting down near the wall sides.	It can be observed that the problem of interaction and participation persisted due to uncomfortable time, classroom setting, activities and materials implemented in class.	Same ways of group organization.	Forming groups of 4 or 5 students.	What helped the most to this change for both groups was the visible change in the implementation of communicative activities and group organization.
				Most of the students participated.	Noisy Environment.	
				More confidence.		
				Students chosen at random.		

X.6 Classroom Dynamics Implemented to improve Students' Interaction and Participation

According to Penny Ur (Discussions that work), “ When a group is given a task to perform through verbal interaction, all speech becomes purposeful, and therefore more interesting.” Classroom dynamics were used to get students involved in the learning process by doing the activities that they could enjoy to lower students' fear when participating and have them share their ideas, so that they could take risks to interact cooperatively and participate in class. At the same time with the practice of these activities, students could become more tolerant to work for their own success. The following chart shows the activities, objectives and descriptions of communicative activities used in the investigation:

Objectives	Name and Description of the activities	Results	
		Positive	Negative
Students will be able to interact one another by trying to guess the type of place others described.	Guessing game Students had to choose a place of Nicaragua and had to write sentences with <i>there is</i> and <i>there are</i> using the model of the teacher as an example.	++	
They will participate by giving reasons why they chose the specific place.	Students got into groups of 4 or 5, wrote their descriptions and when they finished each group had to read the information while the others guessed.		
Students will be able to provide and guess the correct word behind the lines by saying letters.	Hangman Researcher starts the class with the Hangman of the word “Pollution.”	+	
Students will be able to give as many ideas as they can to describe “Pollution.”	Brainstorming When students guessed the words, the researcher asked them to get into pairs and write words related to the topic.	++	

Students will interact with the members of the group to give as many ideas as possible to be winners.	Group Competition Then, they have 5 minutes to finish and compete with the other groups.	++	
	Role Takers Researcher wrote the concept of “Pollution”, then she assigned the students to write in groups of 5 their own concepts.	+++	
Students will take a specific role and take responsibility for it.	Researcher gives a specific role to each student, such as a secretary who writes all classmates ideas; a time keeper who controls time for participation of all students in the group; a language monitor who controls who and how much Spanish and English was used; a coordinator who organizes the work; and a reporter who represents the group by sharing their ideas. There was a consensus at the end.		
Students will know others’ opinions about some problems occurring where they	Information Gap Activity Students were given a chart on their handouts in which they have to ask and write others’ opinions about water, land and air pollution in order to know their environmental situation.	++	
Students will ask about problems occurring in other places of the country and also ask for solutions.	Interview Students asked for solutions to the problems found in relation to the environment.	+	

Students will be able to interpret in groups of 5 the message of a song.	Finding Connections Students had to listen to the song “ Heal the World,” then they had to choose a paragraph and in groups of 5 analyze and interpret what the message of this paragraph was.	+	
Students will be able to analyze a problem and give a solution to such pro	Problem Solving Activity Students were given some environmental problems that occur in Nicaragua, so that they gave solution to each of them. In groups of 4, students analyzed one problem given by the teacher. All the groups had a different problem and had to give different solutions.	+++	
Students will be able to share ideas about their investigation about one type of pollution.	Project Presentation Students had to present what they had investigated about one type of pollution(air, water and land pollution) that took place in the city students lived. Then, the groups presented while the others who were sat down listening to the presentation had a format to ask questions after the presentation. At the end, they wrote the answers given by the presenter and decided whether they agreed or disagreed with such answer, it was called “ Reflection” The presenters had to show poster presentation.	++	

Students will be able to order a text by analyzing its logical sequence.	Putting in Order Individually, students had to read a text to analyze how it was ordered.	+	
Students will share their opinions about the right order of the previous text.	Opinion Exchange Then, in pairs they had to order the pieces in order to find the logical sequence of the words.	+	
Students will debate about the logical sequence of ideas in a given text.	Debates Later, in groups of 3 students had to compare their ordered texts.	++	
Students will create a dialog about the situation in Nicaragua in the future years.	Dialog Finally, there was a consensus of ideas in which students discussed why they ordered the text in certain way.	+++	
Students will know how to act out a real situation happening in Nicaragua.	Role Play Activity Students were asked to write a dialog about the situation in Nicaragua for the future. This activity was done in groups of 4 and students had to personalize the dialog.	+++	

Students will be able to discuss about an important natural resource, and decide why it is important.	Discussion activity for decision making After personalizing the dialog, students had to present it as a role play to the other students. Ranking Activities Students were asked to get in groups of 4 and write from 1(the most important) to 4 (the least important) the most relevant natural resource in Nicaragua and give reasons why they did it so.	+++	
Students will be able to show their understanding of the class by interacting one another.	Ball Game Class was divided in two groups, they had to throw a ball to the opposite group while put some music. When the music stopped, the student with the ball, had to pick up a question from a bag and answer it. Not answering such question about the previous lessons was minus one point for the group.	+	+++

As it can be observed, the chart showed that there were not negative results in relation to the activities done. It can be analyzed that these communicative activities used in the language classroom made the students enjoy some activities more than others. The activities used by the researchers were considered by their levels of motivation for students to interact and participate in class, so students that got one plus(+) were classified as good activities; the ones with two pluses (++) were characterized as very good, and last but not least, the activities with three pluses(+++) were considered excellent and were the ones that students showed better results and that they really liked at the moment of implementing them.

Such activities were not classified in relation to motivation, interaction and participation because they could not be presented isolated, but interrelated one another. It means, where there is motivation, there is interaction, and where there is interaction, there is always participation. The results shown in this chart worked for groups I and II of the investigation.

XI. Conclusions and recommendations gotten from Students' motivation, interaction and participation

These conclusions and recommendations were based on the four guided questions mentioned at the beginning of the investigation which were related to the students' characteristics, teacher's characteristics, classroom characteristics and conditions and interactive and participative dynamics used.

XI.1 Conclusions

1- Students' characteristics:

The diagnostic test results showed that students with high level of English could enjoy group activities and their participation in the classroom; in contrast, students with lower level were restrained to do so. In addition to this, there was a minimum percentage of students with deficient knowledge that was inhibited to interact and participate in class.

In relation to students' interaction and participation in the first semester, students had a lot of similar characteristics concerning them in the classroom. Most of the students did not consider that there existed any problem with these two areas of the teaching and learning process. However, it could be seen that there were slight differences between the two groups when they presented their reasons why they interacted or participated in class.

According to students' opinions in relation to their interaction, it was gathered that with group work, group I and II could be successful in learning in semester II. In addition, group work was a good strategy to be used in the language classroom to improve students' interaction, so that they could have more communication. However, students mentioned that the only student who worked was the one who knew English while the others got distracted doing something else. This was why the majority of the students chose to work in groups *sometimes* depending on the students they worked with and depending on the strategies used by the members for group work.

It is important to mention that with a small number of students, students could organize themselves better. For this reason, the amount of students in a group had to depend on the number of students in the classroom.

It was seen in this analysis that students chose leader students because of their popularity and leadership in order to get more help and not have problems with short time because in this way group I and II could be successful in learning because group work was a good strategy to use in the language classroom. But to some extent, it could also be a negative aspect because the others were dependent on them.

Although students liked group work to know others' opinions, problems with participation were found because the same students participated in class and there was not too much dialog practice.

There was an increase in group interaction for sharing ideas and having roles, and also an increase in participation for students' tolerance.

Some students did not like group work due to their possible high level of English and that they did not want to get affected with low grades for group work.

There was also a minority of students who disliked group work which showed a small increase of the problem of interaction for students not having enough good relationships.

In relation to *motivation* and participation, some students mentioned that they did not pay attention because they felt bored and they just participated to get more points.

The conclusions gotten from the real time observations were the following for semester I from groups I and II: in group I, most of the group was passive and they liked to work in big groups; as a result, they liked to tease when having class activities.

In Group II students were very hyperactive students; however, they did not like group work too much with students they did not like to work with. It can be observed that the problem of interaction and participation persisted due to uncomfortable time, classroom setting, activities and materials implemented in class.

2- Teacher's characteristics:

Other negative aspects were that students found that the class was long, students laughed when others talked and there was distraction when interacting in group activities. Also, when participating, not all students participated.

Some negative aspects found in the journal writing for semester II were that students needed more time for class work, but it showed a decrease in comparison to the first semester.

In addition, there was not enough participation although the teacher was a facilitator. It can be seen that there was a problem with participation and interaction which were not successful due to the classroom conditions, activities and materials used in class.

The conclusions gotten from semester II from groups I and II were the following: due to the fact that most of the students from group I could not continue for failing the first semester, it can be said that maybe this could help to decrease the problem of interaction and participation because the teacher could help them more.

3- Classroom characteristics and conditions:

The negative aspects found in the first semester were that students complained about bad classroom conditions what caused low motivation.

4- Interactive and participative dynamics:

According to the journal results in semester I from group I and II, this is what was gathered in relation to the positive aspects seen: students considered that there were dynamic classes due to the implementation of some activities to motivate students through the use of interesting topics and good materials in order to avoid the low involvement in group activities.

In relation to the positive aspects seen in the second semester for group I and II, this is what was gotten: more motivation due to learning English through dynamic activities in class.

Moreover, there was also an increase of motivation for interesting classes and good materials.

Students could interact and participate actively in class for the communicative activities and materials used .

In group II, although the group was a large one, the same communicative activities were used. Students showed a change in their interaction and participation in the communicative activities and materials used in the classroom.

What helped the most to this change for both groups' interaction and participation is the visible change in the implementation of communicative activities and group organization.

From the communicative activities done in the language classroom, the results were classified as follows: it was analyzed that these communicative activities used in the language classroom made the students enjoy some activities more than others. Such activities were not classified according to motivation, interaction and participation because they can not be presented isolated, but interrelated one another. It means, where there is motivation, there is interaction, and where there is interaction, there is always participation.

XI.2 Recommendations

1- Students' characteristics:

First, it is important to start this improvement from high school where students can be encouraged to work in groups and participate so that they can get used to do this from the beginning.

Second, combine mixed-abilities students so that students with high level of English can help those weak ones.

To use occasional use of the leaders in the groups to avoid that others become dependent on them.

To avoid monopoly of participation of the same students by keeping control of who are the students who are participating.

If students are given the necessary tools from the beginning, then in the other years of study, they will internalize this in a better way and they will not face the same problems not only at the university level, but also when they become professionals.

2- Teacher's characteristics:

To implement from the beginning of the *Año Comun* the use of Placement tests to avoid having marked differences among levels of English of the students.

Teachers should make use of strategies and instruments that allow them to identify problems of interaction and participation in the language classroom although groups do not seem to have problems.

The most convenient is to have small groups of students to be successful in the teaching and learning process and to give equal and fair opportunities to all students to interact and participate.

To encourage group work by showing the students its importance in the language learning process.

The students should be provided with strategies they can use to organize their groups in a better way.

To encourage bored students to get involved in the activities and have more communication with them to avoid this problem.

It can be said that teachers have to be positive to encourage students' learning through the use of group work activities in order to improve students' interaction and participation. Thus, classes will be more successful.

3- Classroom characteristics and conditions:

To improve classroom conditions for the English classes, at least with basic things, such as chairs, good fans, bigger classrooms, and others.

4- Interactive and participative dynamics:

To implement in the sessions of group work more activities so that each student has a specific role to avoid students' distraction or that only one works.

To implement dynamic activities according to students characteristics, levels, interests and needs (for example, passive and hyperactive students).

One of the necessary things is that there should be a wide variety of group organization activities.

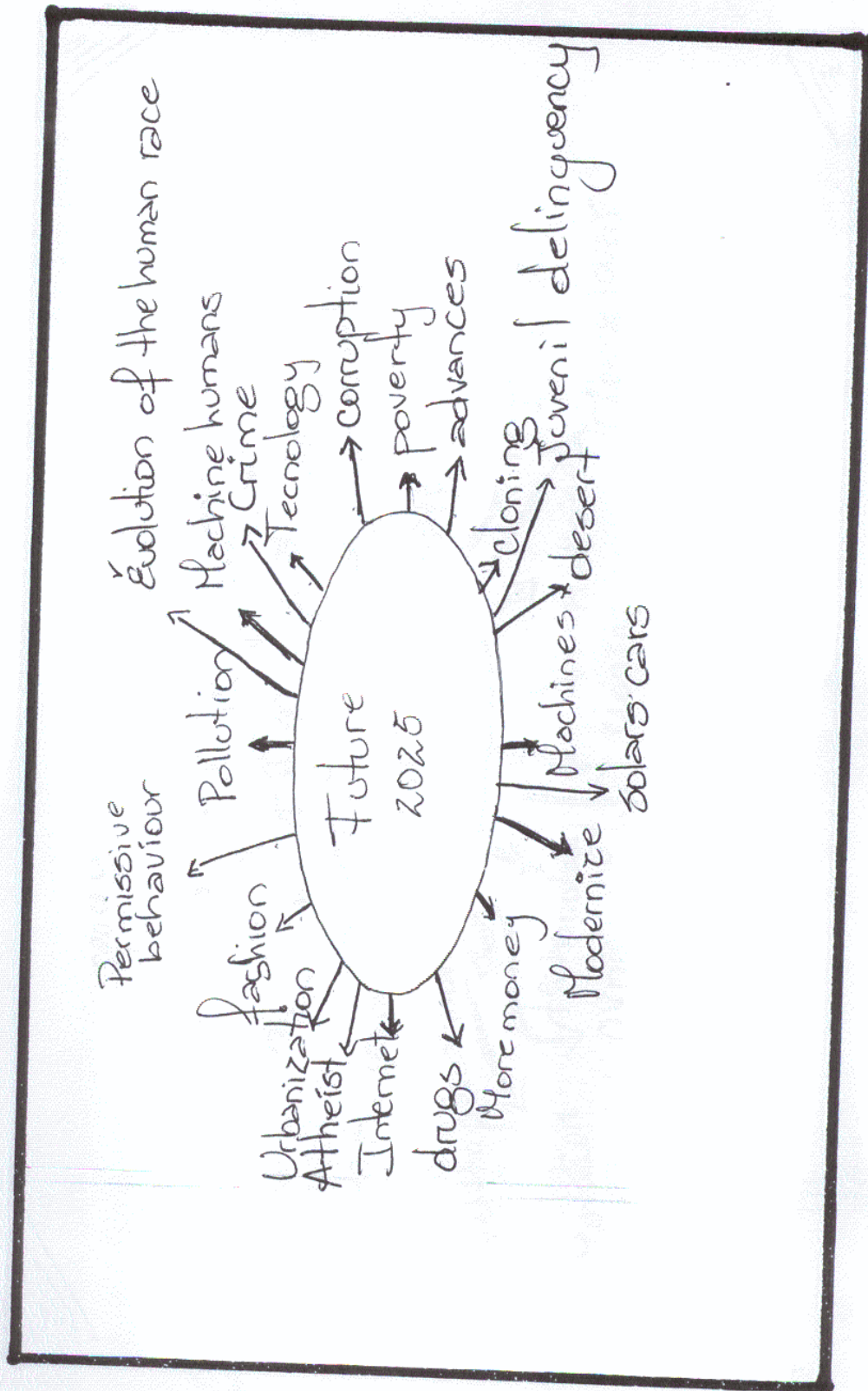
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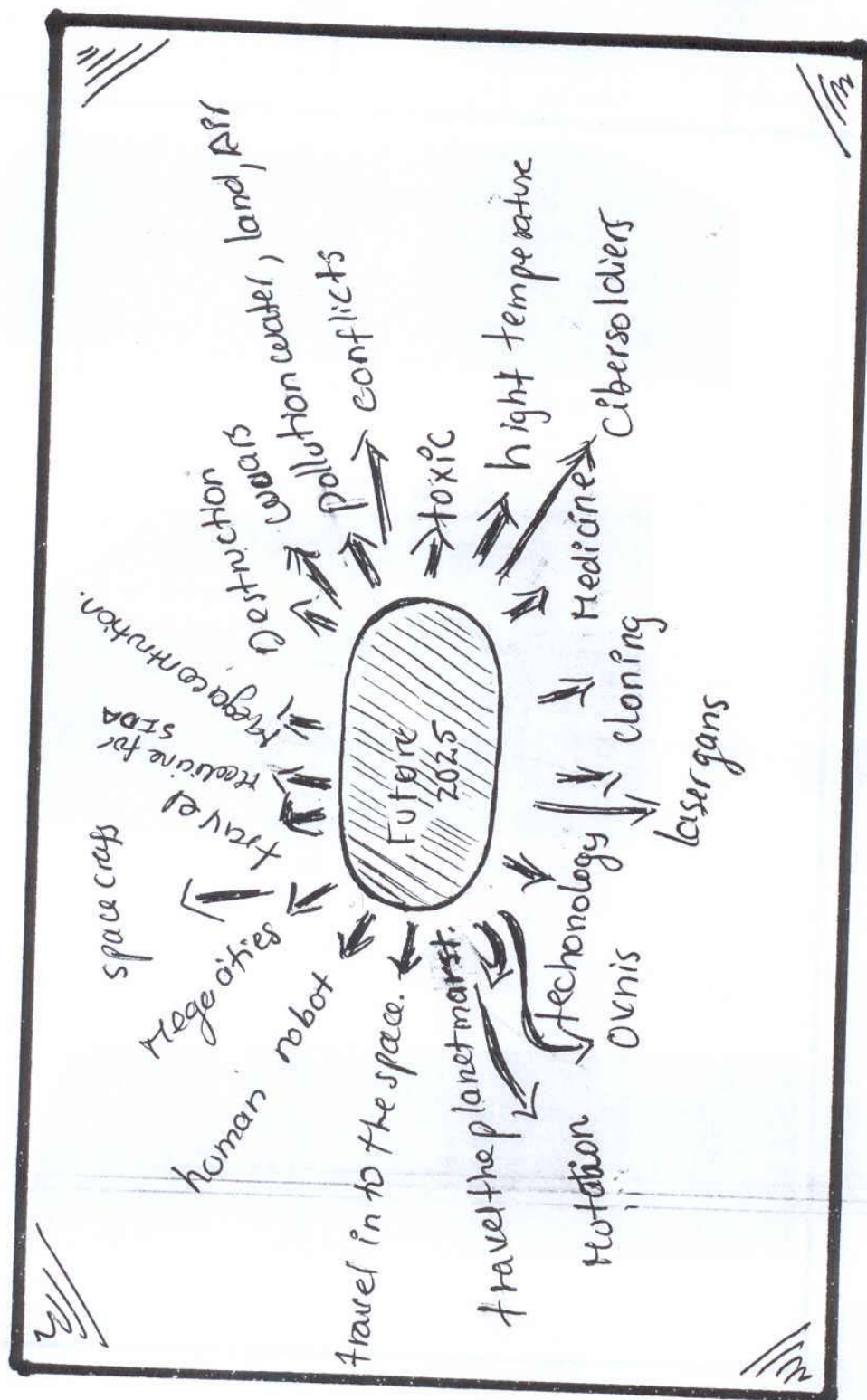
Appendixes

Brainstorming

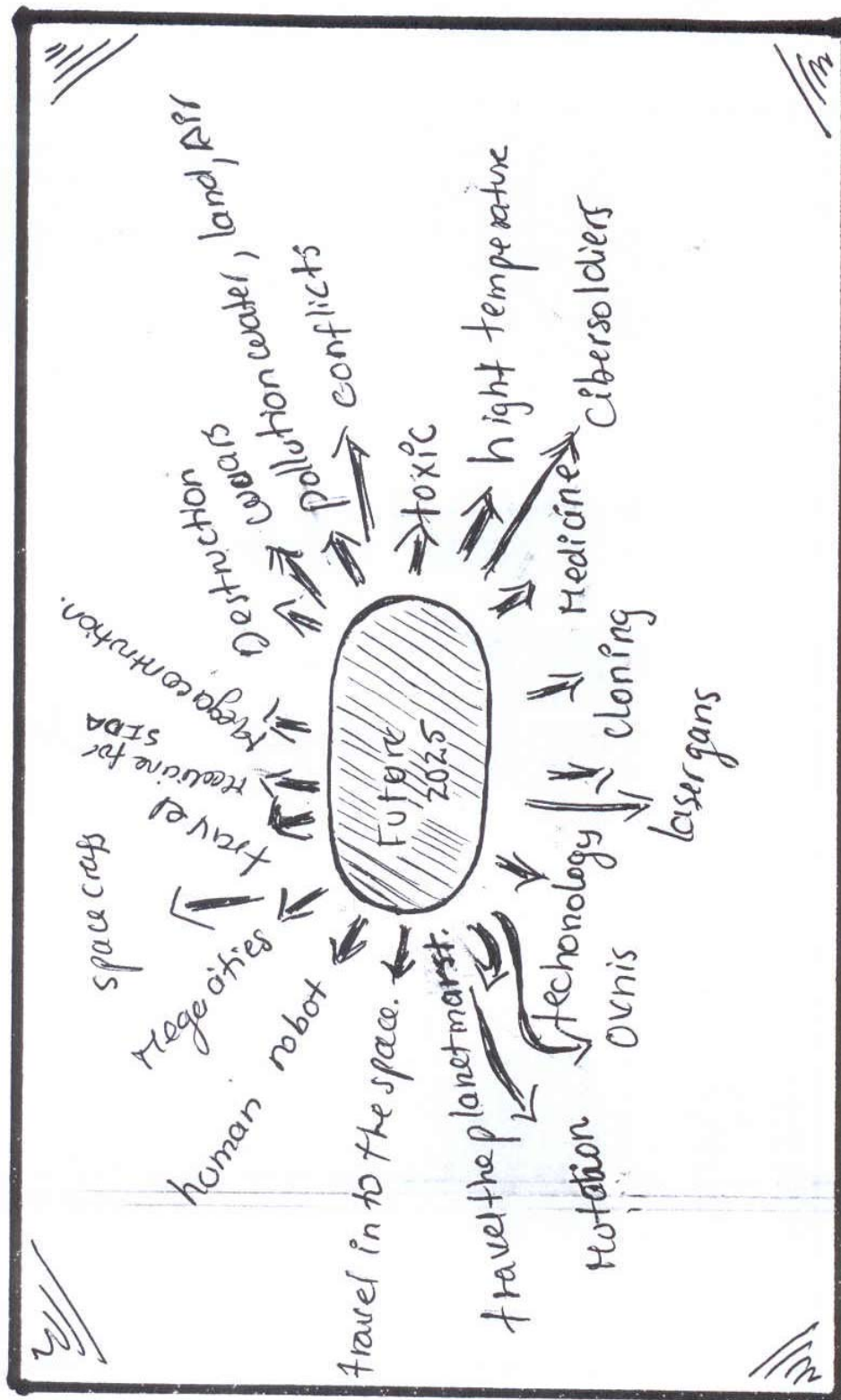


H

Brainstorming



Brainstorming



3

Guessing Game

Country → Nation

Is our home, our place of living,
when I was born and I am
living, like all my society.

World = planet.

It is a place where all the
people, animals and plants
live together.

Kill → murder

When I hurt someone and stops
to living. When I go to jail
for do that.

Information Gap

Clave #6 -

What are your hopes or wishes for the future?

R=

- Student^{Nº} 28 hope she can be the better business administrator
- Student^{Nº} 28 hope she can be the better wife of the word.
- Student^{Nº} 28 wishes she can have a family
- Student^{Nº} 28, wishes she can visit different country of the word

Information Gap

Clave #6 -

What are your hopes or wishes for the future?

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- Student^{Nº} 28 wishes she can have a family
- Student^{Nº} 28, wishes she can visit different country of the word

Information Gap

Nº 11

What are your hopes or wishes for the future?

- 1- Student 18 wishes she can be interesting woman
- 2- st 18 wishes she can be healthy.
- 3- st 18 hopes she can have a house.
- 4- st 18 hopes she can have a profession.

Interview⁶

6- Answer the questions. Then, interview two of your classmates. Discuss the answers with the other students.

What is the biggest environmental problem where you live?

Name	You 18 Place: León	Student 1 39 Place: Sutiava	Student 2 37 Place: Sonoto
Problems	The problem in León is garbage and rivers are contaminated.	The problem in Sutiava is land pollution, the garbage.	The problem in Sonoto is the land pollution.
Solutions	people should recycling garbage - Don't fling garbage in rivers.	A good solution is: people should find to deposit the garbage in its place.	A good solution is Don't fling garbage in the street.

Name	You: 14 place: León	Students: 1 21 place: Chinandega	Students: 40 place: Matagalpa
problem	The problem is garbage on the streets.	The problem is garbage on the rivers.	The problem is garbage on the sort places.
Solution	Don't throw away garbage in streets.	Don't throw away garbage in rivers.	More politics about where we can throw away the garbage.

Interview

What is the biggest environmental problem where you live?

Name: N° 12 - León.

Problems: There are problems of Garbage, water pollution and air pollution.

Solutions: 1- Don't throw away garbage in rivers, streets and parks.
2- Stop the garbage fire.

Name: N° 13 - Somoto

Problem: There are rivers contaminated.

Solution: Don't throw away garbage in rivers.

Name: N° 26

Problem: There is a fabric throwing away garbage in the rivers.

Solution: Throw the garbage in another place.

8 Problem Solving Activities

You live near "Fortin" or "Churena". There is a lot of garbage around your house. You already talked to the government and people that work on campaigns but nobody does anything to solve this problem. You can not breath and your children have a lot of skin and lung problems. You don't have money to buy another house. What can you do?

Solutions:

- 1- I should move of this place.
- 2- I should talk with my parents for help me.
- 3- I should search a work for buy a medicine.
- 4- I should teach some prococutions to prepare for illness.
- 5- I have to let go to my sons go to school.
- 6- I Can go with my sons to a health center "free".
- 7- I^{have} to search other place for live with bast conditions
- 8- I can teach about order from to infance.
- 9- I can talk to my children that don't wet in the rain.
- 10- I should sow some trees around my house.
- 11- I should keep clean my home.
- 12- I should prohibited to my children don't play with the trash.
- 13- I have to search a women with a lot of money.
- 14- I shoold talk with god for he bring me help.
- 15- I should cover me with large clothes for protect my skin.
- 16- I can search others ones for help me.

Problem Solving Activities

Imagine there is a mudslide in León you don't have cars, buses and other types of transportation. Your family and you are the only ones who are closer to the mudslide the other families, what can you do?

- 1- If you want to escape; you should run.
- 2- If you can't escape; you should pray.
- 3- If you can't run away; you should scream and wait a helicopter.
- 4- If you don't wanna die, you can run away.
- 5- If your family don't care about you; you should run away and live them alone.
- 6- If you want to escape; you can't lose the calm.
- 7- If you want to nobody die, you can help the other people.
- 8- If you want to run; you should take carefull.
- 9- If you want save your life; you can't save your house.
- 10- If you want escape; you should run away very fast.
- 11- If you want to run away; you should run faster than ever.
- 12- If you want to escape; you should find a way to survive.
- 13- If you want escape for the mudslide, you should

-Next to your house, there is a gas station. In this gas station there is a tank with a big hole in which a lot of petroleum goes out through it. This petroleum gets mixed with the water you and all your city drink and use. There is not more water than the one you use. What can you do?

* If you want to want to fixed This problem, you should make a protest against this gas station.

* If you want to free your city reserves of water, you can driver the liquid (petroleum) and make it see this to the company.

* If you want to resolve the problem from the top, you can make a list with signed, with the wacessity of put in other place this gas station.

* If you want to see a better answer, you need to demand the entire company.

* And if you cant do anything, a should make other place to got water any piray for your health.

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Project Presentations

11

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua.
UNAN-LEÓN
Año Común

Componente: English

Bloque II

Topic: The water pollution
• Poster

Integrantes:

[Redacted]

N° 1

[Redacted]

N° 4

[Redacted]

N° 5

Grupo # [Redacted]

Profesor:

[Redacted]

León, octubre del 2003.

"A la Libertad por la Universidad".

1

Water Pollution

Although the man realized the great importance and utility of the water, unfortunately him some it contaminates it in diverse ways.

The contamination of the water damages the aquatic atmosphere, harming and sometimes killing all the fish and other alive beings that inhabit her.

Of what way does the man contaminate the water?

- + By means of the action of pouring the black waters of the cities in the lakes, lagoons, rivers, etc.
- + The black waters of our capital city spill in the lake of Managua: Their water are polluted.
- + The polluted waters should not drink, because they possess many microorganisms, bacterias, virus, amoebas, etc.
- + For the chemical waste and the residuals of polluted water that hurtle of the factories and industries in the rivers, lakes, lagoons, etc., is also contaminated the water.
- + In the north area of our country, the coffee grower that throw the pulp of coffee in the rivers, have contaminated these sources of water.
- + Some rivers of the mining areas of our country, are polluted because in them they throw the toxic residuals of the mines.

The contamination of the water is a problem whose results are affecting most of the population and that as we see, the consequences must be worse every day.

These consequences are:

- When using the toxic substances or pathogen microorganisms present in the polluted water, they cause the cholera.
- The pathogen germs that are transmitted through the insects that proliferate in waters stagnated through the sting of insects cause malaria and dengue.
- The use of polluted waters with fecal materials; due to the shortage of water for the hygienic services and for the personal hygiene they cause conjunctivitis, leprosy, scabies, worms, etc.
- The mosquitoes and flies that breed in water bring yellow fever, malaria, and sleeping sickness.

Conservation and preservation of the water.

The water the same as the air, is one of the most indispensable natural resources for the life of the alive beings. The water is renewed every time that rains.

Each person has the obligation and the responsibility of preventing the contamination of the water and it's waste unnecessary to be able to possess and to inherit to the future generations a purer and cleaner nature.

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Each person has the obligation and the responsibility of preventing the contamination of the water and it's waste unnecessary to be able to possess and to inherit to the future generations a purer and cleaner nature.

What actions should we carry out avoid the contamination of the water?

- We should not urinate or to defecate in the rivers, lakes, lagoons, etc. We should make it in appropriate places dedicated for this end.
- We should make sure that the constructions of the hygienic services are far from the wells, rivers, lagoons, etc.
- We should not throw the garbage in the rivers, lakes, etc. We should deposit the garbage in appropriate places.
- We should avoid or to prevent the cut of trees in adjacent areas to the rivers, lakes or lagoons. The not existence of trees in it's riversides has made that the rivers disappear completely.
- To suggest to the State that demands to the owners of the factories and industries that place purifying special to separate of the water the toxic waste that emanate of their factories, before being poured in the rivers, lakes or lagoons.
- To suggest to the State that they purify the black waters of the cities before pouring them in the river or in the lake, etc.

Format about presentation's questions

Number: 19.

Questions: why is very dangerous the water pollution?

Answer: Because you can't drink the water contaminated, if you drink this water you can have stomachache, cholera, diarrhea. This pollution can transmit very dangerous diseases for us like typhoid, malaria and yellow fever.

Reflection: I agree, Because this pollution is too dangerous to everybody in the world, the water is dirty and it's impossible to drink it, this kills everything.

Numbers : 38

Answer:

Question:

Question:

What are your recommendations for eliminate of the water pollution.

Answer:

Is very difficult, because the peoples should avoid of the contamination.

Reflection:

I don't not of agreement with the answer because the answer is personal and claim not the recommendation specific for eliminate of the water pollution.

Question:

Mention again the consequences of the water pollution.

Answer:

- Contamination of the peoples, animals and plants.
- Illness in the skin.

Reflection: The answer is correct.

14

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua. —

UNAN - León

Año Común

Componente:

INGLES

Bloque II:

Grupo: ■

POLLUTION

Tema:

AIR POLLUTION

Elaborado por:



#36

#29

#16.

Profesora:



Fecha: 17-10-03.

THE AIR POLLUTION

The air pollution is the harm or imbalance of the habitual components of the gaseous medium for the addition of rare substance, or the loss of his normal components, specially in the stratosphere.

The more common substances are: the chlorofluoro carbons (CFCs), also the smoke, exhaust fumes, dumping, aerosol cans, carbon monoxide, etc. All substances provoke the air pollution.

- The air pollution has much effect as
- Loss of knowledge.
 - Induction to sore throat.
 - Disease in the breathe way
 - Toxic effect irritant to the human.

- Death and damage of the vegetation, animals and matter.
- Destruction of the ozone layer.
- Pollution of the atmosphere.
- Impoverishment of the natural beauty.

Some measure to avoid the increase of the air pollution:

- Eliminate the use of Freones, in picture, aerosol cans and atomizer.

- Control the use of insecticidal and substitute the not degradables with other degradables.

- Control the systems the combustion of the vehicles, so those won't produce many smoke.

- Control burn of garbage, tree and other wastes.

Not smoke

Move always if it's possible on foot, by bicycle or by collective transportation.

" IF WE DESTROY THE AIR...

WE'RE DESTROYING OURSELVES

Student N° 24

Can you tell me three effects of the air pollution in the future?

- destruction of the ozone layer

They only told me two effects, but I didn't understand one of this. but I'm agree with them because the air pollution means the destruction of the ozone, I think that the principal agent of this problem are the factories. I think that we don't care the air because we are ~~the~~ one of principal agent of the pollution.

Dialog

- What of the future
- look for the main idea of each paragraph.
- Noma: The world have more garbage and the pollution is growing. This is big problem.
 - Xiomara: I think that in the future will have less garbage if all recycle it
 - Magdalena: No, I think that the garbage will exist for ever.
 - Nilagres: I think that in the future people will have better education about environment and won't throw away garbage in all place, people will be recycle the garbage by cleaning the environment, too
 - Nadisna: I think that will work the all.

The students' names were changed.

Dialog.

Cynthia : I think than in the future the world's pollution will be more.

Kenia : I don't think so, because it will have recycle materials

Cynthia : it's not sufficient

Alicia : yes, because I think that if communities rural will study the problem environmental will avoid the land pollution and don't do

Dixon : I think that in the future we'll have more pollution, because the self progress, pollute the environment with the biggest machines for the advance

Alicia : Kenia please does royalist because the world its pollute

Kenia : yes, but I think what the people don't to adapt to change, but near can to make

Dixon : Although the community want to help us, we can't making anything.

The students' names were changed.

Students' Interaction and Participation from their discretion written on their journals.

This class was very dynamic and participative because all participate in this class and learn about the pollution. My experience how reporter was very important because talked about the land pollution and its consequence and its important know about the pollution.

Today is 17th October 2003.

Hello! Teacher.

Today we did a teamwork about the Pollution

We did. expose cause, Introduction solutions. I like the class

for what is easy and we talk more English and learn more vocabulary.

I want to do again in the next blogue. OK.

Thank you

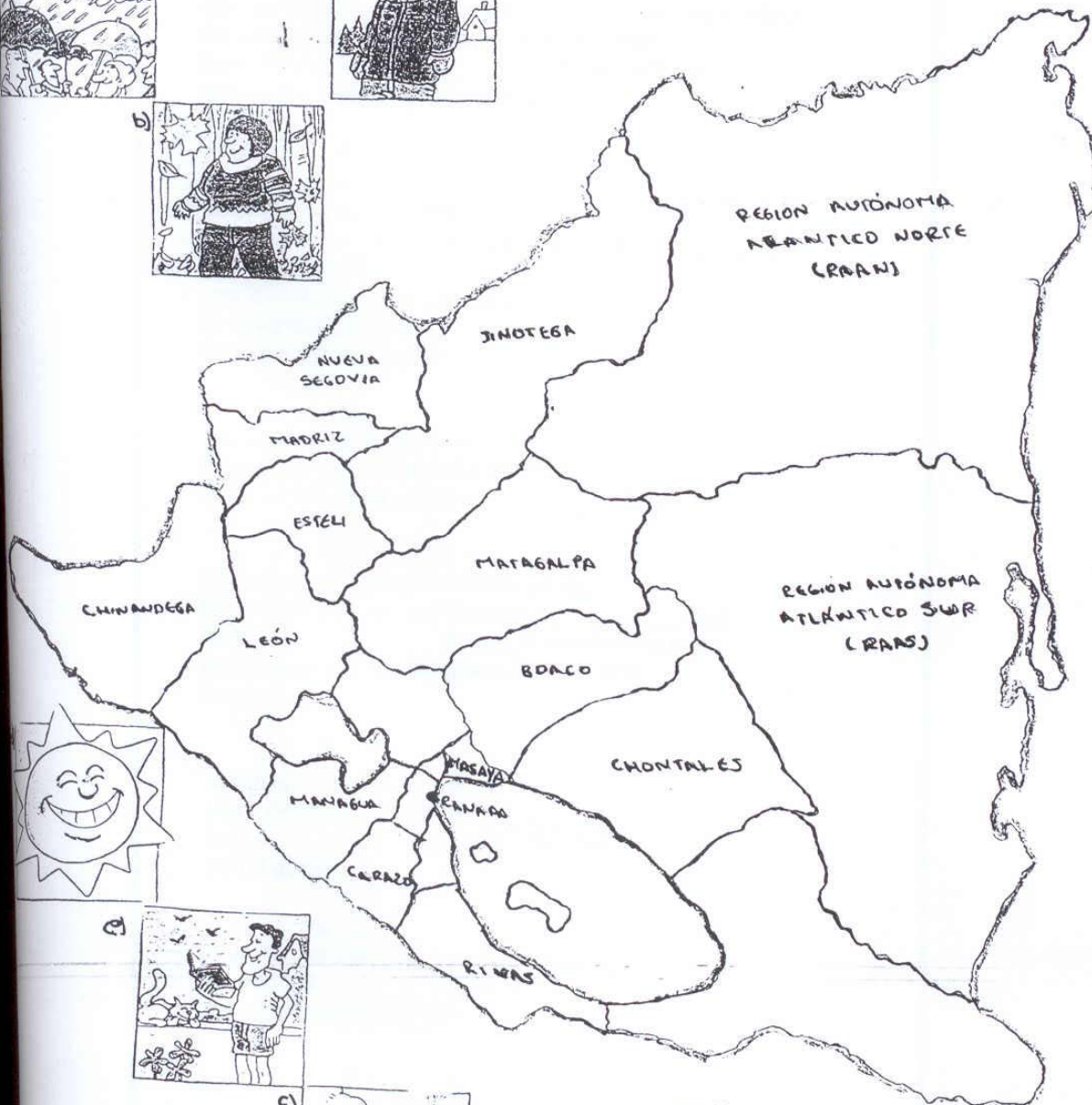
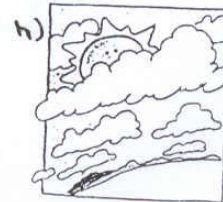
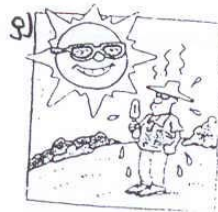
#17

Today, the class was fun and very interesting. I think that the teacher gave us the class with enthusiasm and I am agree with the dynamics that the teacher realize to the class, because it help us that we can consider the class very interesting, I think that is good that the teacher do that everybody participate in the class because it help us to practice and learn this language that is very important to learn for us.

N° 32

The class was too participative, the topic today was important because was four seasons, learned new words and pronunciation, but not have much opportunity. Participative because only pass the some person (21, 22, 18, 17), I want to participate more and I can't. I think the teacher has to assigne the participation

4-Look at the map below. Locate the cities mentioned in the listening and write the appropriate temperature for each.



23-A
Song

HEAL THE WORLD

I

Think about mmm the generations and
say we wanna make it a better _____ for our children
for our children's children, so that they, they
know it's a better _____ for them and think
if they can make it a better place.

II

There's a place, in your _____
and I know that it is love
and the place could be much brighter than _____
and if you really try
you'll find there's no need to cry
in this place you'll feel
there's no hurt or sorrow.

III

There are ways to get there
if you _____ enough for the living
make a little space, make a _____ place.

IV

Heal the world, make it a better place,
for you and for me, and the entire _____ race
there are _____ dying, if you care enough
for living make a better place, for you and
for me.

V

If you want to know why
there's a love that cannot _____
love is _____ and only cares for
joyful giving.

VI

If we try we shall see in this bliss
we can not _____ or dread
we stop existing and start _____.

VII

Then it feels that are _____
 Love's enough for us growing
 so make a better world to _____ a better world.

Repeat part # IV

VIII

And the dreams we were conceived in
 will reveal a joyful _____
 and the world we once believed in
 will shine again in grace
 Then why do we keep strangling life
 wound this earth crucify its soul
 though it's plain to see this world
 is heavenly be _____ glow.

IX

We could fly so high let our _____ never die
 In my heart, I feel you are all my brothers
 created a world with no fear
 together we cry _____ tears
 see the nations turn their swords
 into plowshares.
 ploughshares

X

We could really get there
 if you _____ enough for the living
 make a little space to make a _____ place.

Repeat part # IV

You and for me.....

Teachers Perceptions ²⁴ Taken from Real Time Observations

Título: 7-9 (morning)

Tuesday, June 10th, 03.

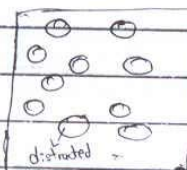
+ Students have a formal setting. The teacher

starts giving some instructions about the journals.

+ Then, she starts the new topic: "Should cloning be prohibited?"

She gives other instructions about students working in groups and create a conversation (she also gives them the time)

+ S's get into their groups. They preferred to choose the ones they were going to work with. The S's are assigned to work with others on a separate group. There are 10 groups. What they have to do is to predict what the pictures are about. S's are working on the activity while the teachers taking the attendance list. S's are using dictionaries, when they don't know how to say something they ask another group. Some groups were worried about the homework. They were borrowing handouts (one of them) because they didn't do the homework. The t. was checking the H.W. Sometimes the group activity doesn't work because S's start doing or talking about something else or maybe one st. is working while the other two are waiting for him/her to finish. The S's now have 15' working in groups. The t. asks the S's to present their dialogues, the ones who don't do it today are going to present it next class. The S's have their presentations, they then give their numbers to the T. Some S's were still working on creating the dialog. 6 groups had their presentations while some S's were using a cell phone.



+ The t. asks the S's to order some conversations.

+ Then, the S's practiced pronunciation, intonation and stress of some words (Chorally Repetition). Competition between Boys & Girls.

+ Giving the S's their homework. Explaining to the S's how they have to do it.

Tuesday, September 30th, 2003

1

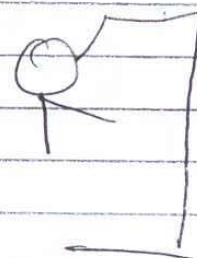
attendance.

They did a hangman with the word:
Pollution - Pollutants

ss give consonants and vowels.

P o l l u t a n t s

av	mx	hx	tr
bx	ov	sv	dx
cx	ix	pv	nv
ex	uv	iv	



What is the meaning Pollutants? -contaminates

teacher makes a brainstorming with the word pollutants and ss. help her.

fuel
 garbage
 trash waste
 smog
 landfills.

(septic pool.)

Exercise 1 page 5.

Teacher wrote on the board the concept of pollution. teacher asks for synonym words.

dangerous/toxic garbage gasoline fuel
 Pollution is poisonous or dirty substances
 that are contaminating the water, air, or land.
 polluting rivers, smog, aerosol, pesticides, lakes-beach-sea/ocean.

2] world in group of 5. Teacher gives
at every member of each group.

1- Secretary

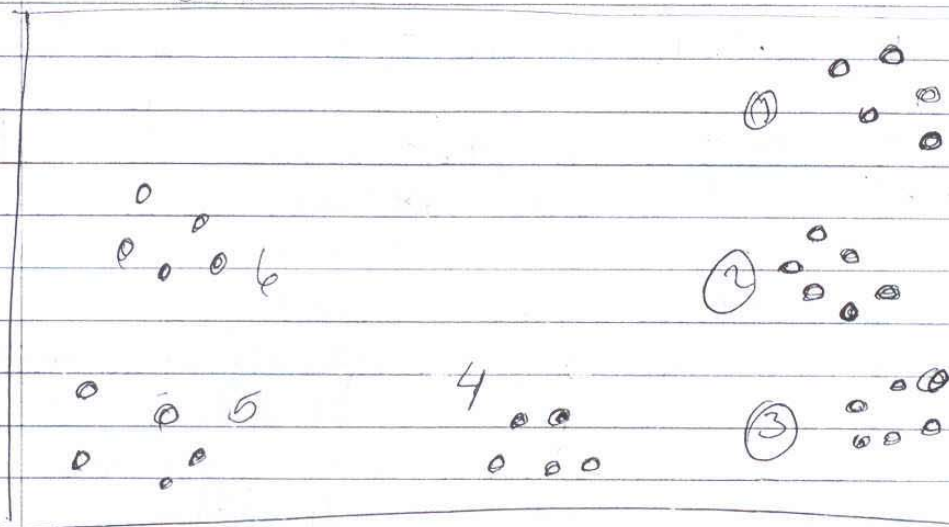
2- Time Keeper

3- Language monitor

4- Coordinator

5- ~~reporter~~

Teacher explains the function of every member.



Students choose their roles, and write
your own concept about Pollution
Teacher walks in every group and
help to the students.

Secretaries write on the board the
concept of pollution and then.
(Secretaries) Reporters explain their
concepts.

Example:

Pollution ~~It's~~ ^{what} all that dangerous for the living being and the environment like smog, garbage, pesticides, gasoline/ etc. all this is very bad for the rivers, lakes, ~~and~~ and the land and mostly for human being.

Pollution ~~is~~ ^{is} a consequence of the development of the cities caused by factories, cars, agriculture and essentially by the humans this phenomenon. the global village, destroying the environment.

Pollution is the destruction of the natural ~~his~~ ^{resources}. It's a big problem because ~~it~~ ^{it} destroyed of the people in the world. the pollution can be caused by ~~the~~ water, air, and land.

Pollution is dangerous for the health; ~~the~~ pollution destroys the rivers, the trees, the lakes, the ocean and the human beings.

the pollution is the problem in the world, because ~~is~~ dangerous, are polluting the - - -



4

Students write their concepts on the not
but not all of them write them.
Some students don't like to write the
concepts of pollution in their notebook.
Teacher corrects some concepts (grammar)
they write their definition because
they need to remember them on the
exam.

Teacher gives examples in order to ss. write
their solutions about pollution.

- Don't ...
- People should ...

Students read their text and write
their own words and write 3 solutions.
According that at the topic that they
have. Some groups have the following topics:

air pollution

Land pollution

water pollution

Divide the class in two groups.

1-0

0-1

0-1

0-1

0-1

0-1

SB writes on the board their solution.

Pumas ✓

Charlie's Angels.

The best solution wins the game.

Air pollution

1 Don't burn fuel

1 - Don't ~~to~~ ^{burn} set on x
flam ~~on~~ wheel

Water pollution 2 - ~~to~~ ^{Don't} dump water
pollution in ✓
river.

2 - people shouldn't
throw away garbage
in the sea. ✓

Land pollution People should recycle
substances such as
paper, plastic and

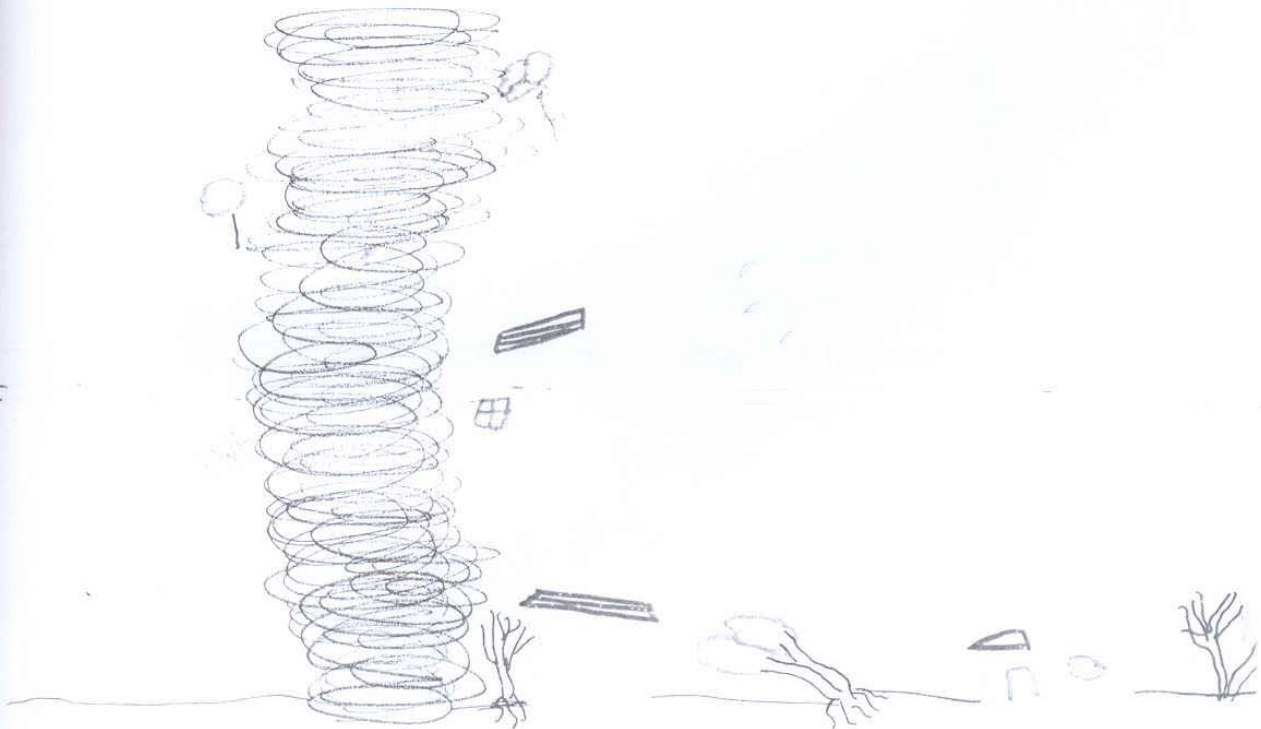
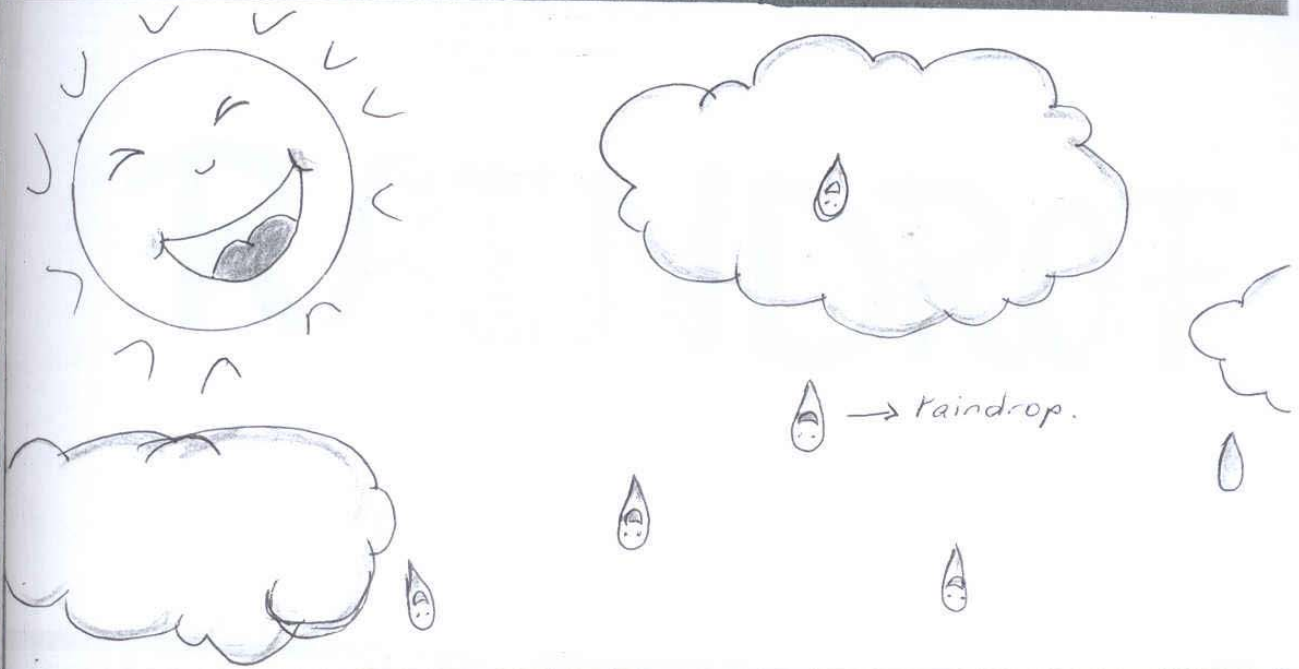
people should recycle
the solid waste

Teacher explains the homework.

HW: Analyse old sayings from the handout and complete the box.

H/bum

Turn the page to see the
word at the back ↓



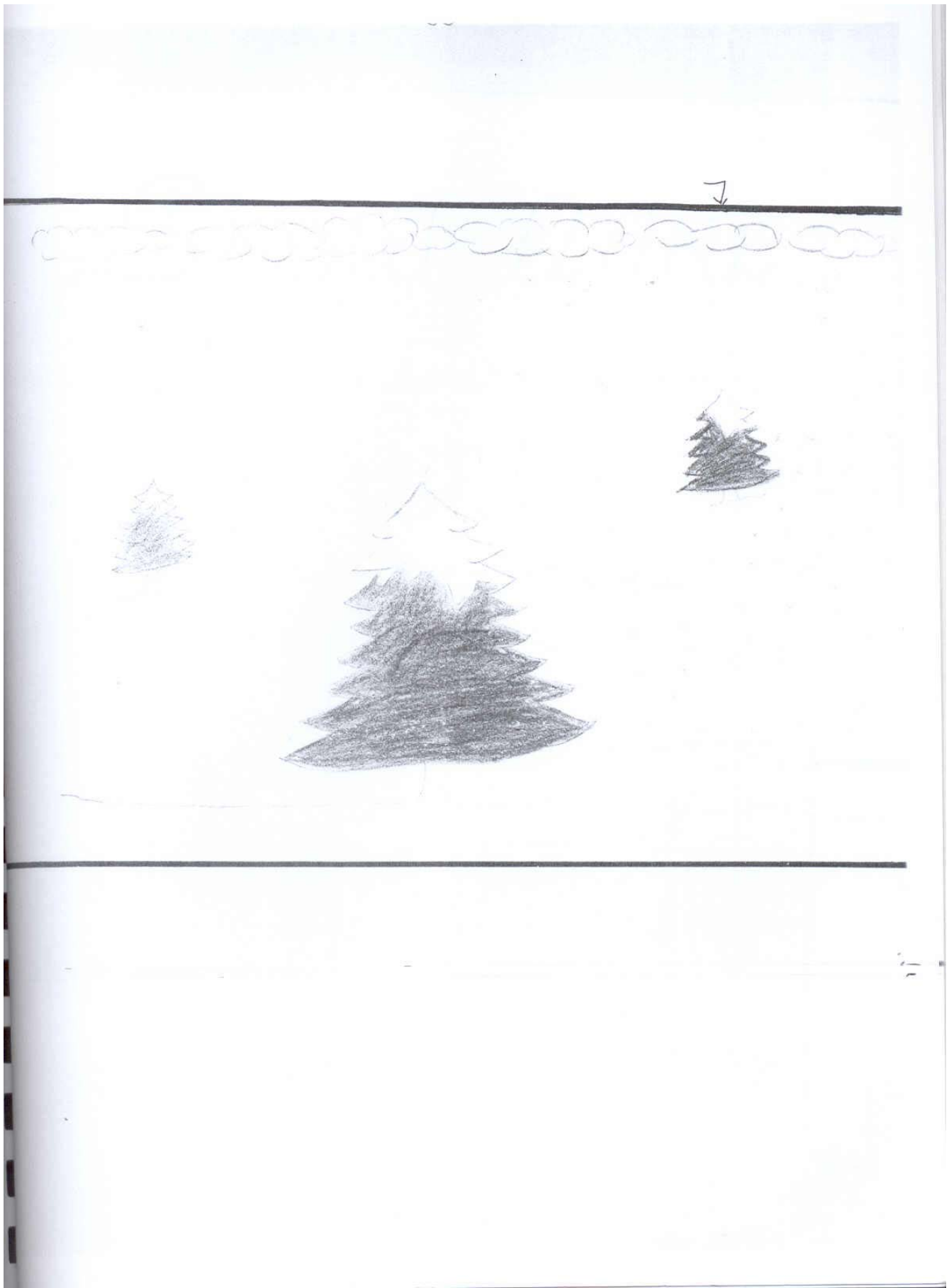
RAIN DROF

There are many raindrops in cloud.

Tornado

→ There is a tornado in Matagalpa.

→ There are some tornados in Rivas



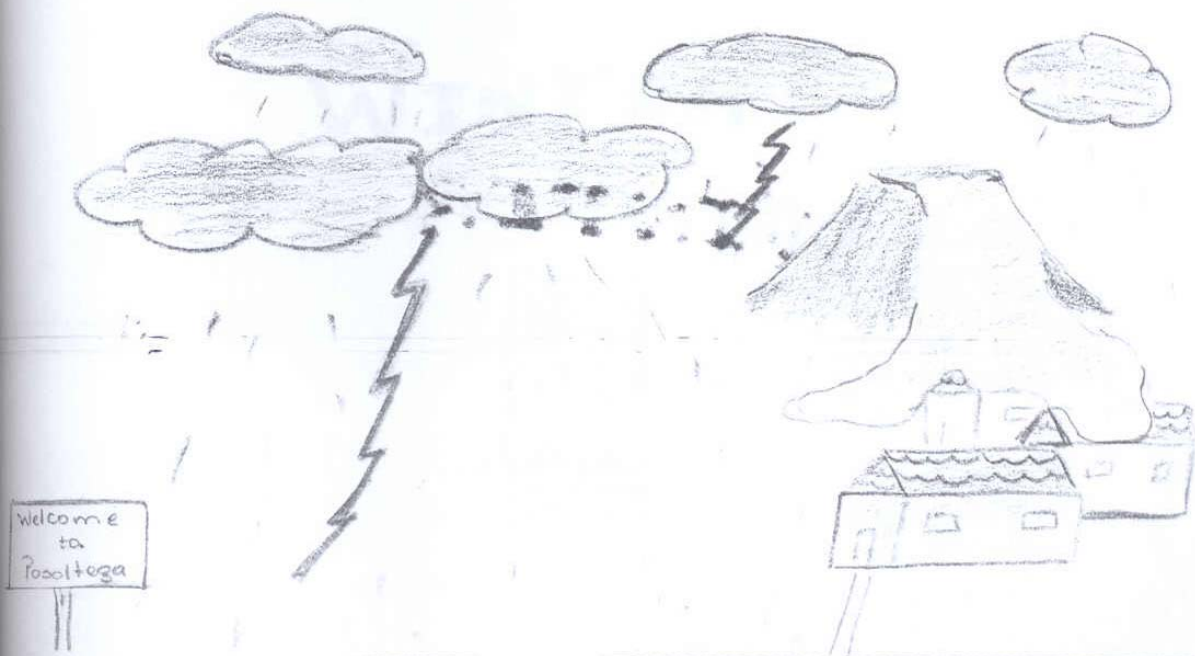
AT THE AÑO COMUN, UNAN-LEON

Indiana C. Caldera Corea & Martha C. Laguna Torres.

SNOW FLAKE

There are many snow flakes in the earth

Turn the page to see the
word at the back ↓



AT THE AÑO COMUN, UNAN-LEON
Indiana C. Caldera Corea & Martha C. Laguna Torres.

FLOOD.

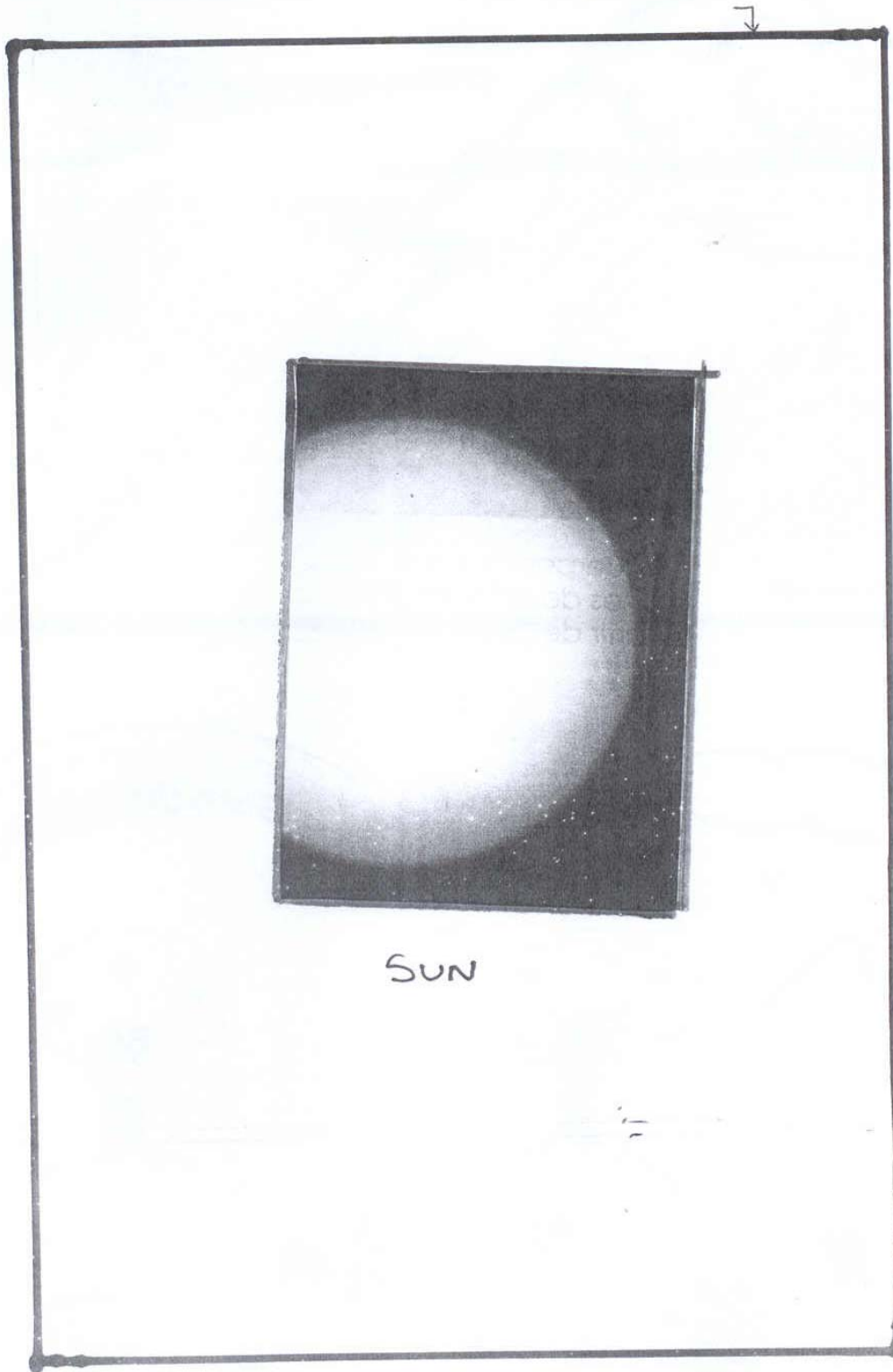
There are many floods in winter.

Tamaño : 9³/₁₆" x 11³/₈"

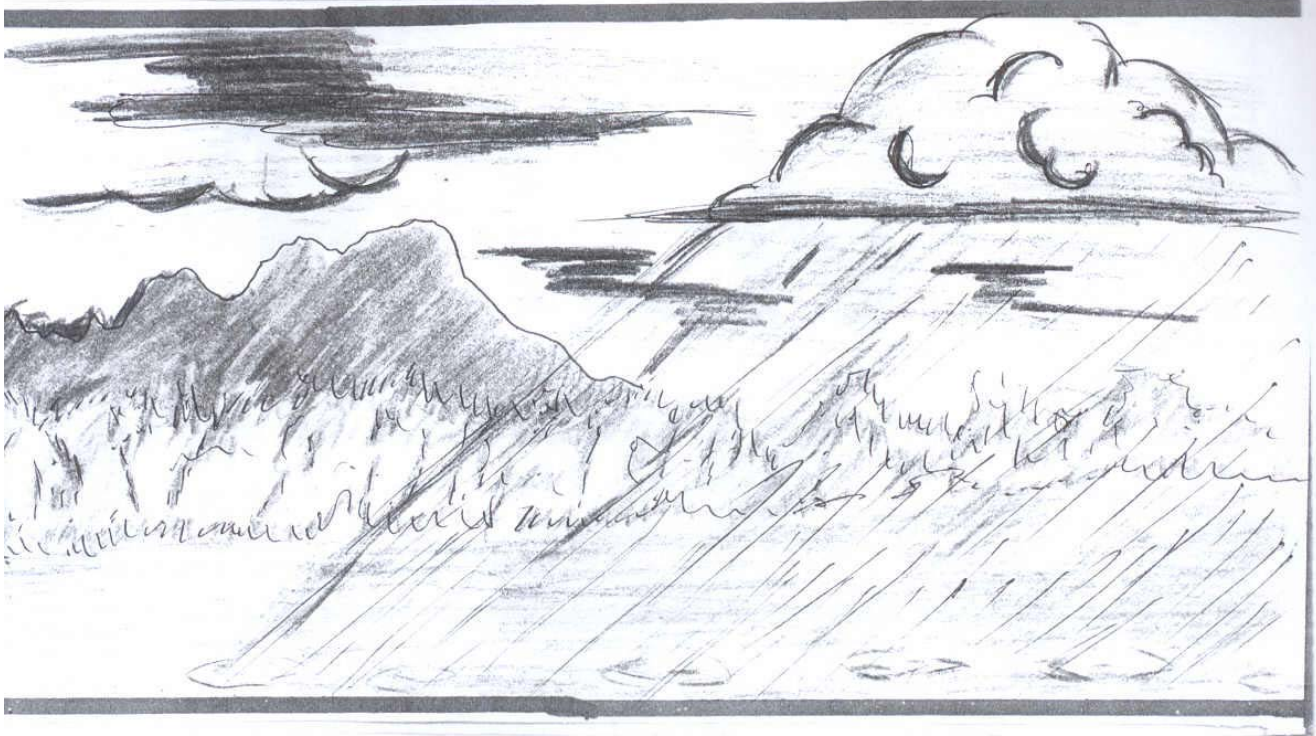
WINTER

There is a lot of water in winter.





Turn the page to see
the word at the back →



APPENDIX 36-A

X.1 Diagnostic Test

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua Año Común

Name:_____ Group:_____ N°:_____

I-Read the text below

The Panama Canal, begun in the 1880's, wasn't finished until 1914. It joins the Atlantic and Pacific ocean, Engineers describe the canal as a victory of human over geography; workers dug huge amounts of lands and tamed rivers.

For 40 years after it was completed in 1931, the **Empire State Building**, in New York city, was the tallest building in the world. Amazingly, this 102-story building was constructed in just 410 days.

The **Netherlands North Sea Protection work** is another victory over geography. The Netherlands, which is below sea level, was often flooded by the North Sea and by rivers. Then, between 1927 and 1932, a dam was built to shut out the sea. 20 years later, dams and canals were built to control the rivers.

The **Golden Gate Bridge**, completed in 1937, was also a challenge for workers: San Francisco Bay has a very strong winds and rough waves. The Golden Gate is still the world's tallest bridge. It has enough steel to wrap around the world three times.

At 1815, the **CN Tower**, in Toronto-Canada, is one of the world's tallest free-standing buildings. Completed in 1976, the tower is used for TV and Radio broadcasting.

The **Itaipu Dam**, completed in 1984, goes across the Panama River at the Brazil-Paraguay border. It is the world's largest hydroelectric plant.

Completed in 1994, the **Channel Tunnel** joins France and England. The "Chunnel" is a remarkable convenience: cars, buses, and trucks are all carried through the tunnel by train.

APPENDIX 36-B

1. Choose the best title for the reading:

- a) Seven Beautiful landscapes
- b) Seven Modern Wonders of the World
- c) The Seven Oldest places in the world

2. Circle the right answers for the questions:

A-How old is the Panama Canal?

- a) 34
- b) 24
- c) 14

B-Which wonder was constructed in just 410 days?

- a) Golden Gate Bridge
- b) Panama Canal
- c) Empire State Building

C-Which is the tallest bridge in the world?

- a) Golden Gate Bridge
- b) Itaipu Dam
- c) Panama Canal

D-Which is the world's largest hydroelectric plant?

- a) CN Tower
- b) Itaipu Dam
- c) Netherlands North Sea Protection Work

E-What joins France and England?

- a) The Golden Gate Bridge
- b) Panama Canal**
- c) Channel Tunnel

APPENDIX 36-C

3- Complete the following statements:

1. _____ are the structures that are the tallest of their kind.
2. _____ are two great victories over geography.
3. _____ is a structure that joins two bodies of water.
4. _____ are two structures that join two separate areas of land.
5. _____ is a structure constructed very quickly.
6. _____ are two structures that are in Europe.

Find the job that is right for you!

Nearly 50% of all workers have jobs they aren't happy with. Don't let this happen to you! If you want to find the right job, don't rush to look through the ads in the newspaper. Instead, sit down and think about yourself. What kind of person are you? What makes you happy?

According to Psychologist John Holland, there are six types of personalities. Nobody is just one type, but most people are mainly one type. For each type, there are certain jobs that might be right and others that are probably wrong.

The **Realistic type** is practical and likes working with machine and tools.

The **Investigative type** is curious and likes to learn, analyze situations and solve problems.

The **Artistic type** is imaginative and likes to express himself/herself by creating art.

The **Social type** is friendly and likes helping or training other people.

The **Enterprising type** is outgoing and likes to persuade or lead other people.

The **Conventional types** are careful and like to follow routines and keep tracks of details.

If you think about who you are, you can make the right job decision. Liz is a good example. Liz knew she wanted to do something for children. She thought she could help children as a school counselor or a lawyer. She took counseling and law courses-and hated them.

After talking to a career counselor, she realized the problem was that she is an artistic type. Liz studied

APPENDIX 36-D

A- Based on the information in the article; check the job you feel would not be a good choice for each personality type. Then, explain your answers to a partner.

1. Artistic	2. Conventional	3- Enterprising
Actor	Accountant	Painter
Computer	Bookkeeper	Manager
Programmer	Inventor	Politician
Photographer	Secretary	Salesperson
Songwriter		
4- <i>Investigative</i>	5- <i>Realistic</i>	6- <i>Social</i>
<i>Detective</i>	<i>Carpenter</i>	<i>Doctor</i>
<i>Model</i>	<i>Factory Worker</i>	<i>Nurse</i>
<i>Psychologist</i>	<i>Mechanic</i>	<i>Writer</i>
<i>Researcher</i>	<i>Reporter</i>	<i>Teacher</i>

B- Answer the following questions:

1. Which personality type are you most similar to?
2. What kind of job do you think would fit your personality?

APPENDIX 36-E

Evaluation Criteria

16-20=A

11-15=B

6-10=C

1-5=D

APPENDIX 37 - A

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua

Año Común

X.2 Questionnaire # 1 for students at the Año Común, UNAN-Leon

Name of the teacher:_____ Date:_____ Age:_____

Sex:_____

Circle the answer of your choice

1- When you have a task in class, do you like to work in_____? Write the reasons why you like to work in this way.

a) Pairs_____

b) Group_____

c) Individual_____

2- Do you like to participate in class:

a) Always?

b) Sometimes?

c) Never?

3- When do you like to participate:

a) When you like the topic?

b) When you understand?

c) When you have knowledge about the topic?

4- Who do you like to work with:

a) Girls and Boys?

b) Boys and Boys?

c) Girls and Girls?

5- Do you like to work with in groups outside the classroom:

a) Always?

APPENDIX 37 - B

b) Sometimes?

c) Never?

6- How do you consider your participation?

a) Excellent

b) Very Good

c) Good

APPENDIX 38

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua

Año Común

X.3 Questionnaire # 2 for students at the Año Común, UNAN-Leon

Name: _____ Number: _____ Date: _____

Group Number: _____ Teacher : _____

Class time: _____ Male: _____ Female: _____ Age: _____

Individually, answer the following questions:

1. Do you like group work? If so, write 3 advantages of having group work?

a)

b)

c)

2. What are 3 disadvantages of having group work?

a)

b)

c)

3. How often do you like group work in your class?

4. How many students do you like to work with?

5. Write the names of the people you like to work with in the English class. What are positive characteristics that identify them in the groups?

6. Are you happy with the amount of time given for group work? Why? Why not?

APPENDIX 39-A

Guessing Games

What season do you think it is?

Procedure

Teacher hands out a c copy with four short readings. Then, students are asked to work in pairs, read the text carefully, and write the title of each reading. After doing this, in groups of 4, students will compare their titles and check if they got the right answers. Finally, the teacher is going to ask for volunteers to come up with their choices. With this, they are going to clarify whether they got the appropriate answers or not.

These days are warm and long. They are sunny days. The days are bright and the sun is hot. The sky is blue and the air is warm. Flowers grow and the trees and the grass are green. Sometimes there are clouds and the sky is gray. Then, it rains and people need a raincoat or an umbrella. Sometimes there is thunder and lightning. Some people are afraid of lightning.

This season is also called fall. These days are cool. Leaves begin to fall from the trees. There are yellow, red, and brown leaves. The colors of fall are beautiful. It is the time to gather apples, pumpkins and corn. Most people go to watch games.

These days are short and cold. The days get dark early. Sometimes all cold mornings, there is frost on the grass and on the streets, sidewalks, and cars. During this season you have to wear warm clothing and stay inside your house.

APPENDIX 39-B

These days are colorful, sunny and warm. There are many different types flowers. Days get longer and warmer in this season. There are new leaves on the trees. Flowers begin to grow. Nature puts on new clothes and many colors: red, yellow, blue, white and purple. Birds build nests in this season. Many baby animals appear. People like to make gardens and farms.

What place is this?

Procedure

Write sentences describing a specific place in which problems or aspects related to seasons are mentioned. Read it out loud without giving the name of the place.

For example:

In this place, there are many people from different places of the country. It is located in the occidental part of Nicaragua. Poneloya belongs to this place. This is a dusty place in summer time, and it is very hot. It is also windy and it does not rain too much. What place is this?

Answer:

Leon city

What word is it?

Procedure

In groups of three, students have to create an album using the following words: Sun, Cloud, Wind, Rain
Raindrops, Snow, summer, spring, Winter Fall/ Autumn.

APPENDIX 39-C

Example: sunset

In front of the page students draw a picture showing the meaning of the word. While at the back of the same page, they have to write the name of the picture.



Front



Back

There will be a competition in groups. A student shows one of the pictures while the other groups guess what the word is.

Some Nicaragua's Natural Resources

Procedure

Write sentences describing the natural resource that you have in the place you live in. Then, read them aloud while the others guess.

For example:

This resource is characterized by having a lot of salty water; it has a lot of waves and sand.

There are some coconut trees and it is located in the occidental part of Nicaragua.

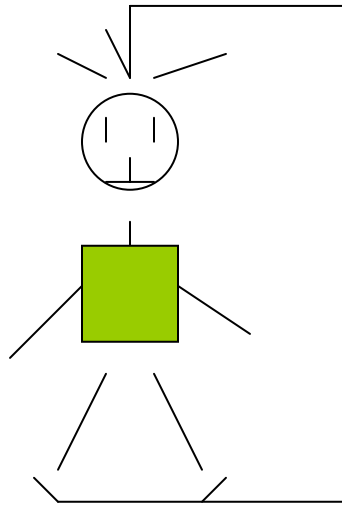
Answer: Beach

APPENDIX 40

Hangman

Procedure:

Teacher draws nine short lines on the board while students have to guess what the missing letters are to know the topic of the lesson.

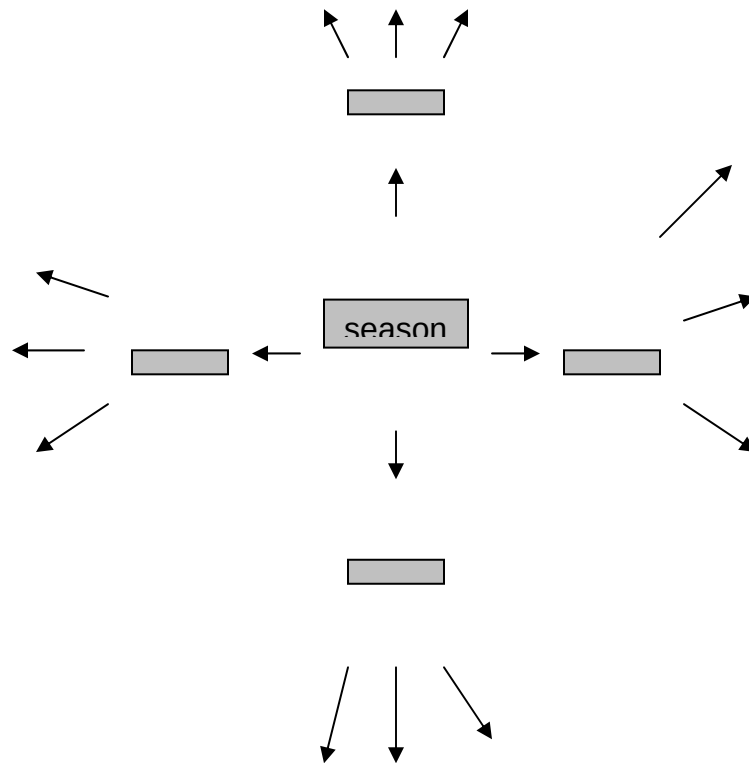


APPENDIX 1-A and 2.

Brainstorming Activities

Procedure

In this activity the teacher is going to write the word “ seasons” in the middle of the board with four arrows, the students have to provide the four seasons and describe how each season is.



APPENDIX 41-B

Procedure:

Students get in groups of three. Then, teacher is going to draw a chart on the board (chart, optional) containing the following words:

Rivers	Lakes/Lagoons	Beaches	Volcanoes

Every group will have a secretary in charge of writing all the information the other 2 students provide. They are going to have 5 minutes to do this activity, the group with more information will be winner.

Group Competitions

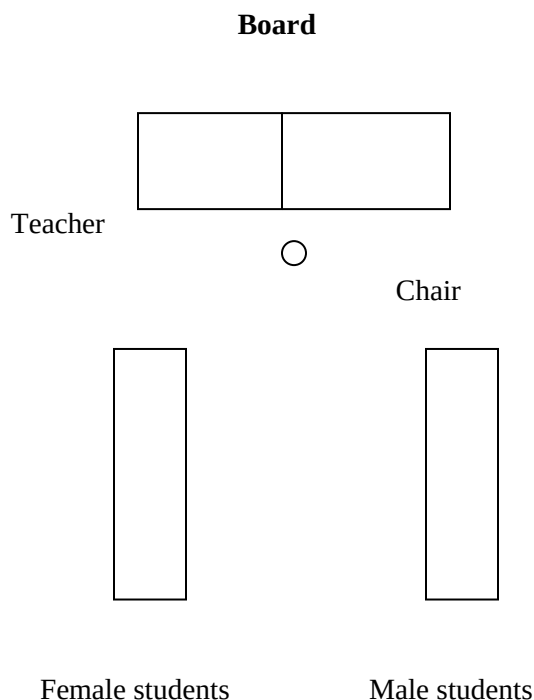
Procedure

Students will be asked to get into groups of 5 students while teacher sticks different copies of different places of Nicaragua on the walls of the classroom, for example: Managua, Rivas, Esteli, Matagalpa, Leon, Jinotega and Bluefields. Each member of the group will have a number from one to five. Teacher will ask different questions taken from a sheet of paper, and she will say any number from one to five to choose one of the students of each group. The students with the number have to stand up and look for the answer to the question. At the end, the groups with more answers will be the winners.

Gender Competition

Students will be asked to get into groups according to their gender. Teacher will ask them some questions aloud, for example: “What problems do you think planet-air will have in the future?”. Then, class will be divided in two groups, female students at one side and male students at the other. Teacher will put two markers on a chair and draw a line on the board to divide it. When asking the question one student from every group will run and take one of the markers and answer the question on their side. The activity repeats till the questions are finished.

APPENDIX 41-C



Role Takers

Predicting

Procedure

Teacher writes the definition of pollution on the board and asks students to get in groups of four. Teacher will give each student a role for everybody to work, for example: a secretary, a time-keeper, a coordinator and a reporter. Each of them will have to defend and work on the role given. Then, they have to read the definition, write the ideas about it, discuss and predict what the reading will be about. Later, teacher asks for volunteers to come up with their ideas.

Pollution is poisonous or dirty substances that are contaminating the water, air, or land somewhere.

APPENDIX 42-D

Role Takers

Be the Expert

Procedure

Teacher divides the class in groups of four or five .Two groups of four or five will have the same topic e.g. Air Pollution. The rest of the groups will have “Water and Land Pollution”. After they are well organized, they will have 15 minutes to read the whole text, using the dictionary. Then, they will have to become the experts of their topics by analyzing, writing and discussing their ideas using the rest of the time.

Air pollution

It is dirt in the air. This is a big problem in some parts of the world. People cause it burning fuel in buses, cars, factories, homes, schools and trains. The smoke from burning fuel has poison, gases and dust. These enter the air and make it dirty.

The dirty air hurts people. It helps to cause more colds, coughs and diseases of the heart and lungs. It also hurts plants and animals and makes clothing and buildings dirty.

APPENDIX 42-E

Water pollution

A major problem with water pollution is people's disposal of sewage and municipal wastes from a large number of people. Over 25 % of all dumping at sea, such as garbage, heavy metal, pesticides, solvents, insecticides, fertilizers, radio active wastes, and plastics, contribute to this problem.

Although water gives life, it can also transmit diseases, from cholera, diarrhea, typhoid and trachoma. Mosquitoes and flies that breed in water bring yellow fever, malaria, and sleeping sickness.

Land pollution

Solid wastes (plastic, papers, metals and glass) are the major form of land pollution. Substances that are not biodegradable, such as plastic and glass, do not decompose over time. These substances are nearly permanent in the landscape.

Sanitary landfills are primarily designed to contain our organic wastes. Such landfills are the most common form of solid waste disposal; however, many landfills are being shut down since their capacity has been reached. These can cause problems in the future due to the land destruction and the inability to seed on such lands.

APPENDIX 43

Information Gap Activities

Interview

Students will be given a chart that they have to complete first with all the information they have about the biggest environmental problem where they live and give a solution. Then , they have to interview two students from other places of Nicaragua and write the answers on the chart.

What is the biggest environmental problem where you live?

Name	You Place	Student 1 Place 2	Student 2 Place 3
Problems			
Solutions			

Procedure

Students will be asked to get into groups of four. They will be showed a map of Nicaragua. Teacher will ask students to discuss in the groups what the characteristics and temperature of each place are using the map. Then, they have to present their answers.

APPENDIX 44

Instructions

Interviewing

In pairs, students have to look at some pictures and make suggestions on how to solve the problems given. Then, they have to interview other students to find more and different solutions (See examples on appendixes 6 and 7)

Finding Connections

Students have to listen to the song “ Heal the World.” Then, they have to choose a paragraph and in groups of five, analyze and connect the song to Nicaraguans’ reality. Later, they have to present their connections to the teacher (See examples on appendixes 23a and b).

Problem Solving Activities

Students will be given some environmental problems that occur in Nicaragua, so that they give a solution to each of them. In groups of 4, students analyze one problem given by the teacher. All the groups have different problems and have to give different solutions. Then, students have to hand in the solutions given (see examples on appendixes 8,9 and 10)

Problem solving activities

Read the following problems. Then, give solutions to each one.

- 1- Imagine that there is a mudslide in León. You don’t have cars, buses and other types of transportation. Your family and you are the only ones, who are closer to the mudslide than the other families, what can you do?
- 2- There is a big acid rain in your city. Your family has harvest of corn and tomatoes that are affected by the acid rain. You don’t have money and nobody can help you. What can you do?
- 3- Next to your house, there is a gas station. In this gas station there is a tank with a big hole in which a lot of petroleum goes out through it. This petroleum gets mixed with the water you and all your city drink and use. There is not more water than the one you use. What can you do?
- 4- You live near “Fortín” or “Chureka”. There is a lot of garbage around your house. You already talked to the government and people that work on campaigns, but nobody does anything to solve this problem. You cannot breath and your children have a lot of skin and lung problems. You don’t have money to buy another house. What can you do?

- 5- You live in countryside in Chinandega. There could be a seizure under your house and everything you have in a bank. If you don't pay back to this bank. You did this because you wanted to crop fruits and

APPENDIX 44

vegetables, but there is a big problem; there is a drought and all your fruits and vegetables are getting burnt. You don't have more money. What can you do?

Project Presentation

Students have to present what they have investigated about one type of pollution(air, water, or land pollution) that occurred in the city students live. Then, the groups present while the others who are sat down listen to the presentation and using a format, they write the questions they will ask when the presentation finishes. At the end, they write the answers given but the presenters and decide whether they agreed or disagreed with the answers (see examples on appendixes 11,13, 14, 15, and 16.

Name:_____

Numbers:_____

Questions:_____

Answers:_____

Reflections (agree or disagree with)_____

APPENDIX 45

Putting in Order

In groups of five, students have to read some pieces of a text about a song “Imagine” to analyze how it was ordered.

Opinion Exchange

In pairs, students have to exchange their ideas with other groups about why they consider *that* is the right order of the song “Imagine”, and they will also talk about the message of the song.

Debate

Discussion Activity for decision making

Procedure

Students will be given a statement about a problem in Nicaragua. The class will be divided in those who are in favor with the statement and those who are against it. They have to present as many arguments as they can. Then, two main speakers present their arguments and discussion is opened for free presentation. At the end of the debate, the issue is put to the vote, so that the ones who are inclined to the others’ points of view can accept them. Students come to their own conclusions.

APPENDIX 46

Pollution
Cause: It is caused by men!
Effect: It provokes many sicknesses.

Dialog

Students will create a dialog about the situation in Nicaragua in the future years. They have to write the dialog in groups of 4.

Role Play Activity

Students have to personalize a given situation and present it as a role-play to the other students.

APPENDIX 47

Ranking Activity

Students will be asked to get into groups of 4 and discuss what the most important natural resource is or is not and what the least important resources are in Nicaragua. They have to rank this from one to five. They also have to present arguments why they do it so.

Imagine that in the future, Nicaragua will be destroyed by pollution, an organization provides each country an artificial resource, and so all Nicaraguans have to choose just one resource and present arguments why they want it.

Rivers

Lakes

Lagoons

Beaches

Volcanoes

Ball Game Activity

”Passing the Ball “ game

Two groups of twenty students will be grouped in two lines, sat down face to face. Teacher hands out a bag with pieces of paper in which there are different questions about the texts given in the previous activity. Teacher throws a ball to one group and turns back clapping (or plays some music) while the two groups of students throw the ball one to another. When teacher stops clapping (or the music) , the student with the ball will have to pick up a piece of paper from the bag and answer the question in it. If the student does not answer the question correctly, the other group has the chance the answer the same question. The group with the most right answers will be the winner.

The setting will be like this:

