

INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO Y DE ESTUDIOS  
SUPERIORES DE MONTERREY  
UNIVERSIDAD VIRTUAL



THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO  
ENHANCE ORAL COMMUNICATION PRODUCTION SKILLS  
AMONG GROUPS OF MORE THAN 25 EFL (ENGLISH AS A  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE) STUDENTS, BOTH INSIDE  
AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

THESIS PRESENTED TO OBTAIN A  
MASTER'S DEGREE IN EDUCATION  
WITH SPECIALIZATION IN  
APPLIED LINGUISTICS

AUTHOR: IRMA GRACIELA MARTINEZ CANTU  
ADVISOR: PROFR. CAROL CARPENTER ITESM

MONTERREY, N. L.

MAY 14, 1998

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UNIVERSIDAD VIRTUAL

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## Dedication

To my parents, Reynaldo and Ma. Cruz for their wisdom.

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To Marco, Alejandro, Andrea and Carlos Reynaldo, my favorite people.

To Roble, who was truly heaven-sent.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO ENHANCE ORAL COMMUNICATION PRODUCTION SKILLS AMONG GROUPS OF MORE THAN 25 EFL (ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE) STUDENTS, BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Author: Irma Graciela Martinez Cantu

Advisor: Carol Carpenter ITESM

## ABSTRACT

Nowadays, to be able to communicate in the English language has become imperative for most professionals world-wide, especially in Mexico, since we are neighbors of an English-speaking country which happens to be the most powerful country in the world and whose language has become the international language of science, technology, business and diplomacy.

The English courses that are taught at the ITESM are based on a communicative language-learning approach which encompasses the four basic language skills: reading, writing, listening comprehension and speaking. Due to the large number of students (usually more than 25) that can be found in each classroom where English is taught, it can be difficult for professors to ensure sufficient oral participation among all the students.

The method applied in this study was the true experimental research method, which requires the observation and comparison of two similar groups, one in which supplementary oral activities were practiced and the other in which they were not. The instruments used to obtain data were a background data collection instrument, instruments for oral evaluations, a student survey and a professor evaluation survey. The first monthly exam scores as well as the final TOEFL evaluation scores were compared. Also, the oral homework assignments were recorded, transcribed and analyzed.

Even though the results of students' background questionnaires revealed that the students from the control group dedicated more time to outside of classroom English practice, and the grades of the first monthly exam were almost the same for both groups, the final TOEFL scores revealed a significant difference which favored the experimental group. The tape-recording activities and student survey revealed that students spoke freely during the assigned time and enjoyed doing so. Finally, the students' surveys on course activities, as well as on their professor's performance were favorable.

The recommendations the author gives is that students should be encouraged to use the foreign language they are studying, in this case English, in activities other than those offered in their textbooks and practiced in the classroom. They should be given the opportunity to engage in activities both inside and outside the classroom that are enjoyable and that at the same time teach them to communicate effectively in English. A final suggestion is that a language lab be made available to the students so they may record and listen to themselves, and if this is not possible, promote the use of tape-recording activities in ways that can be beneficial in improving students' oral production skills.

# LA IMPORTANCIA DE ACTIVIDADES INTERACTIVAS DISEÑADAS PARA REALIZAR LAS HABILIDADES DE PRODUCCIÓN DE COMUNICACIÓN ORAL EN GRUPOS DE MÁS DE 25 ALUMNOS QUE ESTUDIAN INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA, TANTO DENTRO COMO FUERA DEL AULA

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## RESUMEN

Hoy en día, el ser capaz de comunicarse en el idioma inglés se ha convertido en una necesidad imperante para la mayoría de los profesionistas en el mundo entero, especialmente en México, ya que somos vecinos de una país de habla inglesa que a la vez es la potencia más grande del mundo y cuya lengua ha llegado a ser el idioma internacional de la ciencia, la tecnología, los negocios y la diplomacia.

Los cursos de inglés que se imparten en el ITESM están basados en un enfoque de aprendizaje comunicativo del lenguaje que cubre las cuatro habilidades básicas del lenguaje que son la lectura, la escritura, la comprensión auditiva y el habla. Debido al gran número (generalmente más de 25) de alumnos que se encuentran en los cursos de inglés, puede resultar difícil para los profesores asegurar una participación oral suficiente entre los alumnos.

El método utilizado en este estudio fue el experimental el cual requiere de la observación y comparación entre dos grupos similares, uno en el cual las actividades orales suplementarias fueron practicadas y el otro en el cual no lo fueron. Los instrumentos utilizados para obtener datos fueron un instrumento para recolectar datos de antecedentes, instrumentos para evaluaciones orales, encuestas a estudiantes e instrumento de evaluación a profesores. Los resultados del primer examen mensual, así como los resultados del examen final de TOEFL fueron comparados. Asimismo, las tareas orales fueron grabadas, transcritas y analizadas.

A pesar de que los resultados de los cuestionarios de antecedentes de los alumnos revelaron que los alumnos del grupo control dedicaban más tiempo a la práctica del



inglés fuera del aula y que los resultados del primer examen mensual fueron muy similares, los resultados del examen final del TOEFL mostraron una diferencia significativa a favor del grupo experimental. Las actividades grabadas y la encuesta a los alumnos revelaron que los alumnos hablaron libremente durante el tiempo asignado y que disfrutaron haciéndolo. Por último, las encuestas a los alumnos sobre las actividades del curso y el desempeño del profesor fueron favorables.

Las recomendaciones que la autora da es que los estudiantes deberán ser alentados a utilizar la lengua extranjera que estudian, en este caso, el inglés, en actividades aparte de las que son ofrecidas en sus libros de texto y de las que se practican dentro del aula. Deberá dárseles la oportunidad, tanto dentro y fuera del salón, de realizar actividades que puedan disfrutar y que al mismo tiempo les enseñen a comunicarse efectivamente en inglés. Una sugerencia final es la de proporcionarles un laboratorio de idiomas para que los alumnos puedan grabar y escucharse a sí mismos, pero si esto no fuera posible, promover el uso de actividades con grabadora de modo que pudiera serle de beneficio para el alumno en el mejoramiento de sus habilidades de producción oral.

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## Introduction

One of the most important goals that a student of a second language has is to be able to speak that language as effectively as possible in order to communicate with fellow human beings who can be spoken only to in that language. Furthermore, the language that is becoming more and more necessary to master in these times is English due to the globalization of the world and the use of English as the international language of science, technology, business and diplomacy.

Both students and teachers face an important challenge in the pursuit of this goal due to the limited exposure there is when studying English in a non-English-speaking country, i.e., in an environment that does not favor its constant practice. At the ITESM, as in other teaching facilities, it is common to see groups of more than 25 students studying English as a second language, which limits student participation in class.

The purpose of this study is to find optional ways, besides textbook and workbook activities, of practicing English orally inside as well as outside the classroom, and to discover if these extra activities help students improve their oral proficiency as well as their overall knowledge of the English language.

It is also important to know how students feel when participating in activities that are different from any that they have engaged in previously because it also means that they will have to deal with a heavier work load. The method applied in this study is the true experimental research method; therefore, it was necessary to observe two groups of the same level, one in which the new activities were undertaken, and the other in which they were not in order to establish the comparison required by this type of research. The course level selected was the Intermediate Remedial IV course offered at the ITESM. The control group (Group I) consisted of 30 students and the experimental group (Group II) of 32.

## 1. The Problem

The study of English as a second or foreign language has increased over the years in all levels of education because of the emergence of English as the international language of science, technology, business and diplomacy. One of the major tasks an EFL (English as a foreign language) student faces is the development of his/her ability to interact orally with others in English while living outside of an English-speaking country (in the absence of an English-speaking environment). This is the reality of ITESM undergraduate students at the Monterrey Campus, whose English classes have approximately thirty students and meet only four hours and ten minutes a week. There are many resources that facilitate practice in skills such as reading, listening and writing inside as well as outside the classroom. However, when it comes to speaking skills, the students find themselves limited because, although they may be able to improve their pronunciation through repetition exercises, they find it difficult to improve their communicative oral skills, due to the lack of meaningful activities that can be introduced in the limited amount of classroom time and practiced outside of class as well.

This chapter begins with a presentation of the background of the problem followed by the identification of needs, statement of the problem and purpose and justification for the study. It also includes the questions to be answered, the study's scope and delimitation as well as its limitations. Finally, definitions of linguistic terms pertaining to the study are introduced.

### 1.1 Background of the Problem

Outside the normal classroom hours of English instruction at the ITESM, students have few opportunities to practice or apply the knowledge they have acquired in their classes. They need activities that are of interest to them and that involve realistic situations because traditional homework assignments tend to emphasize the practice of grammatical structures instead of focusing on or improving



oral communicative skills that could reduce student frustration while students learn the language.

To develop extracurricular activities to enhance students' oral capacity, the author worked with students who are taking the high intermediate Remedial IV course in English. This course is offered by the 1995 English program in the ITESM Humanities Department. The author selected this level because it is the last of the remedial levels those students who do not fulfill the requirements for a credited or "sello" course must take. It is important for them to develop their English skills as much as possible to be able to perform and communicate adequately at a more advanced level.

### 1.2. Identification of Needs

The principal objective for learning a second language is to be able to communicate in that language effectively, and nowadays it is of utmost importance for ITESM students as future Mexican professionals to master the English language due to commercial globalization and the economic growth required of our country. It is becoming a common practice to conduct business transactions in English, not only in English-speaking countries but in other countries whose official language is not English or Spanish. Conversations or meetings in English are frequently held in most of the leading organizations in Mexico, especially in the highly industrialized cities, such as Monterrey, so the need to prepare students for the spontaneous use of oral English is imperative. Students need to engage in activities that will enhance interaction with their teachers and peers in order to improve their oral communication skills.

### 1.3. Statement of the Problem

It is clear that the lack of student exposure to the English language affects their ability to interact orally with others. The ideal situation in a classroom would be for

the students to interact in English as much as possible. However, in reality little interaction is obtained spontaneously or voluntarily. There is not much opportunity during the class for the students to interact due to the limited amount of classroom time and the large number of students. When there are activities that require interaction, the students take some time to "warm up" to start interacting and lose valuable time to practice the skills they need to acquire or develop.

Another shortcoming is the fact that although the students involved are at the same academic level, this does not mean that they have the same linguistic competence. Therefore, the author gathered background information about their previous studies of English through a questionnaire, and this information allowed her to know the individual linguistic background of each student involved in the study and also aided her in designing the activities that the students were to engage in.

#### 1.4. Purpose and Justification for the Study

It is assumed that the more extracurricular exposure to the English language the students experience, the easier it will be for them to improve their ability to interact. Since not all the students have the same facility and/or interest in learning a second language, it is important to find ways of motivating their interest. This will allow them to dedicate more time to the practice of the language in order to acquire it in a more natural and less frustrating way through activities in which they are motivated and interested.

The main objective of this study was to find options of practicing English other than the textbook activities and the traditional homework assignments in order to improve the students' ability to interact orally. For this particular study it was necessary to design activities applicable to groups of more than 25 students.

Since students are required to take oral production evaluations as part of their overall evaluation, these activities served as a means of improving their oral

production scores as well as giving them more self-confidence when they had to recur to the L2 in any given situation.

#### 1.5. Questions to be Answered

The ability to interact in large groups can be difficult for students even in their first language (L1). The task is to know what can help students overcome the barriers that hinder their opportunities and what possibilities to interact effectively in a second, or foreign language (L2) with teachers and peers can professors create?

Can interactional-oriented activities stimulate students to participate willingly and with interest? Can these activities increase the frequency of oral language use both inside and outside the classroom? Will the students be able to acquire self-confidence and improve oral evaluation scores? These questions were answered throughout the progress of the study in results produced from analytical and survey instruments.

#### 1.6. Scope and Delimitation

The study was carried out during the fall semester of 1997 after the author had designed the required activities and instruments. The subjects involved in the study were two Remedial IV high intermediate-level groups. Group I (the control group) consisted of 30 students and Group II (the experimental group) of 32 students. Three activities were designed to promote oral interaction in the classroom and two for extracurricular (homework) activities. The five activities were applied only to Group II to establish comparisons between both groups. Surveys as to the students' personal perceptions of their oral skills development were given to both groups at the beginning and final stages of the research.

### 1.7. Limitations

The need to have increased student oral interaction in the L2, both inside and outside the classroom, is what originated this study. The principal limitations in achieving effective oral interactions are (a) differences in the students' linguistic competence, (b) students' attitudes, and (c) the time allotted to reach the objective in the course program established for the level involved in this project. Each of these is considered below.

- a) Linguistic competence. Some students have had the privilege of studying English in an English-speaking country or have studied it at bilingual institutions, and still others have facility or talent in learning languages, placing them at an advantage over students who have not had these opportunities or lack these talents.
- b) Attitudes. The students who simply do not like the English language and see it just as a required course may not care to cooperate.
- c) Course objectives. There is an established curricular program of all English levels at the ITESM that must be covered, so any complementary material introduced in the classroom should not interfere with the fulfillment of the units that must be seen and the evaluations that need to be made.

### 1.8. Definition of Terms

The following terms are concepts that are widely used in literature of a linguistic nature. They are included at this point in order to facilitate reading of the theoretical framework, where these terms are initially mentioned. Brief definitions of these concepts, some of which will be broadened in chapter 2, are given as follows.

- a) CLT (Communicative Language Teaching). According to Littlewood, "One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language" (p. 1).

- b) Context. Ellis (1987, p. 6), states that context is “. . . the actual situation in which a communicative event takes place.”
- c) Diachronic. As defined by Palmer, "Diachronic linguistics is concerned with language through time." ( p. 12)
- d) Input. Language that is addressed or directed to the learner.
- e) Interaction. According to Ellis (1994, p.159), “. . . interactional acts can be defined as utterances in context.”
- f) Interactional analysis. As stated by Selinger and Elana, “. . . interactional analysis is an example of observation made with a high degree of explicitness" (p.163).
- g) Interlanguage. "Selinker (1972) characterized the learner's developing system as “interlanguage”, describing it as an intermediate system located somewhere between the learner's native language and the target language, but governed by its unique and coherent internalized rule system that rarely becomes totally congruent with the system of the second language" (Omaggio, p. 229).
- h) L2. The abbreviated form which refers to the second language the student is learning or acquiring.
- i) Linguistic competence. The actual knowledge a student has of the L2.
- j) Linguistic performance. The way in which the students use their knowledge of the L2 in actual speech production and comprehension.
- k) Output. Language produced by the learner.
- l) Proficiency. Ellis states that "L2 proficiency refers to learner's skill in using the L2 . . . in different tasks" (p.720).
- m) SLA (Second Language Acquisition). According to Krashen, second language acquisition is “a subconscious and intuitive process of constructing the system of a language, not unlike the process used by a child to ‘pick up’ a language” (as cited in Brown, pp. 187,8).

As was mentioned above, some of these terms will be broadened in the following chapter. The theoretical framework that pertains to this study will be discussed next.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is based on different terms, concepts and theories related to it. The point of interest is communicative interaction, and throughout the literature review, valuable information applicable to this topic was found. This chapter covers the concepts of communication and interaction along with interrelated elements. The SLA theories that are reviewed are the Environmentalist, Nativist and Interactionalist theories. Second language teaching methods which include the Grammar-Translation, Direct, Audiolingual, and Situational Language Teaching, as well as the Communicative and Natural approaches are described. Also included in the literature review are activities in second language acquisition, error correction and testing for oral production.

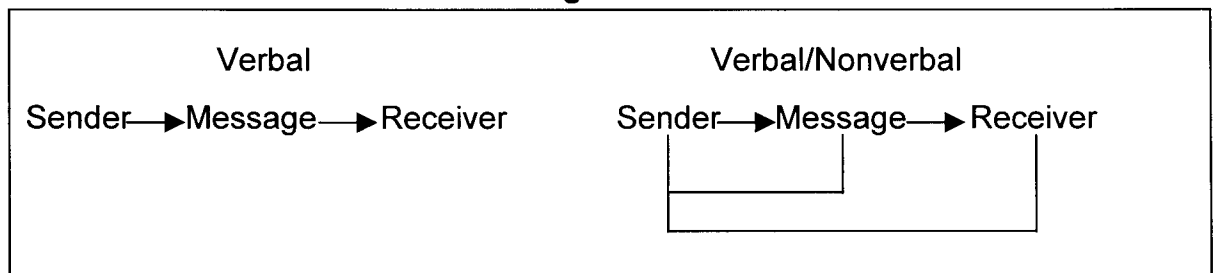
### 2.1. Communication

This study would not be complete if the term communication were not brought to mind. Communication can be defined as “. . . an exchange between people, of knowledge, of information, of ideas, of opinions, of feelings” (Revel, p. 1). According to Porter and Grant, “Communication is sharing meaning . . . . At least two people must interact with each other for sharing to take place” (p. 32).

Communication can be manifested through different means such as speaking, writing and even through gestures. Oral interaction, which is the object of this study, is a form of communication that involves students in the exchange of meaningful information.

The following figure is a social-process model of communication designed by La Forge (Richards and Rodgers, p. 117).

**Figure 1**



For LaForge, communication is not only the transmission of information, but a social process. He states that “. . . Communication is an exchange which is incomplete without a feedback reaction from the destinee of the message” (p. 116).

## 2.2. “Authentic Communication”

An important goal in second language acquisition is the development of oral skills that will permit students to use the L2 in authentic oral communicative situations. Students need to engage in activities that will prepare them for real-life situations. According to Ellis, “Unfocused activities are designed to stimulate what is often referred to as ‘authentic communication’ in the classroom. They are characterized by the following:

- 1) A non linguistic outcome (e.g. drawing a picture, making a model, solving a problem)
- 2) A concern for message rather than channel.
- 3) A gap of some kind (opinion, information, personal feeling) which has to be bridged.
- 4) A need to negotiate meanings in order to achieve the outcome.
- 5) Learner control over the resources (verbal or non-verbal) that are used.(Ellis p.189).

In contrast to the focused activities, which “. . . enable the learner to consciously manipulate specific linguistic items for conveying specific meanings, when he is focused on form” (Ellis, p. 189), . . . unfocused activities allow students to use language spontaneously. Keeping in mind the criteria Ellis has on how “authentic communication” is produced, the activities used in this study were designed accordingly in order to stimulate the desired interaction.



## 2.3. Early SLA Theories

Before discussing the interactionist learning theories (see 2.4.3.) and their pertaining factors, which are more related to this study, it is appropriate to include the other two major and earlier SLA learning theories to review their origins. Therefore, the environmentalist and nativist theories are explained as follows.

### 2.3.1. Environmentalist Theories

In opposition to the nativist theories (see 2.3.2.), environmentalists believe that in SLA " . . . an organism's nurture, or experience, is of more importance to development than its nature, or innate contributions" (Larsen-Freeman and Long, p. 249). These theories can best be exemplified with Skinner's 1957 behaviourist and neo-behaviourist learning theories. Underlying the principles of these theories " . . . was the assumption that language learning, like any other kind of learning, took the form of habit formation, a 'habit' consisting of an automatic response elicited by a given stimulus." (Ellis, p. 299). Skinner maintained that " . . . second-languages should be learned through extensive drill and practice without recourse to rationalistic explanation" (Omaggio, p. 47). However, Chomsky, who proposed nativist theories, seriously challenged Skinner's work, asserting that language learning went beyond the stimulus-response connections. Chomsky maintained that "if language development was highly creative, then language learning theories needed to account for the creative processing that was taking place in the human mind" (Omaggio, p. 48).

A theorist whose work can be classified under the environmentalist field is Schumann, who " . . . tried to explain acquisition by invoking learner external variables, without saying anything about cognitive processing." (Larsen-Freeman and Long, p. 251). He proposed the Acculturation Model which in general terms " . . . can be defined as the process of becoming adapted to a new culture" (Brown in Ellis, p. 230).

Acquisition through acculturation relies heavily on exposure to the target language through social integration. This would facilitate language learning or acquisition if the learners were to be immersed in an English-speaking environment, but would lack the cognitive development that could ensure proper forms of the language and not just the functional aspect.

In our reality it is not so easy for students to be exposed to an authentic L2 environment, but if learners do not have the possibility of developing their language skills in this manner, ". . . we must provide a classroom environment where there is an atmosphere of trust and confidence that develops the students' own confidence and encourages them to plunge in and make the language their own" (Barasch and James, p. 88). This could also be encouraged outside of classroom through activities that stimulate interaction among EFL students (see 3.3.2.2.).

### 2.3.2. Nativist Theories

In general terms it can be said that "nativist theories are those which purport to explain acquisition by positing an innate biological endowment that makes learning possible" (Larsen-Freeman and Long, p. 227). Chomsky, in his theories of child language development, claims that ". . . humans are innately (i.e. genetically) endowed with universal language-specific knowledge, . . . or Universal Grammar" (as cited in Larsen-Freeman and Long, p. 228). For Chomsky (1965), each individual is born with a language acquisition device (LAD). According to McNeill (1966), LAD consists ". . . of four innate linguistic properties:

- 1) The ability to distinguish sounds from other sounds in the environment,
- 2) The ability to organize linguistic events into various classes which can later be refined,
- 3) Knowledge that only a certain kind of linguistic system is possible and that other kinds are not,

- 4) The ability to engage in constant evaluation of the developing linguistic system so as to construct the simplest possible system out of the linguistic data that are encountered" (as cited in Brown, p. 20).

Research has shown that the L2 can be learned or acquired in ways similar to those in which children acquire the L1. According to Larsen-Freeman and Long, ". . . learning of patterned strings of symbols is facilitated when learners are told that patterns exist, and are instructed to look for them, and the patterns themselves are made salient through initial explicit presentation, followed by implicit presentation through examples . . ." (p. 324).

An important contribution made by nativist theorists is that through the observation of a child's systematic L1 development, it is possible to detect that ". . . the child is constantly forming hypotheses on the basis of the input received and then testing those hypotheses in speech— (and comprehension). As the child's language develops, those hypotheses get continually revised, reshaped, or sometimes abandoned." (Brown p. 20). In L2 learning, students can apply learning strategies in a way similar to the way a child does when acquiring the L1.

Another nativist theory is Krashen's Monitor Theory, in which Krashen ". . . addresses both the process and the condition dimensions of learning" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 18). At the process level, he makes a distinction between learning, which is the conscious process related to the formal study of language rules, and acquisition, which is the natural assimilation of language rules through the communicative use of language. "According to Krashen, however, learning is available only as a 'monitor'. The monitor is the repository of conscious grammatical knowledge about a language that is learned through formal instruction and is called upon in the editing of utterances produced through the acquired system" (p. 18). In other words, learners rely on their "monitor" to produce appropriate utterances or to make conscious corrections of their output.

As for the condition dimension of learning, Krashen believes that acquisition can take place if the appropriate conditions exist. This refers to the type of input the learner receives. Chaudron states that "only insofar as the input is comprehensible, at the appropriate level just ahead of the learner's stage of rules development (i+1), will learners be able to derive support for or disconfirmation of their interlanguage rules" (p. 6).

Krashen's Input Hypothesis Theory, which derives from the Monitor Model, visualizes several important aspects pertaining to second language acquisition. The claims he makes are as follows:

- 1) Learners progress along the natural order by understanding input that contains structures a little bit beyond their current level of competence.
- 2) Although comprehensible input is necessary for acquisition to take place, it is not sufficient, as learners also need to be disposed to 'let in' the input they comprehend.
- 3) Input becomes comprehensible as a result of simplification and with the help of contextual and extralinguistic clues; fine-tuning . . . is not necessary.
- 4) Speaking is the result of acquisition . . . learner production does not contribute directly to acquisition (as cited in Ellis, p. 273).

Although it may seem logical that comprehensible input may aid learners in developing their L2, . . . "relatively few studies to date have attempted to show that comprehensible input actually leads to the acquisition of new linguistic features " (Ellis, p. 27).

#### 2.4. Definition of Interaction

Since the primary theme of this topic is interaction among EFL students, it is important to mention concepts pertaining to this subject in sections 2.4.1. to 2.4.5.

The concepts and theories described in these sections helped the author design and develop the necessary instruments and activities to carry out this work.

As was mentioned in 1.8.1, Ellis defines interactional acts as utterances in context. He also states that these acts " . . . impose structure on the discourse by insuring that one utterance leads smoothly to another, and they concern how speakers manage the process of exchanging turns, how they open and close conversations, and how they sequence acts to ensure a coherent conversation" (p.159).

Littlewood (as cited in Richards and Rodgers, p. 66) mentions " . . . that at least two parties are involved in an interaction or transaction of some kind where one party has an intention and the other party expands or reacts to the intention". The view that Richards and Rodgers have on interaction is that "Language is a tool for the creation and maintenance of social relations" (p.17). For Rivers, interaction is " . . . conveying and receiving authentic messages (that is, messages that contain information of interest to a speaker and listener in a situation of importance to both) . . . Interaction involves not just expression of ones own ideas, but comprehension of those of others" (p. 4).

An important goal in language teaching is to get students to interact among themselves and with the teacher; however, this is not solely the teacher's responsibility. Students must be aware that in order to achieve this goal, they must commit themselves to participating in activities that will facilitate and or improve oral communication skills.

#### 2.4.1. Types of Interaction

There are two types of interaction, and these can be classified as interaction between learners and interaction between learners and knowers (Richards and Rodgers, p.116). These types of interactions can be easily identified when

communication in the L2 is carried out in the classroom or language learning environment.

Learners normally interact between and among themselves in assigned activities or exercises from their textbooks, but rarely spontaneously. Students can be practicing a specific exercise to learn or internalize a certain structure and quite suddenly recur to the L1 when dealing with something out of context such as borrowing a pencil or an eraser.

The learner-knower interaction is between student and teacher. It is controlled and dependent because learners cannot so easily or freely recur to their L1 when answering or asking questions directly to the teacher, especially with those teachers who make it a policy to avoid speaking the L1 in class.

According to Munby (1987) in Richards and Rodgers (p. 116), "These types of interaction are said to be microcosmically equivalent to the two major classes of human interaction -interaction between equals (symmetrical and interaction between unequals (asymmetrical)." It is important for students to view their classroom as a scenario in which the L2, in this case English, must be used at all times, whether it is used in structured activities or spontaneous verbal interaction among peers and or professors.

#### 2.4.2. Functions of Spoken Language

Language has different functions according the learner's needs, and these can be classified as transactional and interactional functions. Porter and Grant (p. 223) state that transactional spoken language is used primarily for the purpose of communicating messages such as making presentations or dictating letters. On the other hand, the interactional language is used ". . . in conversations that serve to maintain social relations . . ." (p. 224). This function is natural and spontaneous in nature, and according to Legutke and Thomas (p. 15) ". . . unintended or unplanned interactions are part and parcel of a communicative learning process which is open

to learner contributions of all kinds". We can see the importance Brown gives language functions when he points out that "Mastery of vocabulary and structures results in nothing if the learner cannot use those forms for the purpose of transmitting and receiving thoughts, ideas, and feelings between speaker and hearer . . . " (p. 202).

#### 2.4.3. Interactionist Learning Theories

Since the focus of this study is on the promotion of student interaction, it is appropriate to include the interactionist learning theories in this section, which pertains to interaction. According to Richards and Rodgers, interactionist theories "focus on the patterns of moves, acts, negotiation, and interaction found in conversational exchanges" (p. 17).

In general terms, the interactionist theory can be classified as cognitive as well as social. With regard to its cognitive nature, Ellis (p. 243) states that "The interactionist learning theory emphasizes the joint contributions of the linguistic environment and the learner's mechanisms in explaining language acquisition." In other words, the input students receive and their mental abilities work in combination to produce interaction.

As for the social orientation, Ellis mentions that "Verbal interaction is of crucial importance for language learning as it helps to make the 'facts' of the L2 salient to the learner" (p. 244).

Larsen-Freeman and Long regard interactionist theories as being powerful because ". . . they invoke both innate and environmental factors to explain language learning" (p. 266). However, these authors also state that interactionist theories differ greatly from each other, and in reference to these differences Givon's Functional-Typological Theory and the ZISA (Zweitsprachenwerb Italienischer and Spánischer Arbeiter) group's multidimensional model are described in order to illustrate these differences.

Givon, whose theory originates in work on functional-typological syntax and diachronic language change, " . . . claims that syntactic change is driven primarily by psycholinguistic and pragmatic principles relating to speech perception and in face-to-face interaction" (p. 267). Since interaction is one of the main points in this study, it is interesting to know that it is considered instrumental in second language acquisition and that syntactic changes can be caused through oral interactive activities.

ZISA's group research was conducted in the late 1970's and involved the acquisition of German as a second language (GSL) by Spanish and Italian speakers. The basis of this research is that . . . "learners acquire a number of grammatical features in a clear developmental sequence . . ." (Ellis, 1994 p. 383). An example of this is word-order rules to which learners adhere in a developmental sequence. The findings in this study also showed that learners display individual variation, which is the product of socio-psychological factors. "First, learners differ in the extent to which they apply a particular word order to different linguistic contexts . . . Second, learners vary in the extent to which they use restrictive simplification and elaborate simplification" (p. 383). In other words, restrictive simplification is the way in which the learner simplifies the grammar to make it easier to manage; for example a student might say, "Is hot today". or "I tired". Elaborate simplification, which is less common, refers to hypotheses that are formulated by the learner to achieve an approximation of the actual rule, in which case overextensions of the rule are made by the learner; for example, "He broked the window", "It was builted" or "Theys eat".

#### 2.4.4. Interaction in the Classroom

EFL teachers strive to get their students to interact with them as well as with each other. Stevik (as cited in Legutke and Thomas) points out that " . . . the central methodological challenge, for both teacher and student, consists of creating the learning space within which the interaction is to unfold" (p. 15).



The communicative approach to language teaching (see 2.4.5.) has been widely accepted and implemented by many EFL teachers; however, "despite the widespread acceptance and endorsement in the EL classroom of these two components of communicative language teaching--socially oriented lessons and small group interaction--few attempts have been made to provide empirical support for their use" (Pica and Doughty as cited in Gass and Madden, p.115).

With regard to classroom interaction, Ellis states that "This is not planned in advance, but rather is 'co-produced' with the learners. The interaction provides learners with opportunities to encounter input or to practice the L2. It also creates in the learners 'a state of receptivity', defined as an active openness, a willingness to encounter the language and the culture" (pp. 573-4).

According to Lindsey, who speaks about learning in general, "Learning has become separated from experience, structured, and prescribed ...The rigid education structure continually blocks the pathways of spontaneous and playful inquiry . . . ." (p. 9). If the students are to interact in a more spontaneous and social manner in their language class, it is important to motivate them to do so by encouraging activities that are of interest to them so they have reasons to interact and therefore develop, in a natural way, the language skills of reading and writing but above all, listening comprehension and speaking. Lindsey also states that " . . . learning seems to slow down after early childhood--that is, after the learner is removed from an interactive relationship with his or her environment . . . ." (p. 42). In other words, student interaction creates an atmosphere that helps students develop certain skills which makes learning easier. The challenge for the instructor at this point is to find worthwhile activities that will motivate the EFL students in order to enhance their capacity to interact. Activities such as games, simulations of situations and role playing (see 2.7.1.), among others, stimulate students, and they " . . . offer practice that takes learners' attention away from language learning and directs it toward the communication of meaning . . . . Learners sometimes become so

engrossed in communicating that they forget they are trying to use a new language" (Oxford p. 77). Consequently, the students' abilities to interact will increase, and so will their confidence in their oral communication skills.

An important aspect to consider when carrying out interactive activities is the setting. When working in pairs, students face each other, and small circular groups of three or four are formed when students work in teams. However, with groups of 25 students, a whole group arrangement, where students form one large circular group, can be somewhat difficult especially when the desks cannot be moved, as is the case of some classroom with fixed type seating.

#### 2.4.5. Interaction Outside the Classroom

Although it may seem utopic to consider students interacting or practicing the L2 outside of class due to the lack of an authentic target language environment, this type of interaction would be very beneficial in their development of language learning. An advantage that Stevens (as cited in Nunan) stresses is that tasks outside the classroom "provide learners with opportunities for genuine interaction which have a real-life point to them" (p. 93).

Through interaction, whether it is in or outside of the classroom, ". . . students can use all they possess of the language -- all they have learned or casually absorbed -- in real-life exchanges where expressing their real meaning is important to them" (Rivers, p. 4).

Even though we are not in the midst of an English-speaking environment or community, we do have technological resources that can help us create one through the use of videos, tape recorders or television. Also, learners can be in contact with native speakers, either personally (through exchange student programs) or through electronic devices (Internet). Furthermore, activities can be assigned to students by their professors to help achieve outside classroom practice (see 3.3.2.2.).

## 2.5. Competence

An important goal in any type of learning situation is competence. Human beings engage in the learning process, in most cases, in order to master that which they are studying. Richards and Rodgers point out that "for Chomsky, the focus of linguistic theory was to characterize the abstract abilities speakers possess that enable them to produce grammatically correct sentences in a language" (p.70). His view of competence deals primarily with abstract grammatical knowledge.

Ellis refers to this term as " . . . a language user's underlying knowledge of language, which is drawn on in actual performance" (p. 697). The term performance, which is contrastive to competence, is also defined by Ellis who states that it is " . . . the actual use of language in either comprehension or production" (p. 718). However, due to prior language experience, individual differences and language transfers, which will be described further on, not all learners have the same level of competence in a given course, so this presents a challenge when trying to achieve equal participation or performance from all members of a group.

It is important for students to be aware that learning is a continuous process that does not end in the classroom; therefore, they should take responsibility for their self-learning and development. McKeachie states, "For students who lack a sense of efficacy, teachers must not only provide situations where success occurs but also give students opportunities to undertake challenging tasks on their own to prove to themselves that they can achieve "(p. 352). These tasks should be activities in which students can express themselves freely and feel that they are using their knowledge of the L2 in a meaningful way.

### 2.5.1. Related Factors

Previous knowledge of the L2, individual learner differences and language transfer, which are factors that can affect competence and subsequently performance, are explained as follows.

- a) Previous Knowledge of the L2. As was mentioned above, students' previous knowledge can vary within a classroom or group of L2 learners. Ausubel (1968, a cited in Omaggio1993) states that "for material to be meaningful, it must be clearly related to existing knowledge that the learner already possesses" (p.131).

At least three different types of background knowledge are activated in the second-language comprehension process. These include the knowledge of the target language code, knowledge of the world and knowledge of the ways the various types of discourse (conversations, speeches, broadcasts, etc.) are organized (Omaggio, p.131).

- b) Individual Learner Differences. Individual learner differences, which include factors such as attitude, aptitude, motivation, personality, learning styles and learning strategies can also affect student performance in the L2 (Omaggio, p. 63). In other words, students may have a certain knowledge or competence of the L2, but when they are required to reveal it in actual communication, these factors can affect their performance either positively or negatively. Some authors believe that student attitudes have a direct impact on the success of language learning whereas, others consider it to have an indirect influence. According to Brown, ". . . negative attitudes can affect success in learning a language" (p. 51). Ellis states, "Learner attitudes have an impact on the level of L2 proficiency achieved by individual learners and are themselves influenced by this success" (p. 198). On the other hand, Spolsky sustains that "attitudes do not have a direct influence on learning, but they lead to motivation that does" (p.149). Gardner also claims that attitudes affect motivation, which in turn affects second language acquisition (cited in Larsen-Freeman and Long, p. 175). In reference to language learning aptitude, Ellis mentions that it is "the specific ability for language learning which learners are hypothesized to

possess" (p.36). We can easily detect aptitude differences in our students during classroom tasks, homework assignments and tests. According to Larsen-Freeman and Long, "Regardless of the age of the learner, what is undeniable is that individuals learn languages at different rates" (p.167).

One of the most important factors involved or needed in L2 learning is motivation. Brown describes motivation as being " . . . probably the most often used catch-all term for explaining the success or failure of virtually any complex task" (p. 114). Ellis (p. 36) classifies motivation as:

- a) Causative, which has an effect on learning,
- b) Resultive, which is influenced by learning,
- c) Intrinsic, because it derives from the personal interests and inner needs of the learner and,
- d) Extrinsic, which can derive from external sources such as material rewards.

In today's world, there may be more extrinsic reasons for learning English as a second language, but they should not be the only ones.

Students' personalities can also influence the degree of success they may achieve in the L2. Two major hypotheses in L2 learning comparing introverted and extroverted learners indicate that " . . . extroverted learners will do better in acquiring basic interpersonal communication skills . . . and introverted learners will do better at developing cognitive academic language ability" (Ellis, 520). It is obvious that the talkative students are more comfortable than the quiet or introverted ones when engaging in interactive activities, so it is important to motivate the latter by increasing their oral participation in order to display their actual knowledge of the language.

Another aspect in learner differences is learning styles (also called cognitive styles), which " . . . refer to the characteristic ways in which individuals orientate to problem solving" (Ellis, 499). In other words, while one student

may find learning easier through audio means, another may do so through visual ways. Another example pertaining to learning styles would be of students who rely on instructions or exemplification compared to others who can figure out patterns or structures on their own. However, it is still not certain to what extent learning styles can affect second language acquisition (Larsen-Freeman and Long, p. 193).

An additional factor in learner differences is learner strategies. Ellis defines these as “. . . the behaviors or actions that learners engage in, in order to learn or use the L2” (p. 712). We can expand this definition with that of Oxford’s, who says that “. . . learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations” (p. 8). According to Oxford (p.16), “Learners can handle strategies that can be classified as:

STRATEGY	EXAMPLES
Cognitive	use of memory, practicing
Metacognitive	arranging and planning; auto-evaluation
Social	interacting in the L2 with peers or native speakers.

Once again we can see how important it is for learners to take responsibility of their own learning through the application of strategies that will help improve their skills in the L2. The textbook that the Remedial IV students use during their course is the On Target 2 Intermediate Level text by Purpura and Pinkley. In the first unit of this book, there is a complete lesson on learning strategies which includes questionnaires, vocabulary and grammatical exercises based on this topic. The students therefore, have a textbook that makes them aware of the learning strategies that can best help them in learning or acquiring the L2, and it is also beneficial that they are

exposed to this in the target language. The complementary exercises provided in their workbooks are assigned to the students by their teachers so they can obtain further practice of the learning strategies presented in their English course.

- c) Language transfer. Finally, the term “language transfer” refers to “. . . the incorporation of features of the L1 into the knowledge systems of the L2 which the learner is trying to build” (Ellis, p. 28). This can cause disruptive or hesitant speech when students are interacting in the L2, which would be a negative form of language transfer; however, language transfer can be positive when patterns of the L1 and the L2 are similar.

The three factors explained above were apparent when students engaged in the different activities they were assigned, inside as well as outside the classroom (see Appendices D.1 -3).

### 2.5.2. Communicative Competence

To expand Chomsky’s definition of competence (see 2.2.), which does not include the social and functional use of grammar, Hymes coined the term of communicative competence. He points out “. . .that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical, but also appropriate” (Spolsky, p. 52).

According to Ellis, “Communicative competence includes knowledge the speaker-hearer has of what constitutes appropriate as well as correct language behaviour and also of what constitutes effective language behaviour in relation to particular communicative goals” (p. 13). In other words, both linguistic as well as behavioural knowledge are considered. Learners not only need to have knowledge of the language, but also knowledge of how to apply it.

Tarone and Yule (p. 17) present Canale and Swain's (1980) key components of communicative competence, which are grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. These interrelated elements can be defined as follows:

- Grammatical knowledge is what a learner knows of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentences, grammar, semantics and phonology.
- Sociolinguistic knowledge is the learner's knowledge of sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse.
- Strategic knowledge includes verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdown in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence (Canale and Swain in Spolsky, p. 53).

Therefore, we can see that language is not learned or acquired in isolation, but evolves in a social environment which could be a classroom or any other setting where communication in the L2 takes place. Revel states that "teachers must demonstrate how language items are used, and in what situations they are appropriate" (p. 5). It is desirable for learners' communicative competence to reach a point at which they can handle the L2 freely and spontaneously in order to communicate effectively.

## 2.6. Second Language Teaching Methods

After having reviewed different theories of language acquisition, it is clear that these theories have influenced the methods or approaches that have been developed for the teaching-learning process of second languages, or as Brown states it, "Teaching methods . . . may be thought of as theories in practice" (p. 11).

Methods such as the Grammar-Translation, Direct and Audiolingual Methods, which were the most common ways of teaching foreign languages before the 1970's, are also referred to as traditional methods. Methods such as the Situational



Language Teaching, Communicative, Natural and Community Language Learning were developed later.

### 2.6.1. Grammar-Translation

One of the first methods that was applied to teaching modern languages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the grammar-translation method. It originated from the Classical Method of teaching Latin and Greek which focused " . . . on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary and various declensions and conjugations, translations of texts, and written exercises" (Brown, p. 74). The premise of the Grammar-Translation method was basically that it focused heavily on teaching the L2 through the mother tongue, disregarding pronunciation. Also, extensive grammar explanations and analysis as well as translation from the L2 to the mother tongue were common practice. Other characteristics of this method are that vocabulary was taught through lists of isolated words, and reading of classical texts was seen even at early stages (Brown, p. 75).

Opposition to the Grammar-Translation Method began to develop in Europe in the late nineteenth century with the Reform Movement, which revitalized the discipline of linguistics and emphasized that speech and not the written word was the primary form of language. Richards and Rodgers firmly believe that " . . . though it may be true that the Grammar-Translation Method is still widely practiced, it has no advocates. It is a method for which there is no theory" (p.5).

### 2.6.2. Direct Method

The direct method, which attempted to teach language by direct demonstration, originated at the end of the nineteenth century, and was highly popularized by Charles Berlitz. He never referred to it as the Direct Method but made it quite famous by referring to it as the Berlitz Method. It is believed that the true originator of this method was Francois Guoin, who " . . . had been the first of the nineteenth

century reformers to attempt to build a methodology around child language learning" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 9).

According to Brown, "the basic premise of the Direct Method was that . . . second language learning should be more like first language learning: lots of active oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation . . . and little or no analysis of grammatical rules" (p. 57). As is well known, this method or the more familiar Berlitz Method of language teaching has been quite successful in private schools where highly motivated paying students learn the L2 intensively in small classes and with individual attention. However, this does not apply to public schools or large classrooms which make this method difficult to use due to limitations such as strong dependence on teachers' skills rather than on textbooks and failure to consider the practical realities of the classroom (Richards and Rodgers, p. 10).

### 2.6.3. Audiolingual Method

The Audiolingual Method, which was first designed for military personnel, ". . . resulted from the increased attention given to foreign language teaching in the United States toward the end of the 1950's" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 47).

"An audio-lingual language teaching method is based on the assumption that language is acquired mainly through imitation, repetition, and reinforcement" (Fromkin and Rodman, p. 390). It stresses the mechanistic aspects of the language in which constant drilling is required.

Since language use came to be considered as creative and not a form of habitual behaviour, this method became questionable and began its decline in the late sixties. But although this method may be considered obsolete, "audiolingualism and materials based on audiolingual principles continue to be widely used today" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 48).

#### 2.6.4. Situational Language Teaching

Situational Language Teaching, or Oral Approach as it was originally named, were terms widely referred to by British applied linguists, predominantly Harold Palmer and A.S. Hornby, from the 1930's to the 1960's. The main objectives of this approach were the command of the four basic language skills through structure. Also accuracy in both grammar and pronunciation was highly regarded and errors were to be strictly avoided. Through this method "the learner is expected to apply the language learned in a classroom to situations outside the classroom" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 36). Learners are expected to learn structures in a controlled manner initially and then move on to a freer practice of structures.

The method allows students to think on their own and try to analyze the meanings of words or structures without prior explanation. It came under question in the mid-sixties and gave way to the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (see 2.6.5.). However, since the main emphasis of the Situational Language Method is placed on oral practice, grammar and sentence patterns, it continues to be practiced widely. Examples of courses offered which are based on the Situational Language Teaching Method are Streamline English (Hartley and Vinney 1979), Access to English (Coles and Lord 1975) and Kernel Lesson Plus (O'Neill 1973) (Richards and Rodgers, p.31).

#### 2.6.5. Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which originated in the late 1960's (Richards and Rodgers, p. 64) ". . . is best considered an approach rather than a method" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 83). ". . . Approach refers to theories about nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 16). In other words, an approach is a set of principles that can lead us to the best way of dealing with a given circumstance or situation in the teaching-learning process."

This approach has been clearly defined by Brown, who offers the following four interconnected characteristics as a definition of Communicative Language Teaching:

- 1) Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
- 2) Form is not the primary framework for organizing and sequencing lessons. Function is the framework through which forms are taught.
- 3) Accuracy is secondary to conveying a message. Fluency may take on more importance than accuracy. The ultimate criterion for communicative success is the actual transmission and receiving of intended meaning.
- 4) In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts (p. 213).

It is assumed that language teaching through this approach " . . . will reflect the particular needs of the target learners . . . of reading, writing, listening or speaking" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 73). The activities of this approach focus on communicative uses of language involving tasks done in groups or pairs. Oral presentations are created through dialogues, conversations, role-plays, debates and skits.

Even though the communicative approach has been widely acclaimed, there are some aspects that need to be more critically observed, such as the appropriate teacher training, since this approach is supposedly more effective if teachers are native English-speakers (Richards and Rodgers, 83). Other points to consider are materials development, testing and evaluation.

### 2.6.6. Natural Approach

This approach was originated in the late 1970's by Tracy Terrell, a Spanish teacher in California who proposed a new philosophy of language teaching. A firm supporter of this approach is Krashen, whose theory this approach is based on (see 2.3.2.) and who along with Terrell " . . . identified the Natural Approach with what they called 'traditional approaches to language teaching'. Traditional approaches are defined as 'based on the use of language in communicative situations without recourse to the native language . . . '(Richards and Rodgers, p. 128). This approach makes no reference to grammatical analysis, grammatical drilling, or to a particular theory of grammar.

A main characteristic of this approach is that it emphasizes the exposure to comprehensible input to help lower students' anxiety level. " . . . As in Communicative Language Teaching, specific objectives depend upon learners' needs and the skill (reading, writing, listening or speaking) and level being taught" (Richards and Rodgers, p. 134). As for the activities, there is a strong focus on listening and reading based on language use in communicative situations. There is a lot of pair or group work and class discussion. Even though there is a lack of grammatical analysis and drilling," . . . the right kinds of comprehensible input provide the necessary and sufficient conditions for successful classroom second and foreign language acquisition." (Richards and Rodgers, p. 140).

### 2.7. Activities in Second Language Acquisition

As is well known, there is a large variety of activities or tasks designed for the development of L2 learners' skills in reading, writing, listening comprehension and speaking. Since the purpose of this thesis is the promotion of interaction among EFL students, the focus will be on oral communication skills in CLT. According to Richards and Rodgers, "classroom activities are often designed to focus on completing tasks that are mediated through language or involve negotiation of

information and information sharing" (p. 76). The most popular types of activities that will be reviewed below are role playing, instructional games and simulations, dialogues, sketches and debates.

### 2.7.1. Focus on Oral Communication Skills

The following are some of the most popularly applied activities for promoting oral skills.

- a) Role playing. One of the tasks in which learners have the opportunity to be creative is role playing. According to McKeachie, ". . . role playing is the setting up of more or less unstructured situations in which students' behaviors are improvised to fit in with their conceptions of roles to which they have been assigned" (p. 167). Students interact with each other spontaneously but in a predetermined context in which they can apply what they have learned. These activities are motivating for the students because they can maintain or arouse their interest. Also, since they are portraying characters other than themselves, students are less inhibited in expressing "someone else's" feelings. In role playing, a variety of topics or situations can be handled; however, it is important to keep in mind those activities that the students can identify with the most and are more comfortable in carrying out.
- b) Games and simulations. Just by hearing the word "game", students normally react enthusiastically because games are associated with fun. Games can also be simulations because they model real-life problem situations such as detective-type simulations in which students have to solve a crime.

When planning these types of activities, teachers must establish the teaching objectives that will be covered by the games so that the learners will really benefit from them. In games and simulations, "students must

make decisions, solve problems and react to the results of their decisions" (McKeachie, p. 163).

- c) Dialogues. Through dialogues, students can also practice their oral skills to improve their oral proficiency. They can either practice specific structures or functions with dialogues that appear in their textbooks, which normally can be modified with optional or alternate cues, or they can create their own dialogues (Revel, p.33).
- d) Sketches. Participating in sketches can be an enjoyable activity for L2 learners because they have the chance of "...hiding behind an easily identifiable caricature" (Revell, pp. 33-4). The best sketches are those that are short and funny and give students the opportunity to express strong feelings through them. Like actors, learners rehearse their lines and stage their production once they are ready to do so.
- e) Debates. Students can participate in these types of activities in a real or simulated issue. Learners need to have " . . . (a) adequate shared knowledge about the issue and (b) different opinions or interest to defend" (Littlewood, p. 57).

These are just a few samples of activities in which students can practice their oral production skills in the L2. Through speaking and oral interaction activities such as the ones mentioned above " . . . learners will get to rehearse skills such as mobilizing grammatical knowledge, mastering pronunciation, which will help in genuine communicative interaction outside the classroom" (Nunan, p. 64)

### 2.7.2. Error Correction During Oral Production Activities

There is a considerable amount of literature regarding error correction. We often wonder how and when students should be corrected to produce the best results in their learning process. Should they be corrected as soon as the error is made, thus stopping their flow of English utterances, or is it more helpful to correct

them in other instances? It is usual or normal for L2 learners to have errors when communicating orally in the L2, so it is important to follow the best strategies in error correction to be more helpful to the students. Burt and Kiparsky (1974) as cited in Omaggio "... suggested that teachers distinguish between local errors, or those that do not go beyond the clause or sentence level, and global errors, or those that interfere with comprehension by causing confusion in the relationships between and among the major parts of the discourse" (p.277). According to these authors, local errors that do not interfere with comprehension should be left alone, but the global errors should be corrected.

Walz (in Omaggio), who summarizes various correction schemes of different authors, "... posits four basic criteria for selecting errors to be corrected:

- 1) Comprehensibility. Above all, choose errors that interfere with understanding first.
- 2) Frequency. More frequent errors should be corrected consistently, while isolated slips can be left alone.
- 3) Pedagogical Focus. It is best to correct errors that reflect misunderstanding or incomplete acquisition of material that is the focus of current classroom practice. If such errors are left uncorrected, students who notice the mistake might become confused about their own understanding of the concept being covered.
- 4) Individual Student Concern. Walz suggests that all good teachers get to know students well enough to be able to sense their reactions to various correction techniques. More capable, secure students will profit more from the correction of minor errors than will students who feel less capable. These latter students might profit most from the correction of major mistakes only (Omaggio, pp. 277-8).



### 2.7.3. Correction Procedures

Walz “ . . . classifies error-correction procedure into three basic categories: 1) self-correction with the teacher’s help, 2) peer correction and 3) teacher correction” (Omaggio, p. 280). Some examples of these procedures during class work are as follows:

- 1) Self-correction with the teacher’s help. In this case teachers can pinpoint or give cues to the students when an error has been made without supplying the correction. An example of pinpointing would be when a student uses an incorrect preposition in a sentence such as “I usually go on vacation on July”. The teacher can help correct that statement by reproducing the statement up to the error, emphasizing it so that the student can realize that a correction is called for and he or she can supply it. As for cuing, teachers can give students options so they can give their own information. For example, A teacher may ask a student when he usually goes on vacation, but the student might not be sure of which time expression to use, so the teacher gives cues by adding: In May? In June? The student now knows or remembers that the correct preposition is *in*, so he may give a complete response in which he can include the correct preposition. Other ways in which teachers can help their students when correcting is when they provide their own complete answer as an example when asking students questions, repeating an answer with a correction when the student has erred and rephrasing a question when a correctly structured but inappropriate answer has been given.
- 2) Peer Correction. Another way in which corrections can be handled is through peer correction. Two ways in which this can be done is by providing student monitors with a) monitoring devices “ . . . such as ‘corrector cards’ in structured conversation and interview activities that provide cues to the correct form of questions and/or answers . . . ”(Omaggio, p. 281), and b)

checklists with which students can monitor their own speech or conversation in groups by looking for particular types of features needed in a specified activity or situation.

- 3) Teacher Correction. This final category is divided into direct and indirect correction of errors. In the first case, teachers make the correction of the error the student has made, preserving as much as possible what was said, but emphasizing the change the teacher made and requesting a repetition of the correct statement. "However, direct and immediate correction may not be as beneficial to learners as more indirect techniques that invite the learner to self-correct with teacher help" (Omaggio, p. 282) As for indirect teacher correction, teachers make correction of errors without emphasizing the change that was made or requiring a repetition of the correction.

Even though error correction may seem difficult, if these criteria and techniques are kept in mind, it will be easier for teachers to decide the best and most helpful way to correct students.

#### 2.7.4. Testing Oral Production

When it comes to testing students on oral production, it can be said that this is one of the most difficult tasks a language teacher can encounter. "Teachers feel that oral exams are the most difficult types of exams to create, schedule, administer, and grade, especially when they have large classes or many classes in the course of a day" (Omaggio, p. 454). This may be true, however, it is of high priority to evaluate students' oral proficiency due to the demands placed on this particular skill in recent years.

At ITESM, professors have been enlightened with courses that this institute offers given by specialists in oral evaluations. One such course was given in May, 1994, and was conducted by Professors Ron and Ana Maria Schwartz of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus. Profrs. Schwartz gave hand-outs which

included a manual of different oral tests given by them as well as literature pertaining to this topic.

In order to know how proficient or skillful a student is in using the L2, different aspects of the language, such as fluency, grammar, listening comprehension vocabulary and pronunciation need to be evaluated. The type of test selected for this research was the interview (see 3.3.3).

Even though the main purpose of this thesis is to enhance students' oral production skills, this cannot be done without emphasizing the practice and understanding of grammar structures, which will allow students to produce more fluent utterances. As Littlewood points out, "The learner must attain as high degree as possible of linguistic competence. This is, he must develop skill in manipulating the linguistic system, to the point where he can use it spontaneously and flexibly in order to express his intended message" (p.6).

The UMBC manual (p.14) offers an evaluation instrument which the author adapted to fulfill the needs of her research. The author wished to simplify the evaluation procedure as well as to obtain the sufficient data to produce the results needed to complete the study. The original UMBC instrument covers three general areas: fluency, listening comprehension and grammar, which were insufficient for the required evaluation instrument for the following reasons:

- a) Data cannot be recorded quickly and precisely because it is not divided into different sections.
- b) It does not have sections for "right" and "wrong" answers, nor for questions answered correctly but without the required structure. These sections were crucial to evaluate the two groups and to establish the required comparison between the two (see Appendix G.3).
- c) A section where frequency of question repetitions by students may be recorded in order to evaluate listening comprehension is not included.

- d) A section where the number of utterances a student produces is not included.
- e) With the exception of fluency, other overall oral production aspects (pronunciation and vocabulary), are not considered.

This chapter ends with the description of the oral evaluation instrument that played a very important role in obtaining the data necessary to compare both groups with regard to the development of their oral production skills. The following chapter will describe the method that was followed in this research as well as the different activities and research instruments that were designed to complete this study.

### 3. Method

Throughout this study, it was necessary to work with two groups of the same level to establish a comparison between the one that engaged in additional interactive activities, and the one that didn't. This comparison has the purpose of revealing if these additional activities help enhance student oral communication skills.

In order to obtain the data that was needed to present comparative results of oral production between the two groups, several steps had to be followed. This chapter will describe the population sample that was observed and the description of activities that were designed for the purpose of allowing more interaction among the students of the experimental group. It will also include the survey and analytical instruments that were applied, as well as the procedures involved in this method. Finally, the oral evaluation that was designed to produce findings will be explained.

#### 3.1. Research method

The method applied in this study is the true experimental research method whose purpose is "to investigate possible cause-and-effect relationships by exposing one or more experimental groups to one or more treatment conditions and comparing the results to one or more control groups not receiving the treatment" (Isaac and Michael, p. 52). The object of this study is to determine whether the application and practice of specially designed oral activities in groups of more than 25 students can help these students improve their oral production skills. Therefore, it was necessary to observe two groups of the same level, in one of which these activities were undertaken in order to establish the comparison required by this type of research.

### 3.2. Population Sample

The population sample involved consisted of the experimental group, which was composed of 32 students and the control group, which had 30 students. Neither of the groups were specially assigned for this project. These students were all in the Remedial IV (high-intermediate) level of English, which is the last remedial English course offered at the ITESM (see Appendix A, Course program). As described in the program, the regular oral production activities include practice of dialogues from textbook, oral presentations, class discussions, role play, and debates (see 3.3.1.).

#### 3.2.1. Instrument for Background Data Collection

In order to obtain background information on students' previous knowledge of, as well as their interest in English, a questionnaire that was designed by the author was filled out by each of the 62 students. The questions asked can be found in Appendix B.

#### 3.2.2. Initial Overall knowledge of the L2

In order to have a point of comparison between the grades the students received on their first monthly grammar exam (Appendix C.1) and the results of their final TOEFL evaluation, the grades of the students from both groups on the first exam, which was the same one for both groups, were recorded (Appendix C.2). This data establishes the differences or similarities regarding grammar knowledge between both groups at the beginning of the semester, and the final outcome at the end of the semester after the experimentation was carried out. The first exam was taken before the different oral activities were presented to the experimental group to compare student grammatical knowledge of both groups in equal circumstances. The findings are explained in Chapter 4, section 2.

### 3.3. Oral Production Activities

It is important that students carry out activities that will help them improve their oral production skills. The two groups practiced various activities during the semester. The experimental group, however, had a few activities that were different from the control group, designed for the purpose of obtaining comparative results. During the final weeks of the semester, before their final written exam, both groups were orally evaluated to compare the results of their evaluations (see Tables 4, 5 and 6 in Chapter 4, section 5.).

#### 3.3.1. Oral Production Activities Practiced by Both Groups

Some activities were the same ones that were practiced by both groups. These activities are as follows:

- a) Oral interaction with text activities. The textbook covered in the Remedial IV level is the On Target 2 text of the Scott-Foresman series. Each unit introduces the grammatical structures and vocabulary that will be covered in a listening exercise as well as in a reading lesson which consists of a dialogue. The grammar is then presented in a “grammar frame”. After students have made a grammatical and vocabulary analysis, they proceed to practice these elements through subsequent activities designed for this purpose in their text. Normally the activities are carried out according to the cues given in the text, following an example. Some of the exercises can be done in pairs and others in teams of three or four. For example, when practicing modal auxiliaries (Unit 2), the students practice an exercise that gives the following instructions and example. *Mr. and Mrs. Green are worried about their daughter's vacation so they're giving her some advice. Write the reasons for the advice on a sheet of paper. Use modals. Don't walk around without a map. **You could get lost** (p. 17).*

After doing the written part of the exercise, students are normally asked to practice the exercise orally with a partner or partners. While the students practice their exercises, the professor walks around the classroom to make clarifications or to assess student performance. Once the exercise has been completed, the professor calls on individual teams to present their dialogues to verify that the students have understood the activity and practiced it correctly. Even though the students are interacting orally, they write down their dialogues or conversations so they can make appropriate corrections when repeating the exercises in plenary.

b) Oral production evaluation dialogues. Twenty percent of the students' monthly grades consists of an oral production evaluation. For this activity the students dedicate several hours of work for its production and need to follow the next steps.

- 1) Form teams of three.
- 2) Create a dialogue that includes all the new grammatical structures and some of the new vocabulary. This dialogue should last at least three minutes when presented orally.
- 3) Hand in the draft of the dialogue for correction by the professor.
- 4) Once the dialogue is checked by the professor, it is returned to the students so they can make the appropriate changes. After making the necessary corrections, the students then proceed to rehearse or practice their dialogues before the assigned presentation date.
- 5) After having practiced their dialogues, the different teams are ready to present them in front of the class. Before this, the professor assists them with any pronunciation doubts they might have. Since the groups are quite numerous, the dialogues are presented on two days. When it is time for the teams to present their dialogues in front of the class, they hand in two sets of copies of their corrected typed presentations. One of these



copies is for the professor to follow their dialogue with and grade, and the other copy is for a peer team who will also be following the written lines as well as writing their comments as feed-back on the presenting teams' written report. After all the teams have finished with their oral presentations, the professor collects all the reports with the feedback and reads these comments aloud to the class, handing back the reports to the corresponding teams. Some of the comments that are given are, "Your dialogue was very complete, because you used all the structures;" "You looked a little nervous, but your dialogue was interesting;" "It was funny and you spoke very clearly;" "Excellent dialogue." Most of the time the comments are as positive as the ones previously mentioned, but occasionally there are corrective comments, such as, "You need to practice more, because you had to read sometimes," or "You need to speak faster." Normally when there are these types of comments, they are accompanied with positive words, too.

The procedure for the third monthly oral production activity, which was the final graded oral activity of the semester, and that the students of both groups presented, is similar to the procedure of the first two monthly oral productions. For this study, students were given specific topics from which to choose. The control group followed the same steps previously mentioned for this activity, whereas the experimental group had a change in instructions. These will be explained fully further on (3.3.2.2.1.).

### 3.3.2. Oral Production Activities Practiced by the Experimental Group

The experimental group was assigned activities that were designed to be practiced inside the classroom as well as outside. There were three activities that were carried out during class sessions and two that were assigned as homework. These five activities were practiced during a period of three months out of the

semester and were based on the first six (out of twelve) Units of their On Target 2 textbook.

### 3.3.2.1. Classroom Activities

For the purpose of improving fluency and accuracy as well as to review certain structures, three activities were developed and implemented for practice in class. These activities were based on the grammatical structures covered in the first six units of their On Target 2 textbook. The activities, which were handled by the students during the practice sessions, consisted of different cues written on brightly colored cards that made the activity attractive and interesting.

#### 3.3.2.1.1. Activity One

One of the first structures seen in the textbook for this level is the present perfect tense (Unit 1). For this tense it is important that the students use the past participle forms of the verbs correctly; therefore, the first activity dealt with the practice of the past participle forms of the verbs through cue cards.

##### ***Objective***

The objective of this exercise was for the students to conjugate the verb given in the cue in the past participle form of the verb to ask a question in the present perfect tense and elicit a response in that same tense from their partners.

##### ***Material***

The material used to practice these structures consisted of a series of cues printed on cards. These cards each contained two cues which students used to ask each other questions in the present perfect tense to elicit responses in that same tense. There were thirty-two sets of cards, so that each student would have a card at all times. The thirty-two cards were divided into A (light blue) and B (green) sets with 16 cards in each set so there would be a question from an A card holder to be answered by a holder of a B card and vice-versa. For example, the holder of

question 1A asks the holder of 1B a question, 2A does the same with 2B, and so on until all the A's ask their questions. After the A's finish asking their questions to their B counterparts, the latter proceed by asking the questions they have on their cards to the A holders.

The cues that were handled are the following:

**1A**

1. climb a mountain
2. write a book

**2A**

1. be in Japan
2. tell a lie

**3A**

1. smoke a cigar
2. ride a motorcycle

**4A**

1. teach math
2. see a ghost

**5A**

1. give a speech in English
2. eat Chinese food

**6A**

1. play a musical instrument
2. go to the Macroplaza

**7A**

1. walk on the moon
2. buy a gift for a teacher

**1B**

1. write letter to a friend
2. play soccer

**2B**

1. watch Beverly Hills 90201
2. sing in public

**3B**

1. have a car accident
2. fall down

**4B**

1. cry
2. go to a concert

**5B**

1. read a book in English
2. be in the hospital

**6B**

1. travel to Europe
2. buy a watch

**7A**

1. eat at "Centrales"
2. sleep in a sleeping bag

**8A**

1. watch "Ventaneando"
2. fall asleep during class

**9A**

1. wash a car
2. drink tequila

**10A**

1. eat pigs' feet
2. catch a fish

**11A**

1. see a French movie
2. drive a Mercedes Benz

**12A**

1. take a course in cooking
2. run in a marathon

**13A**

1. ride a horse
2. dance ballet

**14A**

1. win a prize
2. speak English with an American

**15A**

1. lose your wallet
2. make a cake

**16A**

1. teach English
2. wear a hat

**8B**

1. drink Diet Coke
2. swim at the beach

**9B**

1. shop in Laredo
2. argue with your parents

**10B**

1. tell a joke
2. break a window

**11B**

1. copy during an exam
2. dance "La Macarena"

**12B**

1. take an eco-taxi
2. do aerobics

**13B**

1. have a pet
2. organize a party

**14B**

1. take a TOEFL test
2. cut a class

**15B**

1. lend money
2. get angry at your best friend

**16B**

1. borrowed money
2. go to a costume party

### ***Practice Procedure***

This activity was presented to review Unit 1 in a class session during the third week of the semester (Sept. 1). The 32 students of the experimental group were asked to form a big circle inside the classroom, which was somewhat difficult due to the lack of space in this area. Once the students were settled in their seats, they were each handed a card at random. The instructions were given to the students very clearly and were as follows:

- a) You each have a card with a letter and number written on it. This means that if you have a card with an A5 on it you will ask a question to the person with the B5 card, who in turn will ask you a question when the time to do so comes.
- b) There are two cues on each card. All the A card holders will be the first to ask their questions. You will ask your corresponding partner a question with the first given cue. You need to ask in the present perfect tense; therefore, the verb in the cue must be conjugated using the past participle.
- c) Your corresponding partner must give a complete answer in the present perfect tense and additional information if he or she so wishes. Once all the A card holders have asked their questions, the B card holders will do the same by asking the corresponding A card holders your questions.
- d) Since there are two cues per card, there will be two rounds of questions and answers.

After giving instructions, the author gave a few examples of what was expected from the students in this exercise. She then stepped aside to let the students carry out the activity. The students were a little slow at first but increased their rhythm as they advanced. The professor's interventions were minimal because students had a chance to think about the verb they were handling before it was their turn, and if anyone conjugated incorrectly there was always somebody who volunteered the correct form of the verb.

This activity took approximately twenty minutes to complete and was handled in this manner on only two occasions because it became a little tedious the second time, which also took approximately 20 minutes to complete. Nevertheless, these cards were used subsequently but in a different manner, which will be explained further on. Besides helping students with the present perfect tense, this activity also helped students with the past perfect tense which was seen in Unit 4 of their textbook.

#### 3.3.2.1.2. Activity Two

A second activity was designed with the intention of having students practice the structures seen in Units 2 and 3 of their textbooks. The grammar structures presented in Unit 2 are the use of *must* and *may* for predictions and the use of *may*, *might* and *could* for possibility. The grammar covered in Unit 3 is the use of verb + noun phrase + (to) + verb. A constant practice of these modals and verbs with two complements is necessary if students are to apply them correctly when interacting.

##### **Objective**

In the exercises practiced in activity two, some questions were asked with the objective of eliciting a response with a modal, whereas other questions intended to elicit an answer that contained a verb + noun phrase + (to) + verb.

##### **Material**

To promote this practice among the students, another series of cue cards was developed. Once again there were two sets of 16 brightly colored A (purple) and B (yellow) cue cards.

In this series of cards the cues printed on them are complete questions that the students are expected to answer in the appropriate grammatical structure when they are asked by their partners. The questions that appear on the cards are as follows:

- 1.A Do you think it is good to listen to very loud music?
- 2.A What do you think will happen to the photographers who were involved in Princess Diana's accident?
- 3.A Where will you go on your next vacation?
- 4.A Where will you spend the Christmas holidays?
- 5.A Someone is always punctual. Who do you think it is?
- 6.A Some students have lost their books. Where do you think they might be?
- 7.A My cousin is getting married next week. How do you think she feels?
- 8.A \_\_\_\_\_ hasn't arrived. What do you think happened to \_\_\_\_\_?
- 9.A Who do you think will win the next NBA championship?
- 10.A Where will you go on your honeymoon when you get married?
- 11.A When is the best time to travel to Canada?
- 12.A I can't find my English book. Where do you think it is?
- 13.A Where can I go to get a good haircut?
- 14.A Who do you think might be the next President of Mexico?
- 15.A Who do you think might win an Oscar for best actor in the next Academy Awards ceremony?
- 16.A Who do you think might win an Oscar for best actress in the next Academy Awards ceremony?
- 1.B What do you think your English grade will be this month?
- 2.B What grade do you think you will get on your math exam?
- 3.B What score do you think you will get on your TOEFL exam?
- 4.B How old do you think you will be when you get married?
- 5.B What do most parents encourage their children to do?
- 6.B What was the last thing your parents warned you to do or not to do?
- 7.B What did the teacher tell us to do yesterday?
- 8.B What do flight attendants ask passengers to do?
- 9.B When you were a child, what didn't your parents allow you to do?

- 10.B What do ads want to convince you to do?
- 11.B What do you usually ask your English partner to do?
- 12.B What do bosses expect from their employees?
- 13.B What do doctors usually advise their patients?
- 14.B What time do your parents let you arrive home on weekends?
- 15.B What do children usually try to persuade their parents to do?
- 16.B What do some teachers make you do?

### ***Practice Procedure***

On this occasion students were asked to form groups of four members. Once students arranged their seats in the appropriate positions they were given instructions as to the procedure of the activity. They were told that each team would receive four cue cards and that they would ask each other the questions they had printed on their cards. They could proceed to ask in any order they wished because the entire group had been broken up into these smaller sub-groups. They were told to carefully observe the questions they were holding because the object of the exercise was to elicit responses from their partners with the structure required according to the question asked. For example if the question is, *Where do you think you will spend your next vacation?*, an appropriate response should include a modal such as may or might, therefore, the answer could be, *I might spend a few days in Acapulco*. In the case of verbs with two complements, a question such as *What do children usually want their parents to buy?*, could elicit the following response: *Children usually want their parents to buy candy*.

After receiving the cue cards, the students were asked to do the exercise, and when they finished with their cards, to exchange them with another team that had also finished with their cards. Meanwhile the professor walked around the classroom to observe the activity and to clarify doubts in case there were any. This exercise



was practiced for twenty minutes, and several card exchanges among the different teams occurred during this time.

### 3.3.2.1.3. Activity Three

The final classroom activity was similar to activity two. With the exercises practiced in this activity, students reviewed the grammatical structures seen in Units 4, 5 and 6 of their textbook.

#### **Objective**

Each of the three units covers specific grammatical structures which were practiced in this activity. The objective for Unit 4 was to practice the past perfect and past perfect progressive tenses. Unit 5 required students to use gerunds and infinitives as complements. As for Unit 6, its main objective is the second conditional form. This structure as well as the first conditional forms were practiced in activity three.

#### **Materials**

The materials used for this activity were red and dark blue cue cards also divided into sets of 16 A and B cards. Each of the cards has a question written on it which includes the structures covered in these last three units. The holder of the card asks a partner a question that has to be answered with the structure given in the question. This activity consisted of the following questions:

- 1.A If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?
- 2.A What would you do if you were the teacher?
- 3.A What do you dislike doing at school?
- 4.A What music do you enjoy listening to?
- 5.A What do you look forward to?
- 6.A If you could be a famous historical personality, who would you be? Why?
- 7.A Mention something you can't help doing.
- 8.A If you were an animal, which one would you be? Why?

- 9.A What do you usually avoid doing?
- 10.A What do you miss eating when you are away from home?
- 11.A Mention something you planned on doing but couldn't carry out.
- 12.A What are you interested in doing?
- 13.A What do you normally insist on?
- 14.A What do you usually put off doing?
- 15.A What is something you always worry about?
- 16.A What do you usually think about doing at Christmas time?
- 1.B Why do you think Shirley Temple had won an Oscar by the time she was 7?
- 2.B Had you studied other semesters at ITESM before this one?
- 3.B Had you practiced this type of exercise before?
- 4.B How long had you been in the classroom before we started this exercise?
- 5.B How long had you been doing your homework last night before you decided to stop?
- 6.B How long had you been thinking about studying at the ITESM before you enrolled here?
- 7.B How many times had you studied Unit 5 before you understood it?
- 8.B How long had you been working on your oral presentation before you finished it?
- 9.B What do you feel like doing next weekend?
- 10.B What do you miss doing?
- 11.B What do you feel like eating for lunch?
- 12.B Where do you look forward to going during the next Christmas holidays?
- 13.B Who do you usually put off visiting?
- 14.B What will you do if you get 100 on your English test?

- 15.B What would you buy if you had a lot of money?  
16.B What will you do next weekend if it doesn't rain?

### ***Practice Procedure***

For this activity students were asked to arrange their seats in groups of four. Since this practice procedure is similar to that of activity two, students followed instructions faster and were ready to start immediately. Each team was given four cards at random (blue and red). Students were asked to observe the structures used on their cards carefully so they could expect a response using in the same structure used in their cards. As soon as a team finished with its round of questions, they exchanged their cards with another team that had also finished with their questions. Meanwhile, the professor walked around the classroom to observe and make clarifications when necessary.

The students had no trouble identifying the structures that were being practiced and helped each other when they had doubts while answering. This activity took them about 20 minutes to complete, and all the teams had an opportunity to practice with several different cards.

#### 3.3.2.1.4. Subsequent practices

Since the material that needs to be covered in the program for the semester is very extensive, it was not always easy to introduce numerous oral activities during class. Nevertheless, students did practice with all these cards in three other fifteen-minute periods besides the four previous times they had been exposed to them. The total amount of practice was approximately 120 minutes during the three months in which the activities were introduced. As was mentioned earlier, on the first and second occasions of practice, the students were seated in a big circle so that the teacher could have more control over their responses and doubts. However, this was not practical or convenient because students tended to get bored in the second

practice. For activities three and four, even though the cue cards were labeled the same as in Activity One, the procedure was different and allowed the students to practice in a more dynamic way even though the teacher had less control over their responses to verify if they were speaking English at all times or if they were always answering correctly. The advantages of this form of procedure were that students were speaking simultaneously and felt more freedom to do so. The final practice with the cards was done like a contest in which students were handed the three different activity cards, separated into A's and B's, and they asked each other questions. The team with the most correct responses won the contest.

#### 3.3.2.2. Oral Homework Activities

There were two activities assigned for outside of class to promote more oral interaction. The experimental group as well as the control group had to present for their third monthly evaluation, a final graded oral production activity similar to the ones presented for the first and second monthly evaluations. This consisted of creating a dialogue that included all the new grammatical structures and some of the new vocabulary seen during the month (see 3.3.1.). The difference with the experimental group was that they had to tape record these activities which consisted of two assignments that will be explained fully further on. Since the final evaluation for the Remedial IV level is the TOEFL test, a final oral evaluation is not required for the fourth period (see 3.3.5.).

##### 3.3.2.2.1. Final Oral Activity One

The first activity consisted of a tape that the students had to record during a half hour session of free conversation with their team partners outside of class. Since the procedure for this activity is less extensive than the activities performed inside the classroom, it will be explained as follows:

### **Practice Procedure**

- a) Each team was given a list of topics because they had to do research on a topic of their preference. Each team also received an audiocassette for this activity. There were eleven cassettes distributed among ten teams of three students each, and one of two participants.
- b) The students were asked to select a topic. The suggested ones and the instructions for this activity were the following.

*For this assignment you are required to speak only in English for a minimum of 30 minutes. You will tape your conversation and help each other to avoid speaking Spanish. You can consult a dictionary to include words that might make your topic more complete or interesting. You can talk about two topics if you have enough time or you can talk about a topic different from the ones mentioned below:*

#### *Suggested topics:*

- Important story in the news
- Mercy killing (euthanasia)
- Classical music vs. modern music
- Capital punishment
- Corruption
- Drunk driving
- Important advances in technology
- Influence of television on today's society
- Diets
- Sports
- Child abuse
- Alcoholism

- Recycling
- Changes in fashion

The following step of their assignment was to get together with their teammates and discuss the topic they had selected for a minimum of 30 minutes as stipulated on their instruction sheet. The professor pointed out again that they could talk freely about their topic(s) and tape their complete discussion. Once this was done, the tape was to be handed back to the professor no later than a week after first receiving them. The professor verified that instructions had been followed by listening to all the tapes. The tapes were then returned to the teams so they could record the follow-up activities (see Appendix D).

- a) Students were then asked to proceed with formal research on the topic selected for an oral presentation in front of the class. The assignment was for them to investigate in books, magazines, the Internet or whatever resources they had available to complete their project. As in the two previous monthly oral production activities, students had to write out their dialogues and include in them the grammatical structures covered in Units 4, 5 and 6 of their textbook. The dialogues were to be approximately two sheets in length, which could be covered orally in around 4 minutes. The duration of the oral presentation was asked to be of a minimum of four minutes (see Appendices E and F).

#### 3.3.2.2.2. Final Oral Activity Two

The second final oral activity for outside practice was a follow-up of the activities mentioned in 3.3.2.2.1. The final step of their oral production project was for

the students to tape their written dialogue once it was completed. The duration of their oral presentation was to be about four minutes.

The procedure for this final stage was as follows:

***Practice Procedure***

- a) After having taped their dialogues, students were asked to replay them and to mark any errors they felt they had made. They were asked to make their corrections with a pencil on their written report.
- b) Students were assigned a date on which they had to hand in their written dialogues for correction by the author, who would also observe the corrections they had made themselves when checking their dialogues.
- c) After checking their work, the author returned the teacher returned the dialogues to each team, asking them to make the appropriate changes (see Appendix E).
- d) Finally, the students were asked to practice their corrected dialogues, tape them one last time and replay both versions in order to observe differences.

Once all this had been completed, the students presented, without reading them, their final oral assignment of the semester in front of the class.

### 3.3.3. Evaluation Instruments for Individual Oral Presentations

In order to establish a comparison between the experimental and control groups with regard to the improvement of their oral production skills, it was necessary to design an oral evaluation format that could assess each of the sixty-two students involved in the study. As has been mentioned before, both groups covered the material presented in their textbooks with the only difference being oral practice carried out by the experimental group. The material presented in the evaluation instruments would not be new to either of the groups, but the experimental group would have the advantage of having interacted more with the material which would be included in the oral test, due to their additional oral exercises.

The final oral evaluation that the students took was in the form of an interview. According to Lowe and Liskin-Gasparro, “the oral interview is a testing procedure capable of measuring a wide range of speaking abilities from novice to native” (p.1). To ensure objectivity of this oral evaluation, the interviews were not conducted by the author. Six professors volunteered to help the author carry out this evaluation. Five of the evaluators were English professors at the Monterrey Campus who are very familiar with the teaching methodology involved. The other evaluator was a professor and the director of San Patricio Junior High School, a bilingual institution, who also has ample experience in conducting oral evaluations. After having reviewed literature on oral testing, the author adapted the instruments she would need from evaluations and techniques that were compiled by Ron Schwartz of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus.

As mentioned before, the type of oral evaluation was an interview which was intended to elicit specific grammatical structures in the students’ responses. In order to simplify testing and make recording of results easier and faster so that the students would not get nervous or distracted if they saw the interviewer writing too much, the author designed a registration format (see Appendix G), which needed only check marks for the recording of data. This format was adapted from one used by the University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus (p.12). As in UMBC’s format, the abilities or skills that were tested were grammar, which would be evaluated as right (**R**), Wrong (**W**) or right without the required grammatical structure (**WS**); listening comprehension, which would be evaluated according to the number of times students asked for the question to be repeated (**QR**); and oral production, which included fluency, vocabulary and pronunciation. Another feature that was included was the number of sentences students used in their responses. The minimum number of required sentences was three.

The evaluators were given the following material for the interviews (see Appendices G.1-3):



- a) Guidelines for oral evaluation. The information presented on this form was the description of the procedure for conducting the evaluation.
- b) Grammar analysis sheet. This form explained the grammatical structures required in the students' responses in each of the questions asked. Evaluators were given this material one week before they conducted interviews so they could review the information and ask the author any questions they might have.
- c) Oral evaluation questions. This form contained the questions used in each student interview. There were fourteen questions, ten of which were taken from the cue cards the experimental group had practiced with and which covered Units 1-6 of their textbooks; the other four questions were based on structures seen in Units 7, 8 and 9.
- d) Oral evaluation registration sheet. This is the form on which the evaluators registered each student's performance.

#### 3.3.4. Survey Instrument for Student Appraisal

A final questionnaire was given to the students to obtain their personal perception of the course and the oral activities practiced during the semester. It was important for the author to know if the activities had been fulfilling for the students and if they felt they had benefited from them. The questionnaire that was designed was the same for both groups except for the final question, which pertained only to the experimental group; therefore, two types of questionnaires were used.

The basic questionnaire that was answered by all 62 students can be seen in Appendix H.

#### 3.3.5. Final TOEFL Evaluation

In order for Remedial IV students to advance to the next level, it is necessary for them to take a final Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) that is

averaged with their three monthly exams. A final (fourth) graded oral evaluation is not required. Depending on the scores students obtain, they will either, a) advance to Advanced English A course, which is a required advanced English course (remedial English courses do not receive academic credit), if they score 470 or more on their TOEFL exam and have at least a 70 average from their first three exams; b) go to Advanced English A1 if they have a passing average (at least 70), but do not get the required 470 on their TOEFL exam; or c) repeat Remedial IV if their average grade and TOEFL score do not reach 70 and 470 respectively.

It is important to mention that both the control and experimental groups had the same amount of practice and activities to prepare themselves for the TOEFL exam. The material they worked with was the following:

- A glossary of vocabulary and complementary exercises to practice this vocabulary. The exercises were all checked in class after having been done for homework.
- An in-class sample listening test.
- An in-class sample written expression (grammar) test.
- An in-class vocabulary and reading comprehension sample test.

Even though both groups dedicated the same amount of time and activities to the preparation of the written TOEFL exam, the results obtained were quite different, as will be shown in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

### 3.3.6. Student Evaluations of Professors

At the end of each semester, students are asked to evaluate their professors' performance during the course. Through this instrument, the extent of the fulfillment, according to the students' appraisal of objectives, can be recorded by the students, and it also serves as a means of feed-back for the professors once the results have been tabulated (see Appendix I). Since the two groups received a different treatment, it was of interest to the author to compare the level of satisfaction between

both groups with regard to the activities they carried out during the semester. Their answers on the evaluation are placed on a scale of 1 to 7, 1 being the highest grade.

The aspects that are evaluated are the following:

- Cup *Cumplimento del programa* Program fulfillment
- Obj *Objetivo al evaluar* Objectivity in evaluating
- Ens *Claridad al enseñar* Clarity in teaching
- Raz *Razonamiento* Reasoning
- Tra *Trato al alumno* Respectful treatment
- Inv *Promueve investigación* Promoting research
- Hab *Desarrolla habilidades* Develops abilities
- Act *Promueve actitudes y valores* Promoting attitudes and values
- Apr *Favorece en forma excelente aprendizaje* Favoring learning with excellence
- Mis *Promueve el desarrollo de habilidades, actitudes y valores que se establecen en la misión* Enhancing the development of abilities, attitudes and values stipulated in the ITESM mission
- OGP *Opinión global del profesor* Global opinion of the profesor

The results of this evaluation are specified in 4.7.

During the last three months of the semester, the students of the experimental group had numerous opportunities of participating in activities that promoted interaction among themselves. Authentic communication, which includes features such as information gap, negotiation of meaning and learner control over verbal or non-verbal resources (see 2.2.), could be observed when they engaged in the cue card and tape recording activities. The following chapter will discuss the students'

opinions about the English language and the different activities they practiced, as well as the results of their evaluations.

#### 4. Findings and Results

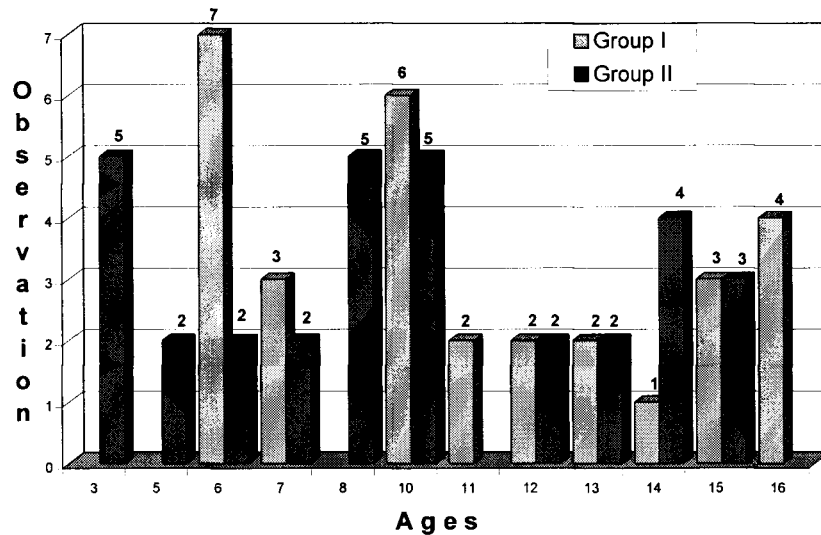
In Chapter 3, the method the author followed was described in its several stages. This chapter will present the results obtained from the questionnaires and assigned activities explained in the previous chapter. The presentation of these results will be through tables and graphs as well as the author's interpretation of them.

##### 4.1. Findings on Students' Background

The first instrument that was given to both groups to collect data on their background consisted of seven questions that were analyzed individually and presented graphically. The experimental group (Group II) was the larger of the two groups, with 32 students, and the control group (Group I) consisted of 30 students. The age range of both groups was from 17 to 22 years.

Question 1. How old were you when you began to study English?

**Figure 2**

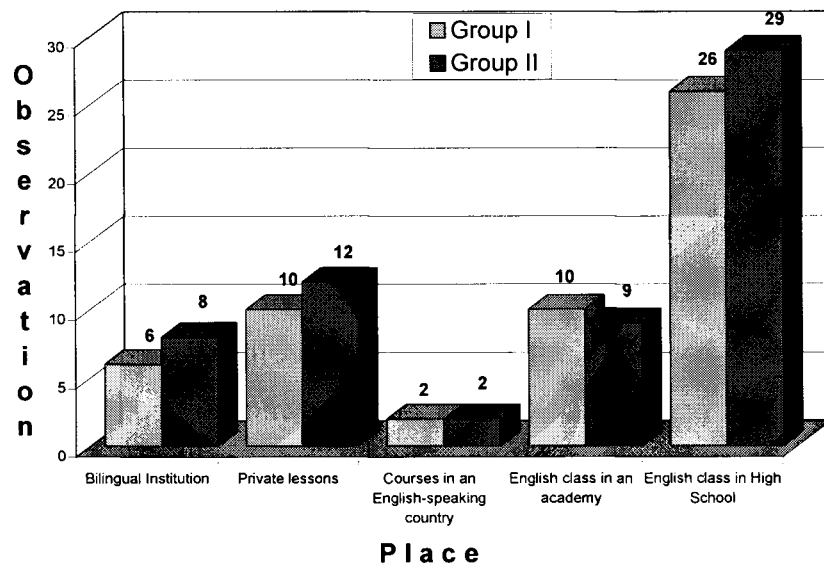


The first question asks the students the age they were when they started studying English. In the experimental group (Group II) there were five students who began to study English at the age of three, and two who began at the age of 5, whereas in the control group (Group I) the youngest age registered was 6, with seven students who began to study English at that age, as did two from Group II. At the age of 7, two students from each group began their English studies. There were five students from Group II who began to study English at age 8, but none at this age in Group I. Six students from Group I and five from Group II began their English classes at the age of 10, and two from Group I began at age 11. There were two students in each group who began to study English at age 12 or 13. In Group I, one student began to study English at age 14, three at the age of 15 and four when they were 16. In Group II, four started at age 14 and three when they were 15 years old.

It can be observed that in the experimental group there are more students who began their English studies at a younger age than in the control group, but there are also more students in the experimental group who started their studies more recently.

Question 2. Where did you learn English before studying it at the ITESM?

**Figure 3**

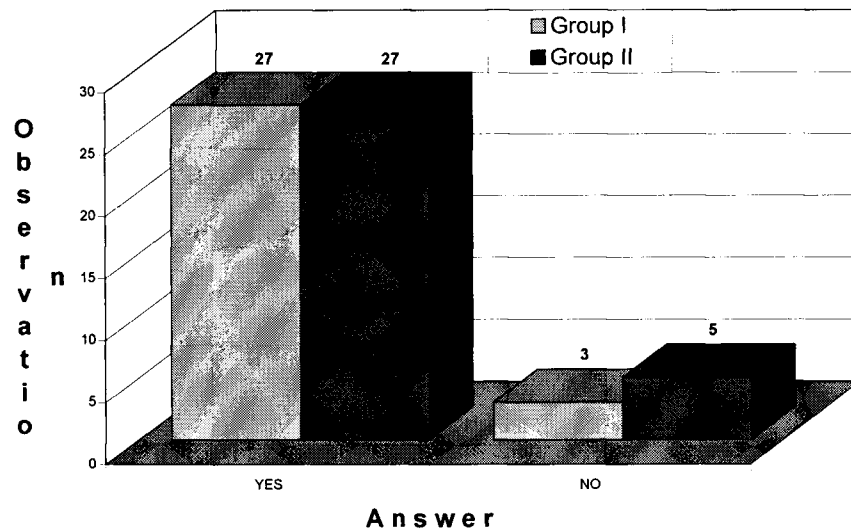


This question inquires about the places where prior knowledge of English was obtained. Six students from Group I and eight from Group II responded that they had studied English at bilingual institutions. Ten students from Group I and twelve from Group II had taken private lessons. Two students from each group responded that they had taken courses in an English-speaking country. As for studies of English in an academy, there were ten students in Group I and nine from Group II who responded to this option. The final option was English classes in high school to which, 26 from Group I and 29 from Group II responded affirmatively.

Based on the preceding information, it can be seen that most of the students had had English classes in high school; however, it could be mentioned that some students responded with two or more options. In Group I there were 17 who answered with more than one option whereas in Group II there were 20.

Question 3. Do you like to study English?

**Figure 4**



The third question asks the students about their feelings towards the English language. In both groups 27 answered that they liked studying English, and the rest of the students (3 and 5) answered that they did not like it. The reasons they

mentioned for both cases were as follows. The numbers in parentheses indicate repeated answers.

#### Control Group (Group I)

##### Positive

- I like the language.
- It's fun.
- It's necessary in order to have achievements.
- It's important and I like it. (8)
- It's important for work. (3)
- I want to study in the USA.
- It's a good tool for work.
- It's very important for my future and I would like to talk more with other people.
- When I was a child my dream was to learn English.
- It's important to communicate. When I travel to the USA I would like to speak it and I think that it's important for business.
- I need it for the textbooks in my major.
- I think that it is important to speak two or three languages.
- It is important and great.
- I like to travel and meet people.
- I like to listen to it.
- It is a beautiful language

##### Negative

- I get bored.
- It's difficult. (2)

#### Group II (Experimental Group)

##### Positive

- It's important for my future. (2)



- I like to communicate with other kinds of people.
- I like it and it's necessary for the future
- It's a great way to visit other countries.
- It's very important. (3)
- English is important for my major.
- It's basic and necessary for my professional life.
- It's beautiful to know more than your native language.
- It's the universal language. (2)
- It's interesting for me and necessary for work. (2)
- I like to understand and I like to be sociable.
- I need it.
- I just like it.
- It's important for a professional.
- I'm interested in knowing people from other countries to talk to them about their culture and mine.
- I'll study and work in the USA.
- It's the most popular language
- It's interesting and in all the classes you learn something new
- It's necessary to have a good job and to learn about other countries, understand movies and songs, and when you travel you can communicate with other people.

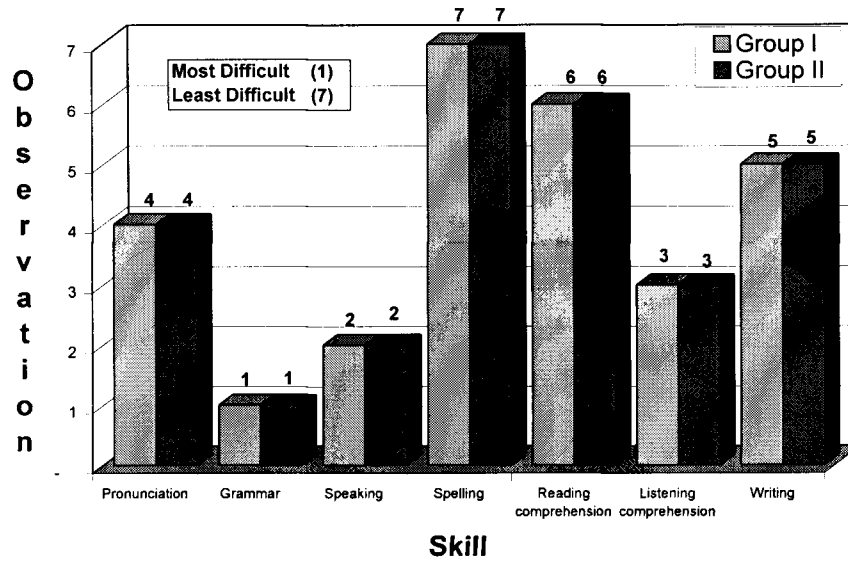
#### Negative

- It takes time.
- It's not easy for me to learn other languages.
- I don't like grammar, but I like to hear and speak.
- It's difficult for me, I prefer to study Japanese.
- I can't speak it.

It is clear that the students in Group II were more expressive in their responses than the students in Group I.

Question 4. Which is the most difficult aspect for you in learning English?

**Figure 5**



The fourth question asks students to state, according to degrees of difficulty, the aspects of English they find the most difficult. For both groups the order from most difficult to least difficult aspects were:

Group I

- grammar
- speaking
- listening
- pronunciation
- writing
- reading comprehension
- spelling

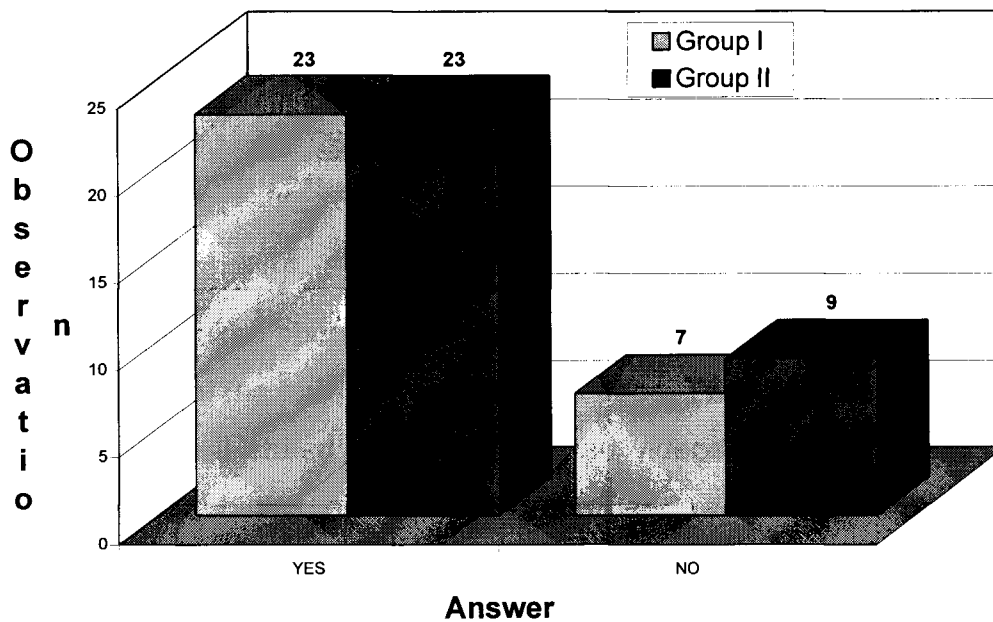
Group II

- grammar
- speaking
- listening
- pronunciation
- writing
- reading comprehension
- spelling

The results of this question in both groups reveal that students have the same perception of the difficulty involved in learning the different aspects of a second language.

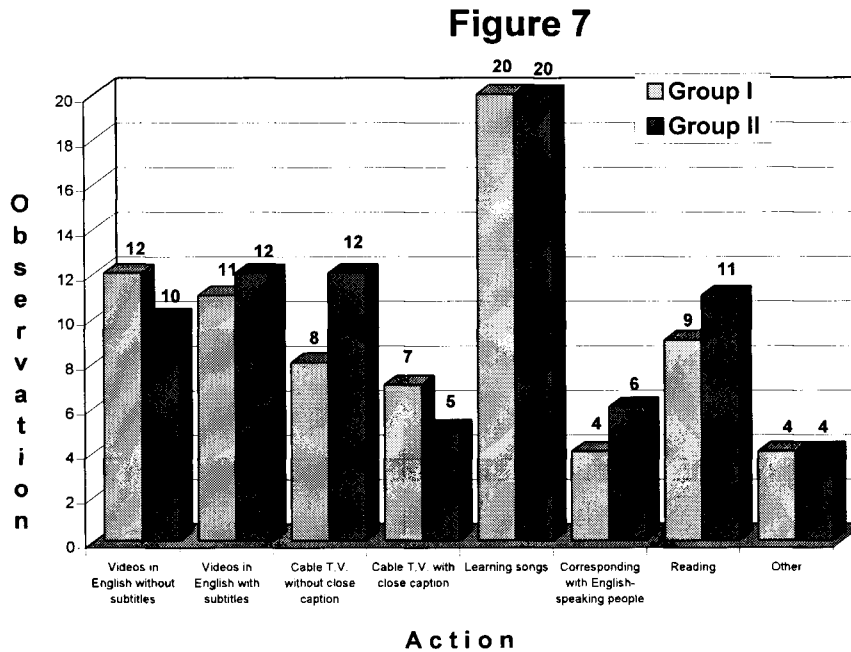
Question 5. Do you practice English outside of class?

**Figure 6**



Question number five asks whether or not students practice English outside of the classroom. The results were comparatively similar in both groups since 23 students in each group did engage in outside practice whereas the other 7 from the control group (Group I) and 9 from the experimental group (Group II) did not.

Question 6. Which form of outside activities do you practice?



This question inquires about the form(s) in which students practice their English outside of class. One of the forms was watching videos. Twelve students from Group I and ten from Group II stated that they watched videos without subtitles. As for watching videos with subtitles, eleven from Group I and twelve from Group II did so. Another form of outside practice was to watch cable television. Eight students from Group I and twelve from Group II did so without close-caption while seven from Group I and five from Group II watched cable TV with close caption. As for learning songs in English, an equal amount of students (twenty) from each group engaged in this practice. Reading was another form of outside English practice. There were nine students from Group I and ten from Group II who responded to this option. Some of the reading materials mentioned were magazines such as Newsweek, People and Cosmopolitan. Also mentioned were computer and sports magazines as well as academic textbooks.

Another option mentioned was corresponding with English-speaking people, and there were four students in each of the groups that practiced English this way.

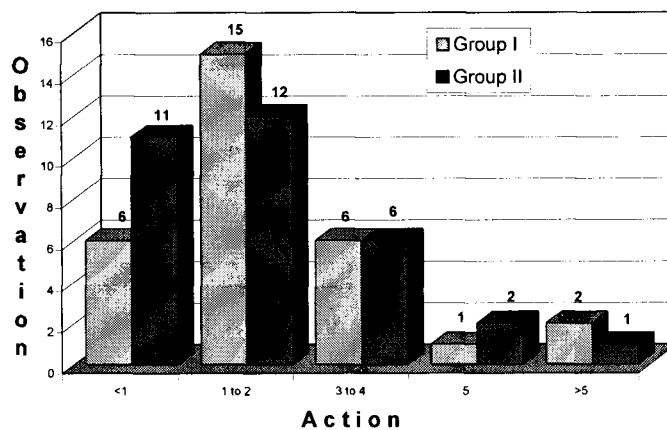
Finally, Group I stated other ways of practice such as, reading information about car audio systems, Internet, Netscape and talking with exchange students.

Group II students mentioned activities such as talking with Americans and computer usage.

As in Question 2, students could select more than one option, and the findings revealed that in Group I, 23 students selected two or more options, whereas in Group II, 21 did so. According to the results of this question, Group I students engaged in more outside English practice than Group II, the experimental group, did.

Question 7. How much time do you dedicate to outside English practice?

**Figure 8**



This final question inquires about the time dedicated to outside English practice. The number of students who had less than an hour of outside English practice were six students in Group I and eleven in Group II. Fifteen students in Group I and twelve in Group II engaged in one to two hours of practice. Six students in each of the two groups practiced English three to four hours outside the classroom. And there was one student in Group I and two in Group II who practiced five hours. Two students practiced more than five hours of English outside of class were in Group I as did one in Group II.

The results of this question confirm that the students from the control group dedicated more time to practicing English outside of the classroom.

#### 4.2. Findings on the first monthly exam

During the semester the students are required to take three monthly exams and a final TOEFL exam which evaluate grammar, listening comprehension, reading comprehension and vocabulary. Since the teaching methods and techniques for this course were similar during the first three weeks of the semester because the designed activities were not presented to the experimental group until after this time, it was important to review the results of the first monthly evaluation to establish a comparison between both groups at the initial stage of the experiment as well as at the end of the semester when the final results of the TOEFL were obtained.

The first monthly exam covered Units 1 through 3, which included the following grammatical structures (see Appendix C.1).

- a) Unit 1 Present perfect tense and the use of *already*, *yet* and *still*
- b) Unit 2 Modal auxiliaries (*might*, *could*, *must*) in present tense
- c) Unit 3 Verb + noun + infinitive

The average grade of the first monthly exam for the control group was 87.57 while the experimental group obtained an average of 89.19 (see Appendix C.2 for individual scores). There was a one-point difference between the two groups after they took their first monthly exam.

#### 4.3. Findings on Oral Homework Activities

The two activities that were assigned for outside practice required the use of a tape recorder and audiocassette by each team. The students taped their activities as instructed and handed in their tapes once they were completed. The results of these activities will be described with the following excerpts from three of the experimental group teams that were assigned these activities. It is important to mention that

'authentic communication' as described by Ellis (p. 189), was observed when the author listened to all the tapes (see 2.2).

For the first activity the students were instructed to have a free conversation among their team members according to topics (see 3.3.2.2.1) that were suggested or any other of their preference. Three of the cassettes for this activity were transcribed to exemplify the activity as well as to analyze the work produced by the students (see Appendices D.1–3).

#### Team One

The participants in this group were three girls who decided to talk about the topic of fashion and did so in a very free and informal way during the thirty minutes that were assigned for this activity. The students' names are Margot, Zarai and Montserrat. The first five minutes of their conversation can be read in Appendix D.1.

#### Team two

The second team whose cassette was transcribed also consisted of three girls (Laura, Annie and Gaby), who chose the topic of child abuse for their assignment. This team followed a different procedure from the first team. They organized themselves in a different manner. Occasionally they spoke freely, and at other times they read. A seven-minute excerpt of their tape, specifically of moments of free speech, is in Appendix D.2)

#### Team Three

The third team was composed of two boys (Eddie and Siller) and a girl (Martha), who also spoke very freely on the topic of their choice. Their procedure was different from the other two teams because they chose to talk about various subjects which included drunk driving, fashion, music, the influence of television on children, diets, sports and technology.

The first seven minutes of their thirty-minute conversation was about drunk driving. In this conversation Eddy assumed the role of leader and sometimes helped his partners with vocabulary or asked for confirmation of correct data when there was language transfer from the L1 (see Appendix D.3).

As for the second oral activity, students recorded their dialogue as soon as they had written it (see Appendix E). After this was done, they handed in their written dialogue as well as their tape to the professor for revision of the written text and verification of recording activity. Finally, as soon as corrections were made by the professor, students were asked to correct their dialogues and tape them again. They were then asked to listen to both versions so they could notice the difference in the oral production.

#### 4.4. Findings on Student Appraisal Survey

The experimental group as well as the control group answered a questionnaire (see Appendix H), whose objective was to collect data on the students' appraisal of the various English language skills, their improvement and the activities they participated in during the semester. The answers given by each group for each question were as follows.

Question 1. Which pair of abilities do you consider more important? Why?

This question asks students what abilities they think are more important for them to acquire or learn in the second language they are studying. It also inquires the reasons why the students think these abilities are the most important.

##### ***Control group's response***

Twenty-seven students out of thirty of the control group answered this questionnaire. The three who did not answer did not take their final written evaluation, which was given on the same day as the questionnaire.



Twenty-five students considered speaking-listening more important than reading-writing, which other two students thought to be more important.

The reasons students gave for speaking-listening's being more important as well as the frequencies of some of these reasons were:

- Important for communicating correctly and rapidly (10)
- Most used (6)
- Important for traveling and visiting other countries (3)
- For future jobs (2)
- Challenging and necessary for communicating
- I like it
- It helps to improve the other abilities (reading-writing)
- More comfortable

The students who considered reading-writing to be more important gave the following reasons:

- Because it is very important for communicating
- Because I think it is important to write well

### ***Experimental group's response***

The response to this question was unanimous since all 32 students answered that they considered the abilities of speaking-listening to be more important than reading-writing. The reasons given as well as the number of times some of these were repeated by students are mentioned below.

- Correct communication for working purposes (9)
- Most used (5)
- Interaction with English-speaking persons (4)
- Competitiveness (2)
- For traveling purposed (2)
- Requirement in my major

- Challenging
- Best way to learn English
- I like listening to songs in English
- No reasons (6)

The reasons both groups gave as to why they considered speaking-listening to be more important coincided in that both groups believed that these abilities were necessary for communicating correctly, and that they were used more than reading and writing. As for the rest of the reasons, they differ noticeably.

Question 2. Do you think you improved your oral production skills? Why?

This question asks the students if they feel they have improved their oral production skills in English, how much they thought their speaking skills had improved and why they believe that to be so.

***Control group's response***

In this case, all 27 students who answered the questionnaire responded that they felt that their oral production skills had improved. Fourteen of these students felt they had improved very little and the other 13 thought they had done so a lot. Nine of the students gave the following reasons for their responses.

***A lot***

- I practiced more.
- I used all the grammatical structures I saw in class.
- I speak more than before
- I practiced very much and was interviewed.
- I hadn't practiced orally before.

***A little***

- I spoke very little in class. (2)
- We have to practice more.
- I had done that before.

### ***Experimental group's response***

All 32 students felt that they had improved, 16 of them believing they had improved a little whereas the other 16 thought they had improved a lot. Thirteen students gave reasons of why they felt they had improved. These are as follows:

#### ***A lot***

- We practiced a lot in class.
- It had been a long time since I last practiced.
- I feel I talk more now (2 students responded the same).
- Every month we had oral production evaluations.
- When I came here I disliked speaking, and now it's usual for me to speak and listen in English.
- I can speak English with my friends.
- Now I am more fluent.

#### ***A little***

- We also practiced a lot of writing and grammar.
- I've known the same things for three years.
- I improved but not as much as I wanted.
- I still need more practice.

We can see a consistency in both groups with regard to the improvement the students believed they had achieved. In both cases all the students felt they had improved, half of them a lot and the other half a little, and even though the control group was less exposed to different types of oral activities, they felt that they had improved anyway.

Question 3. How much oral practice do you feel you had?

This question inquires about the amount of oral practice students felt they had had (Table 1). The three options were: very little, sufficient and a lot.

**Table 1**

	<i>GI</i>	<i>GII</i>
<i>A lot</i>	3	2
<i>Sufficient</i>	19	22
<i>Very little</i>	4	7
<i>No answer</i>	1	

***Control group's Response***

Of the 27 students who responded in this group, 19 considered they had participated in sufficient oral practice, 4 of them felt they had had very little, 3 expressed they had practiced a lot and one did not respond.

***Experimental group's response***

Of the 31 students who responded in this group, 22 considered they had had sufficient oral practice, 7 students stated they had received very little and the other 2 answered that they had participated in a lot of oral practice.

There was no noticeable difference between the responses of the control group and the experimental group. However, the control group's results revealed that three students felt they had had a lot of oral practice compared to the two students that expressed the same in the experimental group, whose oral activities were more than those of the control group. It can be said that even though the control group had fewer oral production activities, they felt that this skill was not being neglected and that seven students in the experimental group wanted more oral activities.

Question 4. Which oral production activities were different from others you had practiced previously?

Question number 4 asks students about the oral production activities they participated in that were different from previous oral production activities (Table 2). The activities mentioned and frequencies were the following:

**Table 2**

***Control group's response***

<i>Oral production dialogues</i>	10
<i>Interview</i>	7
<i>Reading out loud</i>	1
<i>All were new</i>	1
<i>None were new</i>	1

***Experimental group's response***

<i>Cue Card activities</i>	19
<i>Oral production dialogues</i>	12
<i>Taped conversation</i>	11
<i>Interview</i>	1
<i>All were new</i>	1
<i>None were new</i>	1

There was a noticeable difference in the responses of these two groups because the experimental group had had activities that were not practiced in the control group. Three of the students in the control group gave responses that did not answer the question and therefore could not be considered for reporting the findings. Three other students left that question blank. The one activity in which both groups were very similar was the oral production (O.P.) dialogue, since 10 students from the control group and 12 from the experimental group expressed that they had never practiced this type of oral activity before.

Question 5. What oral production activities did you like the most?

This question asks students about their preferences regarding the oral activities that were practiced during the semester. On a scale of 1 to 4, number 1 being their favorite activity, the students' choices and frequencies are seen in Table 3:

**Table 3**

***DEGREE OF PREFERENCES***

*Control group*

<b><i>ACTIVITY</i></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<i>O.P. Dialogues</i>	9	5	5	4
<i>Text exercises</i>	9	9	9	
<i>Interview</i>	4	1	1	
<i>Reading out loud</i>	2	4	1	2
<i>Singing</i>	1			

*Experimental group*

<b><i>ACTIVITY</i></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<i>O.P. Dialogues</i>	10	6	5	5
<i>Tape conversation</i>	7	6	2	1
<i>Cue Cards</i>	6	11	9	3
<i>Text exercises</i>	5	4	7	5
<i>Interview</i>	4	1	1	2
<i>Group discussion</i>	1	1	2	
<i>Reading out loud</i>	1			1

It can be observed that the extra oral production activities that were introduced in the experimental group correlate with the ones that the students preferred most. These activities were the dialogues for oral production evaluations, the taped conversations and the cue cards (see Question 4). The same can be said about the control group, whose new activities were basically the O.P. dialogues, which they also considered to be one of their favorite activities.

Question 6. What activities would you suggest to improve oral production skills?

This question asks the students' opinions about what they as second language learners considered to be good ways of improving oral production skills. Their suggestions and the frequencies some of them are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4**

**Control group**

<i>More conversations among students</i>	8
<i>More O.P. dialogues</i>	5
<i>Movies</i>	4
<i>Interviews</i>	3
<i>Sketches</i>	3
<i>Games</i>	1
<i>Speeches</i>	1
<i>Singing</i>	1
<i>Reading out loud</i>	1
<i>No suggestions</i>	3

**Experimental group**

<i>More O.P. dialogues</i>	8
<i>Tape recording activities</i>	5
<i>Speeches</i>	3
<i>Conversations with native speakers</i>	3
<i>Songs</i>	3
<i>More of the ones we practiced in</i>	2
<i>Interviews</i>	2
<i>Movies</i>	1
<i>Dramatizations</i>	1
<i>Think in English</i>	1
<i>Cue cards</i>	1

Some of the activities that were carried out in class and as homework assignments were mentioned as suggestions for further improving oral production skills. In the control group as well as in the experimental group, the O.P. dialogues were mentioned as suggestions for improvement. The control group also suggested more conversation among students eight times. This type of activity could be covered with the cue cards to achieve the purpose of more conversation. As for the

experimental group, they seemed to benefit from the tape recording-activities, which were also mentioned several times (5) as a way of improving their oral skills.

Question 7. Mention what impression(s) you had when you did the tape recording activity.

This question was asked only to the experimental group with the purpose of informing the author of the students' feelings about the tape-recording activities they did since their initial reactions when the first activity was assigned were of surprise and insecurity. Before doing it, some students expressed that they would not be able to keep a conversation going for the half-hour requirement. Their tapes proved that they had underestimated themselves because all 32 students participated fully during the half hour that was required for this assignment as well for the subsequent assignments that were given. All 32 students gave their opinions about this activity. Some opinions coincided. Their comments on the tape recording-activities as well as the frequencies of some of the comments are as follows:

- Good (3)
- It's a good idea. (2)
- We could use it more. (2)
- I enjoyed doing it because it was fun. (2)
- It was fun and it was the first time I heard myself. (2)
- I made friends and knew more about my team.
- I could see how much I had improved.
- I was surprised at the mistakes I made and could correct myself.
- I heard my bad accent.
- I listened to myself.
- I liked it a lot because it was as if I had been having a real conversation.
- I felt a little slow.



- At first I couldn't understand myself, but little by little I began to understand myself.
- I had a good impression of myself because I started speaking English without knowing that I was doing it.
- It was fun. I enjoyed doing it and I couldn't help laughing.
- I didn't like it because I don't like to speak to a machine.
- It's good because you interact with other partners and it's fun.
- It helps very much because when I finished the tape I was still speaking English!
- It was very interesting because I had never listened to my own voice.
- It was nice because I had never done something like that before and it was great because you had the freedom to say whatever you wanted.
- I learned a lot and enjoyed this activity because I like talking with my friends.
- I was a little nervous.
- It was interesting, I practiced more and I wasn't nervous.
- I discovered my mistakes.
- I liked it but it was difficult for me.
- I liked it a lot because I had never spoken as much English in my life as I did with this activity.

The results of this questionnaire proved to be valuable information for the author since the students' feed-back helped her confirm the need to promote oral production through the various activities that were presented during the course of the semester. Furthermore, these activities were highly accepted by the students themselves because they felt that they were learning English as well as improving their oral production skills in a more relaxed manner.

#### 4.5 Findings on Individual Oral Presentations

Each of the students from both groups, 62 in all, were asked to have an interview with one of six different professors who were participating in this oral evaluation activity (see 3.3.3.). In the first section (I) of the oral presentation evaluation form, the professors registered the number of right (R) and wrong (W) answers, as well as those responses that were given without the required grammatical structure (WS) but were acceptable in the form in which they were answered. The number of question repetitions (QR) needed for individual students' listening comprehension was also registered in frequencies (see Table 5).

Section II of the evaluation required registration of overall oral production, which was evaluated on a scale from 4, indicating the highest grade, to 1, which indicates the lowest (see Appendix G.2 for description of scale). The oral production scores can be seen in Table 6.

Next, the number of utterances produced by the students was registered on section III of the form (Table 7). The results of these presentations, which were conducted during a one-week period, revealed the following data for each of the 14 questions that were answered by the students. Group I (GI) is the control group and Group II (GII) is the experimental group.

**Table 5**

Section I.

<b>Question</b>	<b>R</b>		<b>W</b>		<b>WS</b>		<b>QR</b>	
	<b>GI</b>	<b>GII</b>	<b>GI</b>	<b>GII</b>	<b>GI</b>	<b>GII</b>	<b>GI</b>	<b>GII</b>
1. <i>Have you ever gone to a concert?</i>	15	24	13	7	2	1	1,2	
2. <i>Have you ever eaten Chinese food?</i>	20	23	7	6	3	3	1,1	
3. <i>If you could travel anywhere in the world where would you go? Why?</i>	22	24	7	7	1	1	1	
4. <i>What music do you enjoy listening to?</i>	17	15	7	9	6	8	1	1
5. <i>If you were a famous historical personality, who would you be? Why?</i>	17	18	9	11	4	3	1,1,1,1	
6. <i>How long had you been thinking about studying at the ITESM before you enrolled here?</i>	8	13	18	11	4	8	1,1,1,2,1,3,1	
7. <i>Who do you think might win Oscars for best actor and actress in the next Academy Awards?</i>	11	17	12	6	7	9	1,1,1,1,1,1,3	1,1
8. <i>What do bosses expect from their employees?</i>	12	17	16	10	2	5	2,2,1,2,1,1,1,1,3,1,3	3,1
9. <i>When you were a child, what didn't your parents allow you to do?</i>	10	15	17	14	3	3	1,1,1,2,1,1	1,1,1
10. <i>Mention something you can't help doing</i>	14	14	15	17	1	1	1,1,1,3,1,2,1,1	3
11. <i>How often do you have your hair cut? Where?</i>	11	10	14	15	5	7	1,1,1	1,1,1,2
12. <i>Why do people normally take vacations?</i>	20	24	9	7	1	1	1,1,1,2,1	
13. <i>Where was the first heart transplant performed? Who performed it?</i>	16	14	13	6	1	12	1,1	1
14. <i>What information has your teacher given you about the TOEFL exam?</i>	14	18	13	10	3	4	3,1,1,1,1	2,1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>24</b>

As can be observed in Table 5, from the total amount of the different criteria that was evaluated, although not large (6%), there is a difference between the two groups with regard to their oral performance. The experimental group (Group II) had a greater number of correct responses, 246 (55%), compared to 207 (49%) in the control group (Group I). This can be attributed to the fact that the students were allowed to ask for question repetition which gave them the opportunity to listen to the question and the included structure repeatedly to try to respond with the correct answer, which was more the case for G1. A greater number of errors was registered

for Group I, which equaled 170 (41%) compared to 136 (30%) for Group II, a difference of 11%. As for questions answered correctly but without required structure, Group II had a higher number with a total of 66 (15%), compared to that of 43 for Group I (10%), a difference of 5%. Finally, the number of question repetitions was much higher for Group I, with a total of 84 compared to Group II which totaled 24 question repetitions in all. This means that Group I asked for repetitions 3.5 times more than Group II, which showed a probable indication of better listening comprehension ability.

**Table 6**

Section II.

***Oral production results per student***

<b>Student number</b>	<b>Scores for Group I</b>				<b>Scores for Group II</b>			
	<b><u>4</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
1	14				14			
2	14				14			
3	14				14			
4	14				14			
5	14				14			
6	14				14			
7	12	2			14			
8	12	2			14			
9	12	2			12	2		
10	11	3			12	2		
11	11	3			12	2		
12	10	4			11	3		
13	9	3	2		10	4		
14	7	7			9	5		
15	6	8			9	5		
16	5	9			8	6		
17	4	10			8	6		
18	3	11			8	6		
19	2	10	2		8	6		
20	2	9	3		7	7		
21		14			3	11		
22		14			2	12		
23		14			1	11	2	
24		14				14		
25		14				14		
26		11	3			14		
27		10	4			14		
28		9	5			14		
29		7	7			13	1	
30		5	9			13	1	
31						13	1	
32						6	8	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>

The results for the oral production section of the evaluation were recorded according to the number of students of both groups (Table 6). As can be seen, none of the students scored 1 point. A slightly higher number of students (8 compared to 5) from the experimental group were able to score 4 points in all 14 questions, and a fewer number of students from the same group obtained 2 points. However, there is an interesting difference between the two groups with regard to the overall oral production results, which calls for further study.

**Table 7**

Section III.

<i>Student Number</i>	<i>Group I</i>		<i>Group II</i>	
	<i>(+)3</i>	<i>(-)3</i>	<i>(+)3</i>	<i>(-)3</i>
1	14		14	
2	14		14	
3	14		14	
4	13	1	13	1
5	13	1	13	1
6	13	1	12	2
7	12	2	12	2
8	12	2	12	2
9	11	3	12	2
10	11	3	12	2
11	10	4	12	2
12	10	4	11	3
13	10	4	11	3
14	8	6	11	3
15	8	6	11	3
16	8	6	10	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>159</b>

The results of the final section of the evaluation represent the number of utterances produced by the students for each question asked. The number of frequencies per student can be seen in Table 7. In this section, the difference between the two groups was not large, although the tendency indicates more utterances produced by GII.

#### 4.6. Findings on TOEFL Evaluations

As mentioned in 3.3.5., Remedial IV students are required to take a final TOEFL evaluation. The final TOEFL was taken by all 32 students from the experimental group, and 27 out of 30 from the control group. Two of the students who did not take this test dropped out of the course during the last week of classes, and the other was not eligible to take the TOEFL because he had exceeded his limit of absences. The statistical representations of the comparison of results obtained by both groups can be seen in figures 9 and 10.

**Figure 9**

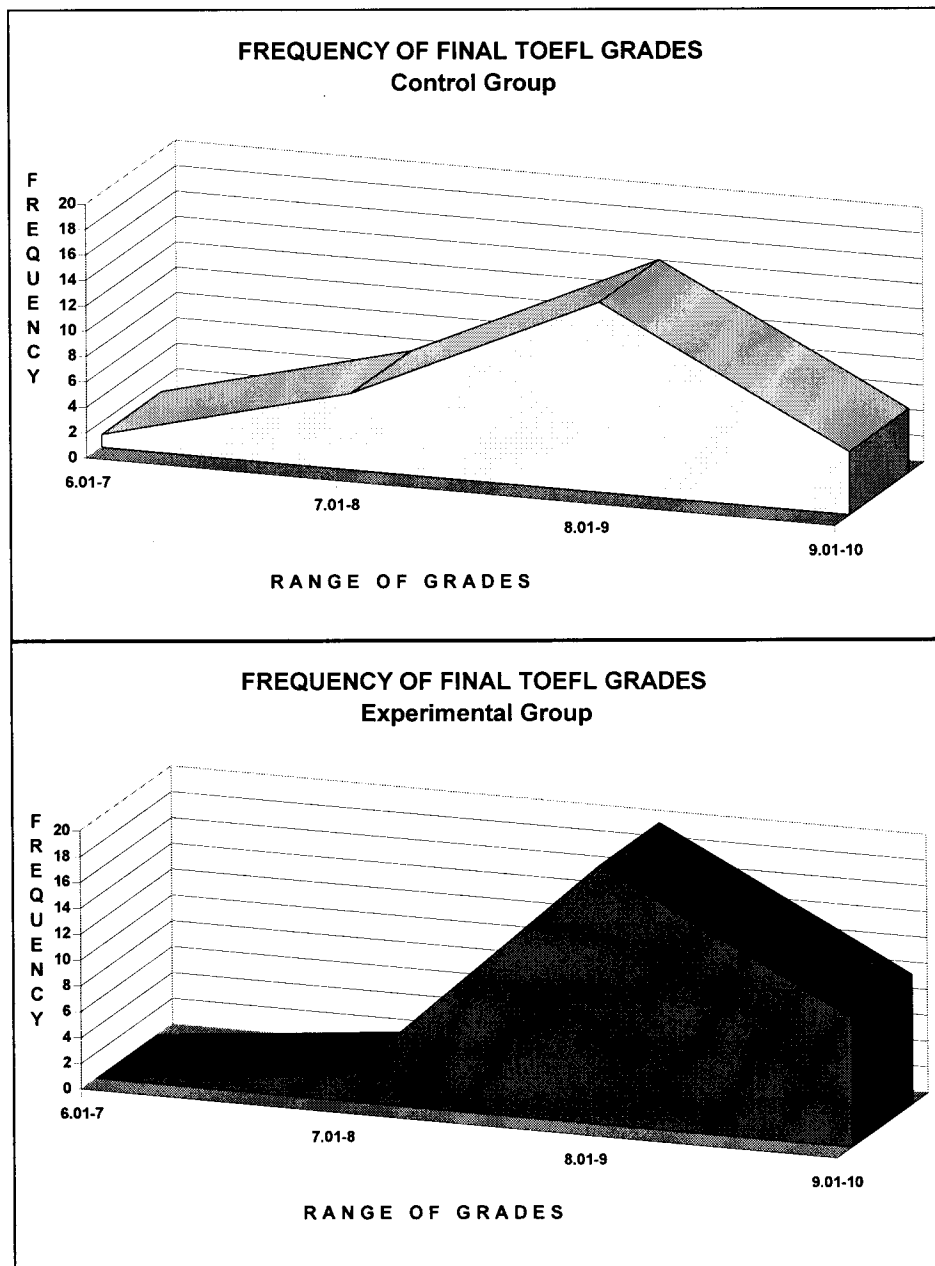
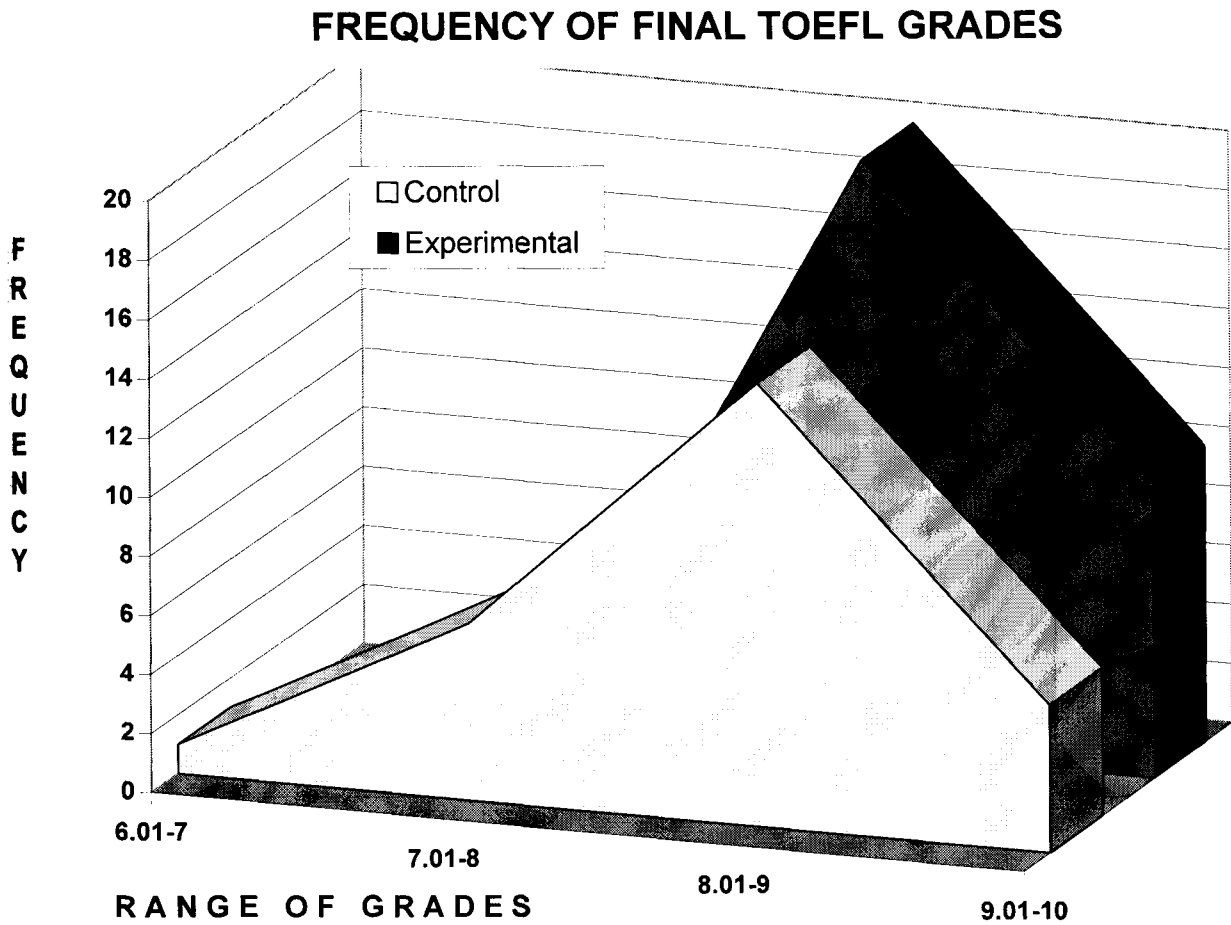


Figure 10



The highest TOEFL score was 570 and was obtained by a student in the experimental group. Fourteen students from this group scored 500 or more points, which was equivalent to a 100 grade. The highest score obtained in the control group was 540, and there were seven other students who achieved 500 or more.

In order to differentiate the scores among the students with a score of 500 or more, which was equivalent to a 100, for statistical purposes the highest score on the TOEFL evaluation was assigned 100 and the subsequent grades were assigned by averaging them with the 570 points. As for the lowest scores, these were more frequent in the control group in which six students obtained fewer than 446 points,

which was the lowest score obtained by a student of the experimental group. The TOEFL scores, as well as the students averaged and real grades, are shown in table 8.

**Table 8**

*Results of the TOEFL exam*

<b>Scores</b>		570	<b>Averaged grades</b>		500	<b>Real grades</b>	
<b>Exp. Group</b>	<b>Control Group</b>		<b>Exp. Group</b>	<b>Control Group</b>		<b>Exp. Group</b>	<b>Control Group</b>
570	540		100	95		100	100
546	530		96	93		100	100
533	530		94	93		100	100
533	520		94	91		100	100
530	520		93	91		100	100
526	510		92	89		100	100
523	506		92	89		100	100
520	500		91	88		100	100
516	496		91	87		100	96
513	493		90	86		100	93
506	486		89	85		100	86
500	483		88	85		100	83
500	480		88	84		100	80
496	480		87	84		96	80
493	476		86	84		93	76
493	473		86	83		93	73
490	470		86	82		90	70
486	466		85	82		86	66
483	463		85	81		83	63
480	456		84	80		80	56
480	446		84	78		80	46
480	443		84	78		80	43
473	436		83	76		73	36
473	413		83	72		73	13
470	403		82	71		70	3
470	400		82	70		70	0
463	370		81	65		63	0
460			81			60	
460			81			60	
456			80			56	
453			79			53	
446			78			46	



#### 4.7. Findings on Professor's Evaluation by students

Before the semester concludes, students are asked and encouraged to evaluate their professor's performance during the semester. For the author, the results of this evaluation revealed the students' appraisal of the course objectives and methodology applied (see Appendix J). Through the students' answers and comments the author realized how the students had felt working with her during the semester. The results are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9**

<b>ASPECT</b>	<b>GROUP I</b>	<b>GROUP II</b>
<i>Program fulfillment</i>	1.7	1.2
<i>Objectivity</i>	1.6	1.3
<i>Clarity</i>	1.7	1.5
<i>Reasoning</i>	1.7	1.5
<i>Respectful treatment</i>	1.8	1.7
<i>Promoting research</i>	2.2	2.2
<i>Developing abilities</i>	1.3	1.2
<i>Promoting attitudes and values</i>	1.8	1.4
<i>Favoring learning with excellence</i>	1.9	1.6
<i>Enhancing the development of abilities, attitudes and values stipulated in the ITESM mission</i>	1.7	1.6
<i>Global opinion</i>	1.81	1.58

As can be seen, though the grades are similar, students from the experimental group evaluated the author with higher scores in all aspects except in Research, which was the same for both groups and represented the lowest score in the evaluation. The lack of research can be attributed to the nature of this English course, which does not require much investigative work because students are asked to practice exercises mainly in their textbooks and workbooks and will only occasionally be asked to do research.

It can be said that even though students in the experimental group were required to work more than the control group, they appeared to be slightly more satisfied with their English course than the control group was.

The feedback and results obtained through the different questionnaires and evaluation instruments that were given to the students revealed facts, which were discussed in each section of this chapter, that determined the outcome of this study. The conclusions drawn from the findings, as well the author's suggestions, will be discussed in the next chapter.

## 5. Conclusions and Suggestions

In Chapter 4, the findings and results that were obtained from data instruments, questionnaires and assigned activities were presented. This chapter will present the conclusions drawn from these findings as well as the author's suggestions for the enhancement of student interaction skills.

### 5.1. Conclusions

One of the most important findings revealed in the questionnaires answered by the students was the satisfaction and benefits they obtained by devoting more time to practicing their oral skills. Students expressed that they had enjoyed participating in activities in which they could speak freely. They can be considered as co-producers of unplanned interaction as stated by Ellis (see 2.3.4.). Through the cue card and tape recording activities, these students experienced activities of authentic communication, which includes features such as information gap, negotiation of meaning and learner control over verbal or non-verbal resources (see 2.2.2.). Students also mentioned that it had been important for them to be able to listen to themselves because they could correct their own errors (see 4.4., Question 7).

The final oral evaluations show that the experimental group's performance was better than the control group's. Although the difference between the two groups in the oral evaluation was not large, the experimental group's improvement is greater in the listening comprehension ability results. The teaching methodology was similar in both groups; however, the improvement in students' oral production as well as in their written evaluations can be attributed to the extra activities that the experimental group engaged in. Even though the practice of these activities meant more work inside as well as outside of the classroom, students viewed them as a more natural use of the language and did not feel that they were burdened with extra work. It is very important to stimulate oral practice, both inside and outside the classroom, by finding and introducing

meaningful activities, especially in groups of more than 25 students so that they can have the opportunity to improve their oral skills (see 2.4.4. and 2.4.5).

An interesting conclusion that can be drawn from the written evaluations students took is that even though both groups started out with a similar level of overall knowledge of the English language, as can be observed in the first monthly exam results (see 4.2.), the final results obtained in the TOEFL evaluation revealed a noticeable difference between both groups (see 4.6). This result was not sought after by the author originally, since the main objective of this study was oral production skills; however, the results of the TOEFL revealed that through oral practice, students can improve not only their speaking skills but also their overall knowledge of the language.

The author can finally conclude by saying that all the questions asked at the beginning of this study (see 1.5.) can be answered affirmatively if an EFL professor uses the different activities described in the course of this thesis. The questions were: “Can interactional-oriented activities stimulate students to participate willingly and with interest? Can these activities increase the frequency of oral language use both inside and outside the classroom? Will the students be able to acquire self-confidence and improve oral production scores?” Not only did students improve their oral production skills, but they also improved their written skills as well.

## 5.2. Suggestions

Although it is sometimes difficult to find time to introduce oral activities during a class due to the curricula that must be covered and the large number of students in a group, it is important that professors find time to promote the enhancement of oral production skills so that students can really use the L2 in meaningful situations. The subtle review of grammar structures, which can help improve fluency in oral production (see 2.7.4.), can be done in specific oral activities as were done with the experimental group when they practiced with the cue cards. They did not feel that they were reviewing grammar, but that they were only having a conversation, which

they enjoyed doing and benefited from. Students favored the practice of the cue card activities (Table 3), so it is worthwhile for professors to introduce them in their courses as a complement to the traditional textbook exercises (see 3.3.2.1). Oral production dialogues, though not an unplanned oral activity, is another alternative favored by students for oral practice. This activity was ranked first, in both the control and experimental groups (see Table 3, Question 5).

Since students appeared to have enjoyed the tape recording activities and benefited from them as was expressed in the student appraisal survey (see 4.4), it would be convenient to have facilities to practice these types of activities. A language lab, in which students could record and listen to themselves, would be appropriate and could be used in many different ways such as for practicing listening comprehension, pronunciation exercises, dictation and other activities involving professor and student creativity.

Another suggestion is that the oral evaluation instrument used in this study could be implemented to give oral production tests at the ITESM. Professors could use it as it is or adapt it to consider it as an option for the monthly oral evaluations.

As a final suggestion the author considers that if a language lab is not feasible, tape-recording activities would be helpful in promoting student oral practice and professors can devise ways of giving these activities the best use.

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## Appendices

## Appendix A Course Program

### INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO Y DE ESTUDIOS SUPERIORES DE MONTERREY

Departamento de Humanidades  
INGLÉS REMEDIAL IV (HI-804)  
EQUIVALENCIA INGLÉS III PLAN 90

#### PROGRAMA PARA VERANO DE 1997

##### SEMESTRE EN QUE SE DEBERÁ TOMAR ESTE CURSO:

Este curso puede ser el penúltimo o el último curso de inglés remedial, según el puntaje del alumno en su examen final TOEFL.

##### PRERREQUISITO PARA ESTE CURSO:

Se requiere que el alumno haya aprobado el Inglés Remedial III u obtenido un puntaje entre 443 y 467 en el examen TOEFL.

##### PROGRAMA SINTÉTICO

Este curso parte de los conocimientos adquiridos en Remedial III y continúa con el enfoque holístico en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje. Habilita al alumno en el manejo del discurso oral y escrito, a la vez que incrementa su comprensión auditiva y de lectura. La metodología se centra en el alumno para fomentar un compromiso con su propio desarrollo integral. Además lo ayuda a desarrollar habilidades de pensamiento crítico tales como clasificar, seguir una secuencia, inferir y llegar a conclusiones.

##### PROGRAMA ANALÍTICO

###### Objetivo General:

Al término de este curso el estudiante podrá comunicarse en inglés en situaciones reales de la vida cotidiana relacionadas con el trabajo y la vida personal y social. Habrá incrementado su capacidad lingüística del idioma inglés mediante la práctica de las cuatro habilidades (producción y comprensión oral y escrita). Finalmente, el alumno podrá aplicar estrategias de aprendizaje en situaciones nuevas recurriendo a los esquemas de pensamiento crítico que ha adquirido.

###### Objetivos Específicos del Aprendizaje :

Al terminar el curso el alumno será capaz de:

1. Utilizar los siguientes tiempos de los verbos: presente simple, presente progresivo, presente perfecto, presente perfecto progresivo, el pasado simple, pasado progresivo, pasado perfecto y pasado perfecto progresivo, y el condicional.
2. Manejar la voz pasiva en presente y pasado.
3. Usar gerundios, pronombres, cláusulas relativas
4. Manejar modales y verbos de dos y de tres palabras.
5. Expresarse mediante el discurso indirecto.
6. Comprender y aplicar las estructuras y funciones del lenguaje en redacciones, lecturas y exposiciones orales a un nivel intermedio.

7. Expresarse con un lenguaje y vocabulario académico y formal.
8. Lograr una pronunciación y entonación correcta en la conversación.
9. Obtener un puntaje entre 470- 517 en el TOEFL.

#### CONTENIDO:

- I. Estrategias de aprendizaje de idiomas
- II. El crimen y el misterio
- III. El papel de la autoridad en la sociedad
- IV. La inteligencia y su medición
- V. La personalidad
- VI. Las fantasías y las preferencias
- VII. El sentido de humor y los chistes
- VIII. Procesos desconocidos
- IX. Reparación de la casa
- X. Los misterios de la ciencia
- XI. La falta de prevención y sus consecuencias
- XII. Mejorando este mundo

#### ACTIVIDADES ADICIONALES DE APRENDIZAJE

1. Trabajo en equipo, pares o grupos pequeños
2. Ejercicios de comprensión auditiva (grabaciones, diálogos, comentarios y reseñas de radio, etc..)
3. Redacción de listas, encuestas, resúmenes, párrafos, y ensayos.
4. Diálogos, discusiones y debates sobre valores, diferencias culturales y temas de actualidad
5. Proyección de videos y películas
6. Representaciones, escenificaciones y dramatizaciones
7. Reportes de artículos y/o libros en inglés
8. Presentaciones orales, demostraciones de proceso, discursos persuasivos

Actividades que promueven el desarrollo de habilidades:

1. Clasificar y generalizar mediante encuestas y gráficas.
2. Reconocer ideas principales, tendencias y conclusiones
3. Inferir el significado de palabras por el contexto.
5. Hacer conjeturas y predecir consecuencias.
6. Evaluar y tomar decisiones mediante el estudio de casos y ejemplos.
7. Analizar, ordenar y enlistar.
8. Formular estrategias para resolver problemas.
9. Elaborar síntesis y resúmenes.

#### TIEMPO ESTIMADO POR TEMA

Introducción 1 hora.

Unidades 1 a 12: 6 horas por unidad. 3 unidades por mes.

Repaso 2 horas

Total 80 horas al semestre.

#### EVALUACIÓN DEL CURSO:

Se evaluará el progreso de los estudiantes con tres exámenes parciales y el TOEFL como examen final.

La calificación de los tres exámenes parciales estará integrada por los resultados obtenidos en los siguientes parámetros:

1. Gramática 40%
2. Producción Oral 20%
3. Comprensión Auditiva 10%
4. Comprensión de lectura 10%
5. Escritura 10%
6. Tarea y/o participación 10%

B. La calificación final del curso estará integrada por los siguientes parámetros:

1. Las calificaciones globales correspondientes a los tres parciales-60 %
2. La calificación global del examen final (TOEFL) - 40 %

C. La calificación aprobatoria mínima es de 70

1. El alumno que obtenga una calificación de 70 o más con un puntaje en el examen final TOEFL inferior a 470 puntos pasa a Inglés Remedial V.
2. El alumno que obtenga una calificación de 70 o más con un puntaje en el examen final TOEFL de 470 puntos o más pasa a Inglés Avanzado A.

#### ASISTENCIA

El margen establecido de faltas es de 10; quien sobrepase este límite no tendrá derecho a examen final.

#### LIBROS DE TEXTO:

Purpura, James E. and Diane Pinkley. On Target 2.

Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1992.

Purpura, James E. and Diane Pinkley. On Target 2 Workbook

Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1992.

#### LIBROS DE CONSULTA:

Briggs, Sandra J. Grammar: Strategies and Practice, Intermediate. Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1994.

Diccionario moderno español-inglés, inglés-español, Larousse.

New York: Ediciones Larousse, última edición.

## Appendix B Instrument for Background Data Collection

### QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE. IF YOU HAVE ANY DOUBTS ABOUT THE QUESTIONS, PLEASE ASK ME.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

- How old were you when you began to study English? \_\_\_\_\_
- Where did you learn English before studying it at the ITESM? Mark more than one option if it is your case.  
 Bilingual institution                       English classes in an academy  
 Private lessons                               English classes in high school  
 Courses in an English-speaking country (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other(s) (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you like to study English? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ WHY? \_\_\_\_\_
- Which is the most difficult aspect for you in learning English? Please indicate with the number 1 for the most difficult selection, the number 2 for the second most difficult and so on.  
 PRONUNCIATION                       GRAMMAR  
 SPEAKING                               SPELLING  
 READING COMPREHENSION       LISTENING COMPREHENSION  
 WRITING                               OTHER  
(please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you practice English outside of class (not counting homework assignments)? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
If your answer is YES, please go on to questions 6 and 7. If your answer is NO,  
Please explain why and hand in your questionnaire. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Which form of outside activities do you practice?  
 **Watching videos in English:**       with subtitles                       without subtitles  
 **Watching cable television**       with close caption                       without close caption  
 Learning songs  
 Corresponding with English-speaking people  
 Reading (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other(s) (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- How much time do you dedicate to outside English practice?  
 one or two hours a week                       three or four hours a week  
 five hours a week                               more than five hours a week

## Appendix C.1 First Monthly Exam

INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO Y DE ESTUDIOS SUPERIORES DE MONTERREY  
DEPARTAMENTO DE HUMANIDADES  
REMEDIAL IV ON TARGET 2

FIRST MONTHLY EXAM (UNITS 1-3)

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS EXAM

### I. FIND THE ONE UNDERLINED ERROR IN EACH SENTENCE AND WRITE IT ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET.

1. The boss told to his secretary not to arrive late because he had an important meeting.  
a b c d
2. Do you think Joe's teacher must know something about the missing papers?  
a b c d
3. I let my sister to borrow my new dress and she still hasn't returned it!  
a b c d
4. I help Larry do his English homework last night and I persuaded him to study harder.  
a b c d
5. The encouragement the teacher gave his students made them gain confidence in written.  
a b c d

### II. CHOOSE THE OPTION THAT BEST COMPLETES EACH SENTENCE, AND WRITE IT ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET.

6. Miss Jordan \_\_\_\_\_ be the accomplice in the robbery! She's such a sweet lady.  
a) must b) could c) can't d) might
7. The principal \_\_\_\_\_ to make the new schedules.  
a) have already begun c) still hasn't begun  
b) hasn't still begun d) has already begun
8. \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ music lessons?  
a) Have....still taken c) Have...ever took  
b) Has....ever taken d) Have...ever taken
9. I \_\_\_\_\_ all my books for this semester.  
a) already have gotten c) haven't still gotten  
b) 've already gotten d) 've gotten already
10. The language teachers \_\_\_\_\_ the new programs \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) haven't done...still c) haven't done,yet  
b) have done...already d) haven't did...yet

### III. COMPLETE EACH SENTENCE WITH THE CORRECT WORD FROM THE LIST. USE THE CORRECT FORM OF THE VERB WHEN NECESSARY. WRITE THE WORD ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET.

shot/ sit through/ scar/ at large/ come up / gain ground/ get along/ widow/ fiancé/  
across/ brag/ take advantage of/ allowed.

1. If you buy a Sony television now, you can \_\_\_\_\_ our special offer and save money.
2. Kathy always \_\_\_\_\_ about all the jewelry and clothes she buys.
3. I just heard the \_\_\_\_\_, but I didn't see anything.
4. He left a lot of money to his \_\_\_\_\_, who was married to him for fifteen years.
5. Mary \_\_\_\_\_ with her mother-in-law, who is very nice and considerate.
6. The Celtics are \_\_\_\_\_ this season. They haven't lost a game.
7. I \_\_\_\_\_ with a wonderful idea for my oral production evaluation last semester.
8. Foreign language students always try to get their ideas \_\_\_\_\_ clearly.
9. You can recognize the suspect by the \_\_\_\_\_ he has on his cheek.
10. Students are not \_\_\_\_\_ to smoke in the classroom.

**IV. COMPLETE EACH SENTENCE WITH ALREADY, STILL OR YET. (WRITE THE WORD ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET)**

1. Karen \_\_\_\_\_ hasn't answered my letter.
2. I can't believe you have \_\_\_\_\_ finished the report! You must be very happy.
3. Joey hasn't handed in his math homework \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I've \_\_\_\_\_ cleaned my room, but I haven't done my homework \_\_\_\_\_.
5. My room isn't clean enough for my mom. She thinks I \_\_\_\_\_ haven't cleaned it.

**V. WRITE A SENTENCE USING AN APPROPRIATE MODAL, MAY/ MIGHT/ COULD or MUST ACCORDING TO THE SITUATIONS GIVEN. (Write the sentences on your answer sheet)**

Example: That man's wife is having a baby.

He must be nervous.

1. Henry isn't really following his boss's instructions at work.
2. Mr. Kelly's flight leaves at 8:00 A.M., but it's raining really hard.
3. My cousin Katherine is getting married next week.

**VI. MATCH EACH SENTENCE WITH THE MOST APPROPRIATE COMPLETION. (Write the corresponding letter on your answer sheet)**

- |                                      |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Shelly looks thin but healthy.    | a) go camping last summer.            |
| 2. Bosses want their employees       | b) eaten Chinese food?                |
| 3. John's stuck in traffic so        | c) speak Spanish in class.            |
| 4. The judge will expect the witness | d) to work efficiently                |
| 5. Has Janet ever                    | e) to return the books promptly.      |
| 6. Bill didn't encourage his son to  | f) he must miss the plane.            |
| 7. Mike hasn't taken                 | g) do this homework assignment.       |
| 8. Our teacher doesn't let us        | h) he may not have time to eat lunch. |
| 9. The librarian asked us            | i) his medicine yet.                  |
| 10. Bob's so busy that               | j) She must be doing aerobics.        |
| 11. Please help me                   | k) ate lobster?                       |
|                                      | l) he could miss his plane.           |
|                                      | m) to tell the truth.                 |

**VII. GRAMMAR. COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET.**

1. The present perfect tense is formed with the auxiliary \_\_\_ or \_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Modal auxiliaries are followed by \_\_\_\_\_.

INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO Y DE ESTUDIOS SUPERIORES DE MONTERREY  
REMEDIAL IV FIRST MONTHLY LISTENING EXAM (ON TARGET 2)  
EXAM A

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

A group of students are talking about their plans for the future.  
Read each statement and answer **true** or **false**.

1. Ken would like to be a biology teacher. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Ruth won't need a scholarship for attending college. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Law school is expensive, so Ruth needs all the money she can get. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Ruth's dream is to become a lawyer. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Albert's dream is to become an artist. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Albert is a great basketball player. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Albert is strong and sensitive. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Mario will be a cook in his father's French restaurant. \_\_\_\_\_
9. June wants to pilot planes and helicopters. \_\_\_\_\_
10. June's uncle might give her a job at the airport. \_\_\_\_\_

READING COMPREHENSION EXAM,

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ EXAM A

WRITE TRUE OR FALSE.

1. \_\_\_\_ The crew of the *Marie Celeste* robbed the food and water.
2. \_\_\_\_ Nothing was missing from the *Marie Celeste* except a lifeboat.
3. \_\_\_\_ Investigators thought that the crew of the *Marie Celeste* might have killed the captain.
4. \_\_\_\_ The mystery of the *Marie Celeste* occurred in the summer.
5. \_\_\_\_ The captain of the *Dei Gratia* and six of his crew boarded the *Marie Celeste*.
6. \_\_\_\_ The *Marie Celeste* Crew may have escaped in a lifeboat.
7. \_\_\_\_ The official investigation answered a lot of questions.
8. \_\_\_\_ A sea monster killed everyone on board.
9. \_\_\_\_ The *Dei Gratia* was in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.
10. \_\_\_\_ The captain of the *Marie Celeste* finished his dinner.



## The Mystery of the *Marie Celeste*

In December 1872, a ship called the *Dei Gratia* was in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, sailing from the United States to Europe, when the captain noticed another ship on the horizon. As he sailed closer, he became puzzled because the ship appeared to be out of control. He saw that the ship's name was the *Marie Celeste*.

The captain decided to sail alongside the *Marie Celeste* to see if its crew needed help. He tried signaling the ship, but there was no response. So the captain and three of his crew boarded the silent ship. They were amazed to find that it was empty—there was no one on board, and the ship was sailing by itself.

They searched the ship to try to solve the mystery and found several very strange things. The *Marie Celeste* had lots of food and water aboard, and there was even a half-eaten meal on the captain's table. It looked as if the captain might have been interrupted in the middle of his dinner. However, nothing on the ship was out of place, and the only thing that was missing was a lifeboat.

Over the past century, several theories have been suggested to try to explain the mystery, but no one is really sure what happened to the crew of the *Marie Celeste*. The captain of the *Dei Gratia* thought that the crew may have killed the captain.

An official investigation at the time also reported that the most likely explanation was that the crew had killed the captain and escaped in a lifeboat to another ship. But the investigation left a lot of unanswered questions. What ship did they escape to? Where did they sail? Why was there no sign of a fight on board?

There have been other theories, although some of them are very difficult to believe. It has even been suggested, for instance, that some kind of sea monster, such as a giant octopus, may have attacked the ship. However, no one knows for sure what really happened; it is still a mystery no one has been able to solve.

Appendix C.2 Results of the first monthly exam

<b>Control Group</b>	<b>Experimental Group</b>
99	97
98	96
97	95
97	94
96	94
95	94
95	94
94	93
92	93
92	92
91	92
91	92
90	91
90	91
90	91
88	90
88	90
88	90
87	90
87	90
87	89
86	89
84	88
81	86
80	86
79	83
79	83
73	83
70	82
63	81
	80
	75
<b>87.57</b>	<b>89.19</b>

## Appendix D.1 Students' tapes transcripts

### Team One

- Margot: Hi girls. How are you?
- Zarai: Fine, thank you and you?
- Margot: Fine.
- Montserrat: How are you
- Margot: Fine Montse. That's a nice T-shirt. Where did you buy it?
- Zarai: I bought it in, I bought it in...at Plaza Fiesta yesterday.
- Montserrat: In what store?
- Zarai: In Zara
- Montserrat: Yes, Zarai, yes.
- Margot: That's nice. That's a very expensive store.
- Montserrat: And big.
- Margot: Yes?
- Montserrat: Yes.
- Zarai: I like all the clothes of that store.
- Margot: That's a nice place to buy everything you want. I don't know who told me about that.
- Zarai: My sister,...my sister bought a pair of shoes.
- Montserrat: Yes? Me too.
- Zarai: Yes. I are a black shoes. Maybe are the same.
- Montserrat: Yes maybe.
- Margot: I bought a coffee shoes just last week because I don't have any pair of shoes, just tennis.
- Zarai: That's good.
- Montserrat: and
- Zarai: Yes. Where?

Margot: In the “Eres” stores. “Eres”, “Eres” that’s the name of the store.

Montserrat: I had never seen that store. There they have a lot of styles and they are good. Hey! Yes. I will go to this store this weekend. Do you want to go with me?

Margot: Yes, of course. I need a black pair of shoes.

Montserrat: One more? (laughter).

Margot: Montse, no I...

Zarai: She bought brown shoes.

Montserrat: Ah, brown.

Zarai: She needs black. What are you going to wear in the end of the Symposium?

Montserrat: I don’t know. Do you know?

Zarai: No, maybe I will go to Vogue to buy a dress.

Montserrat: A dress. Yes? It’s formal?

Zarai: Yes.

Margot: No. I have my dress of my graduation and my mother told me that time that if I want to graduate me, she wasn’t going to buy me an expensive dress, just if I wear it again, and she’s going to send me my yellow dress from my graduation, because it was yellow.

Montserrat: Yes, I saw your dress and it’s a beautiful dress.

Margot: Yes. Do you like it? Ah, thanks.

Zarai: Yes I saw it too in a photograph.

Margot: Yes, there it is (seems to show photograph to friends).

Zarai: There you are with your mother and your brother.

Margot: Yes, my little brother. My mother is a very elegant woman...

Montserrat and . . .

Zarai: Yes?

Margot: ...and I am the opposite of her because I like to wear just T-shirts and jeans or pants. I don't know, I like to be most, more comfortable.

Zarai: Yes, I also like to wear jeans, but I also like the pants of...

Margot: Formal, kind of?

Zarai: Formal, yes.

Margot: To wear formally.

Montserrat: My mother always wears dresses and she's only...she always is hungry.

Margot: (Laughter), Hungry? Angry? My mother too.

Montserrat: Yes, angry. Because my sister and I always use a jeans and like you and... jeans and...

Margot: ...and T-shirts

Montserrat: Yes, and tennis.

Zarai: I don't have T-shirts.

Montserrat: No?

Zarai: No.

Montserrat: Yes, I have many because...

Margot: Me too.

Montserrat: ...my sister and I...

Margot: Use?

Montserrat: Yes, and in all the competitions that we went, we bought a T-shirt of the competition.

Margot: Or the places you go.

Montserrat: Yes. We have many clothes. No, no, no. (as exclamation)

Zarai: T-shirts?

Montserrat: Yes, many t- shirts.

## Appendix D.2 Students' tapes transcripts

### Team Two

Gaby: Hello. We have chosen the topic of children abuse to make everyone aware of the suffering and trauma inflicted on children.

Author's note: This team started with the topic selection and proceeded to read definitions and other related information about their topic.

However, they began to speak freely about their topic after a few minutes of reading warm-up.

Laura: In the following few minute, my partners and I ...let's talk...let's talking about this problem, which is very inhuman in a... in a...in our society.

Gaby: I want to tell you something I have known about children whose parents send them to the streets to sell candies, wash cars or to ask for charity. They need to collect a specific and if they don't take this money, they receive their parents beat them, but I never had heard from these victims themselves. Here at Tec. (ITESM) there's a child named Panchito. He's 10 years old. He goes to the gym every day and he plays with the volleyball balls. One day I began to talk with him and I asked Panchito if his parents don't say something because he goes home late. He said no but had to take 40 pesos home daily. If he didn't, his parents would hit him in hands and legs with a belt. One day he didn't collect the money and when he arrived home, they hit him and didn't allow him to sleep at home, so he continued asking for charity all night

but couldn't get all the money and in the morning they beat him again.

When I was talking to Panchito I noticed he was very worried because he didn't have any money and when he got home his parents were going to beat him again. My boyfriend, after listening to him, give him 20 pesos and Panchito took them gratefully and run off.

Annie: Oh, this is so terrible. I know that there are many children like Panchito that are living on the streets, asking for money and food from the people and this is so terrible because many people don't give them food or money because they believe they are lying, that they use the money for drugs or alcohol.

Laura: This problem don't surprise me. I think that nowadays we have a lot of children in the street. This problem each day is more big and people don't see this as a real problem. We only see the children in the streets and I think that every day we are more insecure and we don't want to give me money...give them money because we think they use this money only for their parents and their parents use them for bad things. Last week I had a talk with my mother about this problem because I saw that many parents have a lot of children that they knew they didn't, they can't give them the things they need from...for live and I ask myself why the people don't have the...the education for don't have many children if they can't maintain them.

Gaby: I think that all abuse are inhuman, but the most cruel is the abuse sexual.

Laura: Sexual abuse.

Gaby: Yes, sexual abuse, because this abuse produces a trauma during all his life.

Annie: I remember when I was in third grade of secondary, I had made a homework of this subject , child abuse and I had found many pictures and many information about this subject and the pictures were so terrible and I was so surprised and this problem really interested me and I would like to help the children that...that are abused or maltreated. When I had to do that work I had found in a book some information like this and I had read theories about...(reads theory from book).

Laura: When I was in high school I did my community service one year in a species of orphan and I tried with little boys and girls for a\_poor class. The most part of the children that are maltreated are the girls. The parents often hit them and they came to the school very maltreated of their bodies and the impressional thing was that they saw this with a thing very natural. They feel good and they don't say anything to their teachers. I have read in a book that child maltreatment has many dimensions. It is against the law in every state. (proceeded to read from a book).



### Appendix D.3 Students' tapes transcripts

#### Team Three

All three: Hi teacher.

Martha: We are Martha,

Eddy: Eddy and...

Siller: Siller.

Eddy: And we are going to talk about drunk driving...

Siller: ...and other things. Let's start.

Eddy: Hi guys. How are you?

Siller: Fine thanks and you?

Eddy: Me too, fine. And have you heard about drunk drivers?

Martha: Yes, I have.

Eddy: What have you heard about it?

Siller: I have heard a lot of things about drunk drivers. I had a friend that he went to the disco and he was very drunk and he went out of the disco and he started to drive to her...to his house, then he hitted to a wall and he died.

Eddy: Ah, sorry guy.

Martha: I think that the people who drink a lot they don't love...love...  
how do you say...

Eddy: Themselves?

Martha: Yes, themselves.

Eddy: Yeah, I think that too, because if you drink and drive this is not (crash) good for people because you can hit and die how...like Siller says.

Martha: My parents are doctors and every day they tell me what happen in the hospital...

Siller: ...for the drunk drivers?

Martha: Yes, the drunk drivers.  
Siller: A lot of the high percentage of the accidents are because the drivers are drunk, very drunk.  
Martha: I will talk about an accident that...that ...  
Eddy: happened?  
Martha: ...happened in high school when  
Eddy: Your high school?  
Martha: When I was here...when I was there.  
Eddy: Where, where? In Veracruz?  
Martha: Yes, Veracruz. A day, all my...my  
Eddy: Group?  
Martha: ...my group went to the disco and went to a party after that.  
Siller: What happened?  
Martha: Two persons, a friend and, no two friends, ah...  
Eddy: Leave? Left?  
Martha: ...left the place and he was drunk. He was driving and...how do you say "chocar"?  
Eddy: Hit. (could've used dictionary, but felt free)  
Martha: ...and he hit...  
Siller: Hit what? A wall?  
Eddy: His car?  
Martha: Yes, he hit his car and the car was...How do you say "vueltas"?  
Eddy: Ah, turned around and turned around.  
Martha: Yes, turn around and he...she died.  
Eddy: She died!  
Martha: Yes and...  
Siller: And then what?

Martha: ...and he, he, he left the

Siller: She or he?

Martha: He, he, he left, he left the city because her parents want...How do you say "lo querían meter"?

Eddy: Get him to the jail.

Martha: Yes, get him to the jail.

Siller: To the jail! Wow!

Martha: He was for two months far away.

Eddy: That was the reason to...he leave...left the city?

Martha: Yes.

Eddy: How old was he?

Martha: 19

Eddy: 19 years old?

Martha: Yes.

Siller: Where was she from?

Martha: From Veracruz.

Siller: That's too bad.

Martha: It was a tragedy and... that's all.

Siller: I think a lot of the fault is from the parents because they don't give a very good education to his childs and he takes the things very very light, very light form and they don't appreciate the life.

Eddie: Yes, I think that too because I think that a good education begins in your parents, in your school, with your teachers, also your friends because the influence is very hard with...to...from your friends and if you...if you go with your friends to a bar and your friends drinks a lot maybe you are...you will have a problem later.

Martha: Do you drinks when you go out?

Siller: I drink a little, but, but

Martha: (laughter) I don't think that you drink a little.

Siller: Yes, but when I drink I think in a lot of things that have happened. I see that we have a designed (for designated) driver, because if I don't have a designed driver, I better don't go.

Martha: And you? (asks Eddy)

Eddy: No, I don't drink, because I don't like it and...

Siller: That's good.

Eddy: ...but always I go to a party to back home to my friends, so they invite me a lot to the parties.

Martha: I don't drink too.

Eddy: Why?

Martha: Because I don't like it, I...

Siller: Yeah, and I believe you.

Martha: I don't like the flavor. Let's change the topic.

The team continued talking about a different topic.

## Appendix E Students' Written Dialogues, First Draft

Margot  
Montserrat  
Zarai

O: Hi, How are you?

A: Hi Montse, I'm fine and you Zarai?

Z: I'm fine. I was waiting for you

O: Did you buy your computer?

A: Not yet because my father told me to wait two weeks so that i <sup>could</sup> look for a good one.

Z: Do you know who invented the computers?

O: I don't have any idea

A: Tell us what ~~do~~ you know?

Z: Well, the computers were invented by Charles Babbage. He was an excentric genius known by people because of his fights against the street musicians.

O: My grandfather said that he also invented the masterkey and the speedometer.

A: Why did he invent ~~ed~~ the computers?

Z: He invented the computers in order to facilitate the elaboration of table of contents because it was really frustrating.

O: Yes, and it was very easy to ~~do~~ a mistake.

A: I know that the computers are in continuous evolution. Now they are smaller, faster, cheaper and more <sup>reliable</sup> ~~confiable~~.

Z: Imagine what would happen if the computers didn't exist.

O: If the computer didn't exist we wouldn't do our <sup>2. no sh</sup> folder homework.

A: The companies couldn't organize <sup>their</sup> his files. We couldn't take money <sup>from</sup> of the automatic cashier and <sup>other</sup> many things.

Z: We couldn't read the newspaper, know the weather <sup>forecast</sup> ~~prognostic~~ and the car <sup>wouldn't</sup> doesn't work. The planes wouldn't fly.

O: The computers continue being risky because if the central computer of any net <sup>breaks</sup> broke down, all the system will ~~fault~~ <sup>fail</sup>.

A: But now, our ~~lives~~ <sup>they</sup> with the computers are easier because ~~it~~ <sup>they</sup> helps us ~~to~~ do our work.

Z: Sometimes, they do everything and with the programs that exist today, everyone can use a computer, even a child.

O: With the internet we can travel in the <sup>cybernetic</sup> ~~cibernetic~~ world and be <sup>informed</sup> informed about the news in the world.

A: This net was created in order to facilitate our search of different information about any subject.

Z: The ~~first~~ <sup>1st</sup> net was used by the U.S.A military <sup>dept.</sup> then this technology was expanded to all this country thanks to four big univesities like UCLA, Sta. Barbara University, Harvard and <sup>an</sup> other one that I can't remember.

O: Now, everyone use<sup>s</sup> internet, even the companies or students, or anyone at home can use it.

A: Yes, we can communicate with people around the world, start a conversation or a friendship.

Z: I want to buy a laptop because you can use it everywhere.

O: And if it <sup>breaks</sup> ~~descomposed~~ you <sup>can</sup> would get a technician to fix it.

A: Yes, but if it <sup>isn't</sup> ~~wasn't~~ a big problem you <sup>can</sup> would have my brother repair it.

Z: Ok, thanks but i have to leave you.

O: Ok. bye

A: Bye.

ITESM  
Martha Guaali Caloca Parra 765885  
José Manuel Siller Benita 633872  
Eduardo Alejandro Suárez Fresnillo 766543  
English Remedial IV  
Teacher Irma Martínez

“ABORTION”

M- We are going to talk about *abortion*, a controvertial topic.

S- I know that 30 million women have abortion every year in USA.

E- Also, I know that one hundred fetuses do not survive pregnancy. The worst part of this<sup>is</sup> that the majority of the pregnancies are terminated in abortion rather than miscarriage.

M- Many of the women have criminal doctors perform the abortion, even worse many ~~of~~ women get people without medical studies to do it. Unfortunately they might even perform the abortion themselves.

S- I think the women that do this are afraid and worried.

M- In <sup>these</sup> cases the abortions are done in dirty places without security.

S- Many poor women die because they can not afford to pay doctors.

E- Education is the principal factor. Many persons don't have it, because they don't know contraceptive methods so that child<sup>born</sup> without women want them.

M- I know that some reasons that cause the abortion are: Old age, ~~too young~~ persons, <sup>who are</sup> many members in the family, <sup>rejection of the</sup> don't exist an illegitimate son, <sup>child</sup> the ~~cause of~~ <sup>child</sup> ~~find on~~ <sup>child</sup> infidelity and others.

S- Many years ago, to avoid a pregnancy, ~~non want~~ <sup>an unwanted</sup> it, women introduced sharp objects in their uterus. Nowadays the methods are not different between past methods and present ~~methods~~ <sup>methods</sup>, crochet hook, solutions from soaps and hangers are introduced in some women.

E- In an old code I read that a Jew<sup>she</sup> said that if any woman aborted they would be judge<sup>convict</sup> and killed <sup>with</sup> by a stick.

S- My point of view is that God give<sup>right</sup> you ~~the~~ life and he take it too, and nobody <sup>has</sup> ~~have~~ the right to take away ~~the~~ life.

E- I don't agree with you. I think if women do not want to have the baby they get their fetuses exterminated, when the babies come from a rape.

*especially*

M- Did you say that women have a person who <sup>can</sup> kill the baby if they don't want him?

E- No, I didn't say that, just if it is a rape.

M- My opinion is that when an abortion is realized, people forget that the thing that the woman has in her womb is not a simple thing, since that moment <sup>is</sup> a human being.

S- I think that many women abort the fetuse in order to <sup>stop</sup> leave the problem.

E- My mom told me that she saw a fetuse <sup>that</sup> who was aborted.

S- I heard how people realize an abortion.

M- Really! I know that the Doctor ~~got~~ the head of the baby ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> destroy with a big nipper so that the body of the baby <sup>came</sup> come out in pieces.

E- I don't believe you.

S- Yes, I <sup>watched</sup> wath a video where the baby's body is <sup>broken</sup> broken and my old sister asked me if the mother could have feelings.

E- We can not believe that some mothers are getting Doctors to perform ~~the~~ abortions.

S- We hope that this topic <sup>is</sup> be considerate by all of you.  
<sup>seriously</sup> considered

*bibliography*



## Appendix F Students' Corrected Written Dialogues

Margot  
Montserrat  
Zarai

O: Hi, How are you?

A: Hi Montse, I'm fine and you Zarai?

Z: I'm fine. I was waiting for you

O: Did you buy your computer?

R A: Not yet because my father told me to wait two weeks so that I could look for a good one.

Z: Do you know who invented the computers?

O: I don't have any idea

A: Tell us what you know?

Z: Well, the computers were invented by Charles Babbage. He was an excentric genius known by people because of his fights against the street musicians.

R O: My grandfather said that he also invented the masterkey and the speedometer.

A: Why did he invent the computers?

Z: He invented the computers <sup>structure</sup> in order to facilitate the elaboration of table of contents because it was really frustrating.

O: Yes, and it was very easy to make a mistake.

A: I know that the computers are in continuous evolution. Now they are smaller, faster, cheaper and more reliable.

Z: Imagine what would happen if the computers didn't exist.

O: If the computer didn't exist we wouldn't do our folder homework.

A: The companies couldn't organize their files. We couldn't take money from the automatic cashier and many other things.

Z: We couldn't read the newspaper, know the weather forecast and our cars wouldn't work. The planes wouldn't fly.

O: The computers continue being risky because if the central computer of any net breaks down, all the system will fail.

A: But now, our lives with the computers are easier because they help us do our work.

Z: Sometimes, they do everything and with the programs that exist today, everyone can use a computer, even a child.

O: With the internet we can travel in the cibernetic world and be informed about the news in the world.

A: This net was created in order to facilitate our search of different information about any subject.

Z: The first net was used by the U.S.A military department, then this technology was expanded to all this country thanks to four big univesities like UCLA, Sta. Barbara University, Harvard and another one that I can't remember.

O: Now, everyone uses internet, even the companies or students, or anyone at home can use it.

A: Yes, we can communicate with people around the world, start a conversation or a friendship.

Z: I want to buy a laptop because you can use it everywhere.

O: And if it breaks you can get a technician to fix it.

A: Yes, but if it isn't a big problem you can have my brother <sup>Jo</sup> repair it.

Z: Ok, thanks but I have to leave you.

O: Ok. bye

A: Bye.

FROM BOOK: COMPUTACION & INFORMATICA HOY

## ABORTION

M- We are going to talk about *abortion*, a controvertial topic.

S- I know that 30 million women have abortions every year in USA.

E- Also, I know that one hundred fetuses do not survive pregnancy. The worst part of this is that the majority of the pregnancies are terminated in abortion rather than miscarriage.

M- Many of the women have criminal doctors perform the abortion, even worse many women get people without medical studies to do it. Unfortunately they might even perform the abortion themselves.

S- I think the women that do this are afraid and worried.

M- In these cases the abortions are done in dirty places without security.

S- Many poor women die because they can not afford to pay doctors.

E- Education is the principal factor. Many persons don't have it, because they don't know *about* contraceptive methods so ~~that~~ children are born without women wanting them.

M- I know that some reasons that cause the abortion are: Old age, persons who are too young, many members in the family, rejection of the existance of an illegitimate child, fear of infidelity and others.

S- Many years ago to avoid an unwanted pregnancy, women introduced sharp objects in their uterus. Nowadays the methods are not different between past methods and present methods, crochet hooks, solutions from soaps and hangers are introduced in some women.

E- In an old code I read that a Jew said that if any woman aborted she would be judged, convicted and killed with a stick. *reported*

S- My point of view is that God gives you life and he takes it too, and nobody has the right to take away life.

E- I don't agree with you. I think that if women do not want to have the baby they can get their fetuses exterminated, especially when the babies come from a rape.

M- Did you say that women have a person who can kill the baby if they don't want him?

E- No, I didn't say that, just if it is a rape.

M- My opinion is that when an abortion is realized, people forget that the thing that the woman has in her womb is not a simple thing, since that moment it is a human being.

S- I think that many women abort the fetus in order to stop the problem.

*R* E- My mom told me that she saw a fetuse that was aborted.

S- I heard how people realize an abortion.

*causativa* M- Really! I know that the Doctor got the head of the baby destroyed with a big nipper so that the baby's body came out in pieces.

E- I don't believe you.

S- Yes, I saw a video where the baby's body is broken and my older sister asked me if the mother could have feelings. *RS*

*causativa* E- We can not believe that some mothers are getting Doctors to perform abortions.

M- We hope that this topic is seriously considered by all of you.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

MARTÍNEZ, José J. Aborto, un paso hacia la muerte.  
Editorial Universal, 1994.

## Appendix G.1 Evaluation Instruments for Individual Oral Presentations

### GRAMMAR ANALYSIS SHEET

Each of the questions should be answered using the grammatical structure mentioned in the question. The student's first response should contain this structure. In sentences 1. and 2., other options are included to elicit complete affirmative responses in the required tense.

- 1) Have you ever gone to a concert (a movie, the theater)? Present perfect tense
- 2) Have you ever eaten Chinese food (Italian, Japanese, etc.)? Present perfect tense
- 3) If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go? Why? Second conditional
- 4) What music do you enjoy listening to? Why? Verbs followed by gerunds
- 5) If you were a famous historical personality, who would you be? Why? Second conditional
- 6) How long had you been thinking about studying at the ITESM before you enrolled here? Past perfect progressive tense
- 7) Who do you think might (may, could) win Oscars for best actor and best actress in the next Academy Awards ceremony? Modals might, may or could
- 8) What do bosses expect their employees to do? Verbs + two complements
- 9) When you were a child, what didn't your parents allow you to do? Why? Verbs + two complements
- 10) Mention something you can't help doing.
- 11) How often do you have your hair cut? Where? Causative have
- 12) Why do people normally take vacations? Purpose clause
- 13) Where was the first heart transplant performed? Who was it performed by? Passive voice
- 14) What information has your teacher given you about the TOEFL exam? Reported speech

## Appendix G.2 Evaluation Instruments for Individual Oral Presentations

### Guidelines for Oral Evaluation

#### Thesis Project

#### **ANSWERS: (Grammar)**

For each question that is asked, there is a specific grammatical structure that should be elicited. Three sentences are required in the student's response. The first response should be in accordance with the question; therefore, the student should have a **R** for a right answer or a **W** for a wrong answer. The following two required sentences that the student needs to produce should help us assess overall oral production.

The **QR** refers to the number of times a question needs to be repeated in order to be understood by the student. A "1" is placed in the corresponding place if the question was repeated once a "2" if it was repeated a second time and so on. It is hoped that questions will not have to be repeated more than twice.

#### **ORAL PRODUCTION (fluency, vocabulary and pronunciation)**

Oral production is measured by the level of intelligibility of a speaker's utterances. The scores will be assigned as follows:

- 4: A student whose production (pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax) is very clear and who manages to express him or herself with a minimum of production errors.
- 3: A student who expresses him or herself correctly most of the time but occasionally has slight errors that do not interfere with listener's comprehension.
- 2: A student whose oral production interferes with listener's comprehension, but manages to convey his or her idea.
- 1: A student whose oral production is so poor that it interferes completely with listener's comprehension.

#### **SENTENCES**

- 3(+): Refers to the minimum amount of sentences required in an answer. The first sentence should be in accordance to the grammatical structure used in the question, and the other two provide additional utterances that will serve to assess overall oral production.
- 3: Occasions in which the student is not able to give the required three sentences in a response.

Appendix G.3 Evaluation Instruments for Individual Oral Presentations

**EVALUATION FORM**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

	I. ANSWERS				II. ORAL PRODUCTION				III. SENTENCES	
	<u>R</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>WS</u>	<u>QR</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3(+)</u>	<u>-3</u>
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Codes:** **R:** Right    **W:** Wrong    **WS:** Without required grammatical structure

**QR:** question repetition

**3(+)** Three or more sentences in response

**-3:** Less than three sentences

Please review **Guidelines for Oral Evaluation**

**EVALUATOR:**

**COMMENTS:**

Appendix H Survey Instrument for Student Appraisal

QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions:

1. Which pair of abilities do you consider more important?

\_\_\_\_\_ reading-writing \_\_\_\_\_ speaking-listening

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you think you improved your oral production skills?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes      How much?      \_\_\_\_\_ a little      \_\_\_\_\_ a lot

\_\_\_\_\_ No      Why \_\_\_\_\_

3. How much oral practice do you feel you had?

\_\_\_\_\_ very little      \_\_\_\_\_ sufficient      \_\_\_\_\_ a lot

4. Which oral activities were different from other activities you had practiced previously?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which oral activities did you like the most? List them in order of preference.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ etc.

6. What activities would you suggest to improve your oral skills?

\_\_\_\_\_

\*7. Mention what impression(s) you had when you did the tape recording activity.

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for your cooperation, and it was a pleasure having you in my class. Good luck on your final exams and happy holidays!

\* The control group answered a questionnaire that did not include question number 7.



# bienvenido

## evalu@net

**selecciona el logo para  
contestar tu encuesta**

evalu@net

**encuesta de  
opinión de alumnos  
sobre sus maestros y directivos**



Matrícula:

Password:

- Laboratorio  
 Grupo Teórico

**el password es el mismo que utilizas  
para tu correo electrónico**

**1. El Profesor es responsable.**

Un profesor es responsable cuando:

- \* Cubre en su totalidad el programa.
- \* Da a conocer el contenido del programa el primer día de clase
- \* Asiste a todas las clases
- \* Empieza y termina su clase a tiempo
- \* Cumple con los servicios de asesoría

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo...	Total desacuerdo	NR				
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

**2. La forma de evaluar del profesor es justa.**

Un profesor evalúa en forma justa cuando:

- \* Los trabajos, tareas y exámenes están bien diseñados, son relevantes y con alto nivel de exigencia
- \* Usa el mismo criterio para evaluar a todos los alumnos
- \* Establece claramente las políticas de evaluación y las cumple
- \* Usa criterios de evaluación objetivos

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo...	Total desacuerdo	NR				
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

**3. El trabajo del profesor en clase es excelente.**

Un profesor efectúa su trabajo excelentemente cuando:

- \* Conoce el material a profundidad
- \* Tiene un plan de actividades que facilita el aprendizaje
- \* Expresa sus ideas en forma lógica y ordenada
- \* Expone conceptos con claridad y precisión
- \* Incorpora experiencias práctica al proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje
- \* Enriquece el curso con información y bibliografía actualizada

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo....	Total desacuerdo	NR				
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

**4. Tanto en el desarrollo del curso como en las evaluaciones, el profesor hace que los alumnos piensen y razonen.**

Un profesor hace que los alumnos piensen y razonen cuando:

- \* Promueve que comprendan el por qué de las cosas
- \* Encarga trabajos que desarrollan habilidades de razonamiento: análisis, síntesis y evaluación
- \* Elabora exámenes que demandan razonamiento
- \* Frecuentemente presenta a los alumnos situaciones de reto intelectual

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo....	Total desacuerdo	NR				
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

5. El profesor trata con respeto a sus alumnos.  
 Un profesor trata con respeto a sus alumnos cuando:
- \* Les habla en forma cortés
  - \* Escucha con atención sus preguntas y comentarios
  - \* Mantiene orden en el salón de clase
  - \* Fomenta el respeto entre los alumnos

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo . . . . Total desacuerdo	NR
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

6. El profesor promueve la obtención, por parte de los alumnos, de información relevante que apoya el aprendizaje del curso.

Algunas formas de promover lo anterior son hacer que los alumnos:

- \* Usen la biblioteca
- \* Realicen investigaciones bibliográficas
- \* Usen el Internet y otras redes de información

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo . . . . Total desacuerdo	NR
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

7. El profesor fomenta en los alumnos el desarrollo de habilidades tales como:

- \* El aprender por sí mismos, encargando trabajo académico para realizar fuera del aula, evaluándolo y tomándolo en cuenta para asignar las calificaciones
- \* El trabajo en equipo
- \* La innovación
- \* El manejo del idioma inglés
- \* La buena comunicación oral y escrita

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo . . . . Total desacuerdo	NR
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

8. El profesor promueve actitudes y valores tales como:

- \* La honestidad
- \* La responsabilidad
- \* El respeto a las personas
- \* El compromiso con el país

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo . . . . Total desacuerdo	NR
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

9. Globalmente el profesor en este curso ha favorecido en forma excelente mi aprendizaje.

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo . . . . Total desacuerdo	NR
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

10. Globalmente, el profesor ha promovido durante el curso el desarrollo en mí de las habilidades, actitudes y valores que se establecen en la misión del Tecnológico.

Materia	Nombre del Profesor	Total acuerdo . . . . Total desacuerdo	NR
Seminario de direccion empresa		<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

# Appendix J Professor's Evaluation Results



# ITESM

## Rectoría del Campus Monterrey

### INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO Y DE ESTUDIOS SUPERIORES DE MONTERREY

Div. de Ciencias y Humanidades  
Humanidades  
Martinez Cantu Irma

Resultados Académicos de Profesores  
Resultado Individual  
Periodo: Agosto - Diciembre 1997

	Gpos	Alumno	Op	Cup	Obj	Ens	Raz	Tra	Inv	Hab	Act	Apr	Mis	OGP	Per
07 Ingles remedial III	1	28	26	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.6	2.2	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.40	
02 Ingles remedial IV	1	30	27	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8	2.2	1.3	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.81	
05 Ingles remedial IV	1	32	30	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.7	2.2	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.58	
Resumen del Profesor	3	90	83	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.7	2.2	1.2	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	77.2
Desviación del Profesor	3	90	83	1.0	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.2	1.5	0.6	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	

Nota: Los casos de excepción son subrayados (OGP >=3)

\* La materia que pertenece a otra unidad no es considerada para el promedio de esta unidad.

	07 Ingles remedial III								02 Ingles remedial IV								05 Ingles remedial IV						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cup	22	3	0	0	0	1	0	Cup	18	5	1	1	2	0	0	Cup	25	4	0	1	0	0	0
Obj	22	3	0	1	0	0	0	Obj	17	6	2	1	1	0	0	Obj	24	4	1	1	0	0	0
Ens	19	5	1	0	1	0	0	Ens	17	6	1	1	1	1	0	Ens	19	8	2	1	0	0	0
Raz	15	8	2	0	1	0	0	Raz	15	7	3	2	0	0	0	Raz	17	11	2	0	0	0	0
Tra	18	5	2	0	0	0	1	Tra	16	5	3	2	1	0	0	Tra	19	5	3	1	2	0	0
Inv	12	5	5	2	0	2	0	Inv	9	11	2	2	0	1	1	Inv	11	8	7	1	0	1	1
Hab	21	3	1	0	0	0	0	Hab	23	3	0	0	1	0	0	Hab	23	6	0	0	0	0	0
Act	18	5	2	0	0	0	0	Act	16	4	3	2	1	0	0	Act	21	5	2	1	0	0	0
Apr	17	9	0	0	0	0	0	Apr	14	8	1	3	0	1	0	Apr	17	9	4	0	0	0	0
Mis	17	6	3	0	0	0	0	Mis	15	8	0	1	2	0	0	Mis	19	5	5	1	0	0	0
Ogp	34	15	3	0	0	0	0	Ogp	29	16	1	4	2	1	0	Ogp	36	14	9	1	0	0	0

**Nomenclatura:**

Op Número de opiniones pregunta 1  
Cup Cumplimiento del programa  
Obj Objetivo al evaluar  
Ens Claridad al enseñar  
Raz Razonamiento

Tra Trato al alumno  
Inv Promueve investigación  
Hab Desarrolla habilidades  
Act Promueve actitudes y valores  
Apr Favorece en forma excelente el aprendizaje

Mis Promueve el desarrollo de habilidades, actitudes y valores que se establecen en la misión.  
OGP Opinión global del profesor  
Per Percentil del profesor en el campus

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