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**USEFUL INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES AND SOME RELATED
ACTIVITIES TO MOTIVATE ORAL COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH
CLASSES**

BY

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the two special persons in my life; my dear daughter Lia Maybeth and to my beloved husband Gary, who gave me the encouragement and support to continue in spite of the problems I encountered in my way. I also dedicate this thesis to my dear parents, but especially to my mom Paulina, who was always very close to me, giving me advice and support to continue studying for the future. It is also dedicated to my sister Argelis, to my grandmother Digna, to my aunt Mery and my cousins Ily and Tito, who have always encouraged me and given me support to finish my work.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Most EFL teachers share the opinion that teaching English is not an easy task, and they are right. Teaching a foreign language can be a difficult but satisfying mission for those whose desire is to guide the learner to be able to speak English, however, it is a never ending effort for the teacher who has to face all the difficulties that appear in the teaching process trying to make language use a reality for his students.

For years there has been a concern for the high percentage of failures in the English subject as well as the inability of the students to use English correctly at the end of their high school studies and these are weighty reasons to look for alternatives to improve this situation. The learners of a foreign language deserve quality guidance in their learning process. This involves individual but closely related variables related to the teacher such as motivation, creativity, attitude, background, humor, physical and emotional condition and so forth. These elements and others joined to a good well-organized lesson and materials of instruction, constitute wonderful keys for the successful development of the English class and learning will occur.

English is a language that children, adolescents and adults are trying to learn nowadays because of the opportunities it offers to those who master it. In spite of this situation, the acquisition of the

target language is a hard task that not all learners can perform with enjoyment if they lack incentive. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of those instructional activities that keep the student's interested. Hence, the material of instruction also becomes a powerful tool for achieving this purpose in the EFL class.

Motivation affects the results in the learning of any subject, so students need to be motivated to learn English. Unfortunately, in many cases, the English classes are considered tiring, boring, and uninteresting. Moreover, usually the students' backgrounds in English are deficient, so many of them have further cause to lack interest in the subject.

In schools where motivation in the English classes is very low, failures are more commonly observed. Students affected by this situation have a negative attitude toward the English subject. Teachers' poor knowledge of motivation contributes to the students' apathy. Humor, as a state of mind, is closely related to motivation, so its importance in the instructional process can not be overrated in the EFL class. However, in many classrooms, English is taught so formally that students do not enjoy the class.

Motivation and interaction among EFL learners constitute one of the main conditions that affect the outcome of the English class. Different reasons can interfere with these two important aspects in

the learning of the language such as

- a Weak language skills** In most cases, the students do not have the necessary background, information, vocabulary, grammar good pronunciation and so forth, that permit them to communicate fluently, and they do not feel able or comfortable to talk about their feelings emotions, ideas, and so on in front of their classmates or teachers. On the other hand, if they do not receive good instruction in the English language this problem, which is why students do not like and do not want to talk in English is exacerbated. This occurs mainly because many teachers are concerned only with teaching grammar and do not spend enough time developing other skills that are also very important in language acquisition, such as listening/speaking skills.
- b Lack of Technology** Technology is playing a more and more important role in all aspects of our lives and even in the teaching/learning process. For this reason, teachers need to know those useful tools in order to apply them to obtain better results with students learning the English language. Technology can produce in students an interest and the desire to know, use, and speak this language, which is producing such great changes in business, tourism medicine ecology, music, and so forth. The contents of many of the texts that are used

by English teachers, neither satisfy the students' needs nor are adapted to the reality of the learners and the society. On the other hand, there is a lack of appropriate equipment for English instruction: the classroom does not have the most adequate structure and few schools have English laboratories, which are among the most indispensable resources for the English teaching process. So the teachers have to provide supplementary resources for their classes according to their possibilities, that are related to the technological equipment that the school does not provide in order to make the subject a little more interesting.

- c Lack of motivation** Unlike adults, adolescents are not self-motivated and do not perceive an immediate need to learn English. They are not concerned with jobs or university degrees that require a knowledge of English. Their world consists of those events of interest to them, new knowledge that they come across, and questions that their inquisitive minds may ask. These teenagers communicate all their needs and experiences and receive new knowledge in their mother tongue. Therefore, the teacher of English has the challenging task of finding ways to motivate them. This is a serious problem that the teachers have in the classroom. Students are not motivated to learn, use, or speak this language. The question is why? This is very easy to answer. Most of them believe that this language is

difficult or is not important for them. Thus, it becomes a very difficult task to get the students to wake up to the real value that English has in our days. Teachers need to use a variety of strategies with the objective of getting students motivated to understand another language, in this case English, which is to say that they comprehend the importance that this language has.

- d Wrong Methodology** Not only do students need to learn the English language, teachers too have to do a self-examination of their teaching process. They have to ask themselves if they are doing a very good job and if they are using the correct methods, techniques, and learning activities in order to improve the learning process.

Teachers need to know how to select and design appropriate and authentic language learning materials and use activities in consonance with the age, interest level, and language ability of the students. Specifically, a repertoire of learning activities to be used before listening, while listening, and after listening is needed. These activities must be based on extremely high interest level topics in order to promote learning. Since one of the greatest obstacles to learning English as a foreign language is motivation, teachers must be held accountable for encouraging language learning through the use

of materials and activities that bring the students world into the classroom

- e **Teachers' Attitude** This point too is also very important in the teaching and learning process because it is the teachers who have the responsibility to promote the acquisition of any type of knowledge, and in this case, the English language Moreover the attitude of the teacher influences his students behavior

For that reason, the excellent teacher must master his subject and be able to adapt instructional techniques to the needs of his students and the requirements of the discipline, and he needs an enthusiastic spirit to motivate his learners, thus avoiding discipline problems Unfortunately however, English teachers themselves often lack motivation and there are many reasons for this situation among which are that sometimes teachers do not really like teaching or the students This means that some of them do not have the vocation, and they perceive this activity just as a job On the other hand they do not receive the necessary support or stimulus from the Ministry of Education

- 1 They receive a low salary
- 2 They have to attend at least 40 students per group
- 3 They do not have the necessary didactic resources
- 4 The classroom conditions are not adequate

- 5 Sometimes the teachers are not capacitated in their area or discipline and they have to make too many preparations for the different groups
- 6 Moreover the parents do not support them when they require it and so forth These and many other unfavorable conditions often found in teaching English, are responsible for the teachers' lack of motivation and as a consequence, the students lack of motivation to learn as well

In summary, motivation and a relaxing atmosphere joined to a humorous friendly teacher can persuade uninterested students to become involved in groups where they can actively participate in activities which would enhance and facilitate the learning of the English language

JUSTIFICATION

Today it is understood that listening comprehension and speaking are two of the most important and perhaps the most difficult skills to teach students of English in a country where English is a foreign language, and opportunities to practice listening and speaking in English in an authentic, communicative setting do not abound In Panama, the vast majority of students do not hear English spoken outside the classroom So how can EFL teachers begin to remedy

this situation? How can teachers motivate their students to participate actively in the classroom without fear? What kinds of activities and strategies do teachers use in order to improve these skills?

These are typical of the questions that teachers have. However, the answers provided often do not satisfy the needs, and the situation remains the same: students do not want to like or feel comfortable in English class.

The first thing that teachers have to tell their students is the importance of the English language at this moment. Students need to know that English is an essential language in the world; also that it is spoken as a first language by at least 500 million people in just nine countries and that English is the official second language in nearly forty others.

It is very important to point out to them that English is used by multinational companies as a common language. Moreover, eighty percent of the information in the world's computers is written in English. In areas such as science, medicine, tourism, business, etc., this language is used too. Moreover, the English language is necessary for every one because it provides a way to progress professionally and personally in order to get a better job, for example.

Especially here in Panama, the benefits of the English language are also part of the social and economic development of the country. The strategic position of the Isthmus of Panama provides good opportunities to use English in different fields such as in the Panama Canal Administration. The canal was designed and built by the North Americans with norms and specifications written in English, and the technology needed for the maintenance and operation of the canal is tied to the English language.

For these reasons, English instruction must be directed to the development of the students' communication skills. However, the effectiveness of the instruction depends on the teacher's ability and the methodology used. Teachers have to look for activities that can stimulate motivation and interaction among the learners of the language, in order to promote interest in them to learn such an important vehicle of communication. It is for that reason that the interests and needs of the students should be taken into account and what we can learn throughout their ways of expressing them, their drawings, for example. For this reason, they are highly advocated in this study as techniques with the potential to motivate oral communication in English class.

RESEARCH QUESTION

One learns one's native language, Spanish, in the case of most

of the population of Panama, through use This is known as first language acquisition This occurs in many ways but is primarily based on verbal communication because social interaction is recognized as an important element which helps learners assimilate linguistic forms meaning and language function in a natural way

The Communicative Method and activities provide students with an opportunity to express their ideas and opinions Thus the most obvious characteristic of this method is that almost every technique or activity is applied with a communicative intention Therefore, this research addresses the following question Does the use of drawings and some instructional activities promote oral communication in EFL students?

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

The following definitions of key terms have been provided to facilitate the understanding of the readers as to how they have been used within the context of this study These definitions were adapted from Webster's New World Dictionary Third College Edition

- ◆ **Attitude** A manner of acting feeling or thinking of a student about a subject that shows his disposition or opinion For the purposes of this study, attitude is operationalized as the scores earned by the respondent on an instrument, a questionnaire,

designed to establish attitude as negative or positive, and the degree of this feeling

- ◆ **Communication Skill** The ability to exchange thoughts, messages or information
- ◆ **Human communication** A system of giving and receiving information Information can be conveyed in a nonverbal manner via gestures, body language, or proxemics
- ◆ **Human Interaction** Is a process whereby two or more people engage in reciprocal action This action may be verbal or nonverbal
- ◆ **Interaction** Is the give – and take of communication It is the interchange of ideas among people
- ◆ **Language Learning** Refers to conscious knowledge of a second language knowing the rules being aware of them and being able to talk about them
- ◆ **Learning** The capacity of a student to acquire knowledge information or skill, especially in a specific field from interaction with others In the process of learning, students interact with other students and professors, and, in this way they can learn

and develop their skills. For the purposes of this study, learning is a permanent behavioral change reflected by the development of communicative skills, which will be operationalized as performance observed through students' drawings in class.

- ◆ **Listening Comprehension** To be able to understand native speech at normal speed in unstructured situations. This statement does not imply an ability equal to that in the students' first language, but an ability to reach a level at which, in ungraded contexts, they can concentrate on the message without conscious attention to the component elements of that message.

- ◆ **Motivation** Inner drives, forces, impulses, or intentions, and so forth, that cause a person to do something or act in a certain way; incentive, goal. It is also the stimuli that influences student learning and the practice of a second language. For the purposes of this study, motivation is operationalized as students' behavior of a positive nature in class; for example, participation in class, expressing their ideas or thoughts through drawings and oral explanations of their work.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- *To underline the value of instructional*

resources(techniques) including drawings, games singing and so forth as activities that add vividness and foster a positive atmosphere for significant learning and oral communication

SIGNIFICANCE

There are many problems that contribute to student failure in English at the end of the academic year and many students that have to repeat this subject the next year will be obliged to rehabilitate during the summer or according to the current educational law will take a final test at the end of the year. These students do not enjoy studying English for them it is a difficult course with difficult content, so they only try to obtain a passing grade for the course, but they do not concern themselves with learning the English language for future use.

The teachers of English should be aware that classes must be focused not only on the learning process itself but also on the learner's needs and reactions toward the target language. This aim can be achieved through motivating activities which can make students feel comfortable, self-confident, and interested when they perform their tasks in English.

The purpose of this research is to show how art work along with many other fun activities used as a motivating elements and joined to inexpensive instructional materials can break the routine of those English classes that students consider boring not motivating, and that do not promote enjoyment in the learning process. However, the principal benefit of these activities is the increase of oral communication without anxiety in the English class. It is for that reason that these type of activities is recommended to enhance the motivation, creativity and flexibility of the participants of the teaching-learning process. Also, these activities can be adapted to any level of ability in the students.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Given the serious problem that contributes to students academic failure in the English subject, teachers are obligated to look for reasons to justify this problem and when they are found it is up to them to find solutions as well. It is believed that one of the greatest reasons for academic failure in English is the lack of interest and motivation on the part of the students to digest the content of their classes. Usually, students only study for a passing grade and not because they enjoy the subject.

It is important to point out that it is the type of methodology used by the teacher, and in these activities that he/she uses what is going to motivate students to learn and make good use of this knowledge. Motivating activities may not be the solution to the problem however, it could contribute to alleviate the situation and allow the teachers to learn more by analyzing students reactions towards the activities and their progress.

This thesis focuses on methodology for motivating students to learn the English language, and how drawing can be used as a motivating activity, accompanied by other instructional activities. Consequently, the literature specifically the ideas and insights presented in this chapter, are important in illuminating this issue.

Learning a language is a very complex process, and foreign language learning is a hard work. It requires effort at every moment,

which must be maintained over a long period of time (Wright Bettendge and Buckby (1993))

Effort an important factor in learning a language is made by all the participants on the learning process. Learning a language that is not the native language of the learner requires endeavor from both of the main participants from teachers and from students.

Therefore teachers should look for methods, techniques and strategies to obtain good results in their classes. They should be creative and imaginative in order to overcome obstacles of time and space. On the other hand, students need to develop skills since they have to learn new things.

Motivation

Motivation constitutes one of the psycho-educative factors that has major influence in the learning process. It is not a particular teaching technique or method, but a cognitive – affective factor that is presented in all learning acts and in all pedagogical procedures in an implicit or explicit way. “It is one of the most fascinating and important areas in psychology. If we can understand the motives of a child, we can understand and even predict his behavior because motives are the dynamic force that energizes behavior” (Rivera (1993))

The word motivation comes from the Latin term *motivus* (a moving cause), itself derived from *motus* (moved). The implication that it refers to the springs of action seems evident in such phrases or words as motive power, motive force, automotive and the like.

The term motivation popularly refers to the causes of behavior, or whatever it is within the individual that incites action. Thus it is often said that success serves his motive (needs) for achievement or for power, status, recognition or some other more specific motive (The New Encyclopedia Britannica (1973)).

The role of motivation in the learning process

The term motivation is commonly thought of as an inner drive, impulse, emotion or desire that moves one to a particular action (Brown (1980)).

It has been widely studied by psychologists. Experts agree that motivation is the key to learning and that it explains the success or failure of virtually any complex task. Applied to the educational field, motivation represents a powerful tool which stimulates learning.

When a person is motivated, he or she meets some needs such as exploration, stimulation and knowledge. As a result, motivation can be considered as the emotional response of the student. How he

feels about himself his peers and his teacher how he interacts with his teacher how secure he feels, and even his reaction to his physical surroundings (Hayes (1977))

When a class motivates a student, s/he wants to learn, to discover and to work so that he or she explores the language around him or her In addition, s/he is stimulated to continue and at the same time to store information that helps him or her to improve or increase what s/he already knows about the language

In addition to some theorists it is the direction of behavior that demonstrates how strong the motivation becomes to acquire a second or foreign language Motivation plays an important role when learning a foreign language because learning a foreign language is a process that has to do with our affective domain (Rivera (1993) Therefore, some linguists psychologists and language teachers consider it of great importance to ascertain language learning

The teachers role in the area of motivation will be centered in inculcating motives into the learners in respect to their learning and behavior in order to apply these motives in a voluntary way to the class work, giving meaning to the assignments, so that students will enjoy the educational activity because it takes into account their social and personal utility

Vega (1987) for example states that motivation is the most important contributing factor to achievement in learning. Yet the Encyclopedia Britannica (1973) takes a different point of view in that motivation can hardly be the sole basis for success, one must have ability, training, knowledge and many other characteristics to achieve specific goals.

Types of Motivation

Many authors agree in dividing motivation into two types, depending on the motives or needs that move a person to learn the language. The two types of motivation are integrative motivation and instrumental motivation.

Instrumental motivation refers to motivation to acquire a language as a means for attaining instrumental goals. It can be conditioned and directed by the teacher. An example of this type of motivation is when grades, money, prizes, promises of employment or travel abroad are given as awards. With this type of motivation, the language becomes a tool for a purpose.

Integrative motivation involves a wider and deeper concept since it requires the learner to reach a level of identity. Integrative motivation becomes a reflection of a genuine interest in learning a language and a desire to be accepted by the speakers of the target

language When a nonnative speaker of English, for example visits the United States, he or she knows that to become accepted by the citizens s/he needs to learn 'their' language in order to be able to communicate within the group

Brown (1980) observes that some learners in some contexts are more successful in learning a language if they are oriented in an integrative way, while others in different contexts learn better with instrumental motivation Nevertheless, he emphasizes that most situations involve a mixture of each type of motivation

In summary both types of motivation integrative and instrumental, should be fostered in the classroom in order to fulfill the learners' needs both in terms of the point of attainment reached and also in terms of the teachers' profile of individual achievement In this way, the student maintains progress in his optimum learning rate towards the maximum goal that he, as a learner is capable of obtaining

The role of the teacher is very important in order for students to become interested in learning the target language His personality will determine to a great extent how secure and disposed the students are to receive and construct their learning Therefore, the maintenance of a high level of motivation is a challenge to teachers since low motivation affects in a very negative way the students

interest. In this respect Vega (1987: 7) says

When students are not motivated by the methodology used by the teacher they do not pay enough attention to the teacher. Therefore they do not learn English easily. The result of this is that they fail on tests and many of them come to dislike English.

The possibilities for increasing student motivation and interest do not have limits. Steady improvement will come only from individual motivation and purpose. This means that if teachers are motivated, they will be interested in obtaining the available tools to achieve the goals of the teaching process.

Fun and humor as means for increasing motivation

Motivation can be kept at a high level not only by the teacher varying his method of presentation or his instructional materials but also by giving students a sense of security, success and achievement. It is important to consider what Llanas (1999: 3) says: "We should start and finish our classes in a funny way in order to make our students interested in it."

Lee (1995) agrees with Llanas when she declares that it is a misconception to think that all learning should be serious and solemn in nature, and if one is having fun learning is not really occurring. Lee

adds that it is possible to learn a language as well as enjoy at the same time. Similarly, Woodward (1997) states that fun and humor are essential in EFL/ESL classrooms.

Humor, when properly used, helps to create a kind of relaxed, friendly atmosphere that is necessary for learning to take place. In his written work, Vega (1987) considers humor an important quality in a good teacher. According to him, humor serves many purposes in a classroom. It keeps pupils attentive, and it helps to give a true picture of many important topics. The real purpose of humor is to create a close relationship between teachers and students. As a result, when students and teacher laugh together, they cease to be separated by age and authority. They become a unit, feeling pleasure and enjoying a shared experience.

Vega states that humor should never be used to control a class. In fact, accepting certain mistakes from pupils is never successful in encouraging students to accomplish learning goals. Llanas (1999) reminds us that it does not matter if they make mistakes because we should not expect perfection but rather communication.

Despite all the positive and productive results in the use of humor, some teachers are still afraid to promote it in their classes. According to some of them, it would distract from the real purpose of the teaching/learning process. Gaudart (1991) explains that in many

schools where the teachers have resisted fun the learners really appreciate any kind of activity that provides even the ghost of excitement and enjoyment This author says that no one can compel teachers to promote fun and humor It is therefore a teachers decision

Group Work Activities and Interaction

It is the nature of humankind to group ourselves, for any number of reasons, beyond the obvious governmental and practice levels We group ourselves to share our commonalities and differences, for purposes of mutual support to accomplish stated tasks, or simply for social enjoyment (Rivera (1993))

Because of the need to make students feel comfortable among themselves, nothing is better than team work activities With these activities, interaction provides more enjoyable ways to learn There are numerous activities to create a motivating funny environment so group experiences are valued in as much as they support the individuals' development and demonstrate the positive aspects of working together toward a common goal

Cooperation is a factor of life, and having learners work together in the classroom teaches them a very important life skill In the respect, Wheeler (1984) notes that teaching learners how to work

with others and not constantly relying on the teacher for everything is an integral part of EFL/ESL classroom. This statement supports the opinion that a classroom is not a place where one listens and is told what to know or what will be tested with little concern for the ability to think and interact creatively. A student we must remember, belongs to a class to a group of people whom he or she should share and participate.

Murphey (1986) states that students receive significantly more individual language opportunities in group work than in a standard procedure that is mindlessly adhered to or that minimizes individuality. This author suggests some advantages of group work.

- ◆ Students perform at the same level of grammatical accuracy in their foreign language output in unsupervised group work as in 'public' lockstep work conducted by the teacher. (By lockstep we mean a standard method or procedure that is mindlessly adhered to or that minimizes individuality.)
- ◆ The frequency of corrections from partners and completions by students is higher in group work than in lockstep teaching.
- ◆ A task requiring information provided by both or all parties.

significantly increases the amount of talk, the amount of negotiation and, apparently, the level of input comprehended by the students

On the other hand, Wheeler (1994) suggests the following to those who oppose group work in their classes

- ◆ The learners will speak their native tongue only if the teacher lets them, so the more the teacher circulates among the learners and reminds them to speak English the easier they find it to comply
- ◆ Teachers should assign roles to each of the members of a group (e g a secretary a leader a presenter) to avoid one learner taking the activity and others becoming passive observers
- ◆ Even if teacher does not follow up on each members' task after the activity is finished the assignment of roles is often enough to act as a catalyst to get the group speaking
- ◆ It is a good idea to assign tasks to dissimilar learner types For example, let the usually taciturn learner to the secretary, and the sheepish learner be the leader

Some teachers are apprehensive of having group work in their EFL classes because they say that students will learn their classmates errors. Wheeler adds that errors are an inevitable part of the learning process and one of the main points of having learners speak with each other is to help them increase confidence and reduce the anxiety that is often found in a purely teacher – centered classroom.

Wheeler (1994) says that the noise factor is more troublesome to the teacher than it is to the learners, so it does not affect their learning. In fact, students are usually unaware of what other groups or pairs are doing. They talk and talk among their own group without noticing what the others are saying.

To some critics of group work, which often implies speaking, it produces a chaotic situation in the EFL class. Perhaps what some teachers consider as chaos is productive interaction among information seeking learners of English. Real chaos, comments Wheeler, is when learners are wandering around the class not knowing what to do or if they are asked to participate in an activity that lacks clear goals or aims.

Productive interaction in the EFL classroom

The term productive interaction as a situation that can occur in

an EFL classroom implies the interchange of opinions and experiences. Murphey (1990) in this respect stated "If I believe that I only teach English, English will remain the center of my concern. However, if I believe that I teach students, they will be the center, and English will be the means to the wider goal of interaction."

Many teachers still do not understand how interaction works. Interaction occurs when negotiation takes place, comprehension checks and clarification appear in any communication process. Therefore, when people interact, we try to adjust our communications to make things comprehensible. Thus, some research indicates that nonnative speakers receive more quality interaction among themselves than they do when interacting with a native speaker. As a result, nonnative learners of English are the most appropriate persons to interact productively.

Students need situations where they are on their own trying to use the foreign language to exchange with others messages of interest to them (Gaudart (1991)). Yet teachers cannot send students off in groups or pairs and tell them to interact. The teacher has to select and graduate these activities, so that attitude of seeking to communicate is developed early in an activity, which is within the students' growing capacity.

Students can be encouraged to express themselves freely in

the language from the beginning through experiences and games, which provide them with a framework for spontaneous communicative creation while presupposing they will use what they have been learning through an orderly progression of study and practice

Murphey (1990) expresses his point of view about interactive activities by saying that the amount of material that can be interacted with, if teachers want to teach interactively, is the unlimited resources within reach of their students. This thought becomes of great benefit for teachers who take into account their students' ideas and comments since they, as the most important members of the learning process, have wonderful potentialities to explore which added to the teachers' creativity will contribute to an interactive environment conducive to a progressive learning of the language.

MOTIVATING STUDENTS

Some students seem naturally enthusiastic about learning, but many need—or expect—their teachers to inspire challenge, and stimulate them. "Effective learning in the classroom depends on the teacher's ability to maintain the interest that brought students to the course in the first place" (Ericksen (1978:3)). Whatever level of motivation students bring to the classroom will be transformed, for better or worse, by what happens in that classroom.

Unfortunately there is no single magical formula for motivating students. Many factors affect a given student's motivation to work and to learn, among which are interest in the subject matter, perception of its usefulness, general desire to achieve, self-confidence and self-esteem as well as patience and persistence (Bligh, (1971) Sass (1989)) And of course not all students will be motivated by the approval of others some are motivated by overcoming challenges

Researchers have begun to identify those aspects of the teaching situation that enhance student's self-motivation (Lowman (1984), Lucas,(1990), Weinert and Kluwe (1987), Bligh,(1971)) To encourage students to become self-motivated independent learners instructors can do the following

- ◆ Give frequent, early positive feedback that supports students' beliefs that they can do well
- ◆ Ensure opportunities for students success by assigning tasks that are neither too easy nor too difficult
- ◆ Help students find personal meaning and value in the material
- ◆ Create an atmosphere that is open and positive

- ◆ Help students feel that they are valued members of a learning community

According to Ericksen (1978), good everyday teaching practices can do more to counter student apathy than special efforts to attack motivation directly. Most students respond positively to a well-organized course taught by an enthusiastic instructor (teacher) who has a genuine interest in students and what they learn. Thus, activities that a teacher undertakes to promote learning will also enhance the students' motivation.

Different authors have pointed out some strategies in order to achieve student motivation such as

- ◆ Capitalize on students' existing needs. Students learn best when incentives for learning in a classroom satisfy their interests, needs, feelings and so forth (McMillan and Forsyth (1991))
- ◆ Make students active participants in learning. Students learn by doing, making, writing, designing, creating, solving. Passivity dampens students' motivation and curiosity (Lucas (1990))
- ◆ Ask students to analyze what makes their classes more or

less “motivating” Give them the opportunity to express the ideas orally or in written form as questionnaire, for example how is the teacher’s enthusiasm? is the material relevant? is the class organized?, appropriate difficulty level of the material? active involvement of students?, rapport between teacher and students? does the teacher use appropriate concrete and understandable examples?, and so on (Sass (1989))

- ◆ Hold high but realistic expectations for your students
Research has shown that a teacher’s expectations have a powerful effect on a student’s performance If a teacher act as though she expects her students to be motivated hardworking and interested in the course, they are more likely to be so (American Psychological Association (1992))
- ◆ Help students set achievable goals for themselves
Failure to obtain unrealistic goals can disappoint and frustrate students Encourage students to focus on their continued improvement, not just on their grade on any one test or assignment Help students evaluate their progress by encouraging them to critique their own work (Cashin, (1979))

- ◆ Tell students what they need to do to succeed in the course Cashin (1979) and Tiberius (1990) are in agreement not to have the students struggle to figure out what is expected of them Reassure students that they can do well in the course, and tell them exactly what they must do to succeed
- ◆ Strengthen students' self-motivation According to Lowman (1990), teachers must avoid messages that reinforce their power as a teacher or that emphasize extrinsic rewards
- ◆ Another strategy is to avoid creating intense competition among students This point is made by Eble (1988) competition produces anxiety, which can interfere with learning
- ◆ Be enthusiastic about your subject A teacher's enthusiasm is a crucial factor in student motivation If you become bored or apathetic, students will too
- ◆ Give students feedback as quickly as possible, reward success
- ◆ Be specific when giving negative feedback

- ◆ Vary your teaching method.

These are some of the interesting strategies that those authors mention as a way to increase students motivation, they also say that this is not an easy task; but, with a little effort, teachers can get good results.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF MOTIVATION.

Basic principles of motivation that are applicable to learning in any situation. (Gross, (1999)).

1. The environment can be used to focus the student's attention on what needs to be learned. Teachers who create a warm and accepting yet business- like atmosphere will promote persistent effort and favorable attitudes toward learning. This strategy will be successful in children and in adults. Interesting visual aids, such as booklets, posters, or practice equipment, motivate learners by capturing their attention and curiosity.
2. Incentives motivate learning. Incentives include privileges and receiving praise from the teacher. The teacher determines an incentive that is likely to motivate an individual at a particular time. In a general learning

situation, self-motivation without rewards will not succeed
Students must find satisfaction in learning based on the understanding that the goals are useful to them or, less commonly, based on the pure enjoyment of exploring new things

- 3 Internal motivation is longer lasting and more self-directive than external motivation which must be repeatedly reinforced by praise or concrete rewards
Some individuals – particularly children of certain ages and some adults – have little capacity for internal motivation and must be guided and reinforced constantly
The use of incentives is based on the principle that learning occurs more effectively when the student experiences feelings of satisfaction
- 4 Learning is most effective when an individual is ready to learn, that is when one wants to know something
Sometimes the student's readiness to learn comes with time, and the teacher's role is to encourage its development
If a desired behavior occurs
If a student is not ready to learn, he or she may not be reliable in following instructions and therefore must be supervised and have the instructions repeated again and again

- 5 Motivation is enhanced by the way in which the instructional material is organized. In general, the best organized material makes the information meaningful to the individual.

None of the techniques will produce sustained motivation unless the goals are realistic for the learner. The basic learning principle involved is that success is more predictable and motivating than is failure.

Students' Drawings a Useful and motivating Activity

According to Hahn (1985), many teachers assume that the older the students the less willing they will be to draw pictures, therefore while these teachers might use drawings with children, they hesitate to do so with adults. Although some students claim they can not draw after the first exercise this is no longer a problem because it has become clear to them that drawing ability is not important and does not interfere with full participation in the activity.

It is also interesting, to see how inhibitions about drawing begin to disappear and a student who at first drew a tiny picture in one corner of the page becomes free and relaxed enough to fill the entire page. Therefore, it would seem that the first resistance to break down is that of the teacher, who has preconceptions about who would or

would not be willing to draw a picture (Stevick (1982))

The drawings are very versatile and may be used for different purposes with different groups, so that, for example a drawing the aim of which, with one group, is to stimulate conversation might be used to focus on a particular structure with another

Hahn (1985) gives the teachers some suggestions that facilitate classroom procedure

First the teacher should distribute the paper for the drawings and not ask students to supply their own

Second, it is important that the directions be clear and in a simple language but also as non-restricting as possible so as to leave room for imagination

Finally the time should be limited to a maximum of ten minutes This leaves time enough for everyone to do something yet reinforces the point that the art is the first part of the activity a means to an end (language) to which the greater part of the class time will be devoted

In order to simplify the discussion about drawings as a useful activity, Stevick (1982) has labeled exercises according to their purpose or focus when he uses them vocabulary expansion

conversation starters comprehension, colloquial language, structure practice, etc, and while it is important to have an aim in mind before asking students to draw, it is essential to remember that none of these exercises deals with only one aspect of the language For example vocabulary expansion is a built- in feature of all of them and, in a conversation exercise, a new structure may have to be introduced

Stevick explained in a very good way how those activities work

Vocabulary Expansion This is used to introduce new words or to know the vocabulary of our students As a first and very easy activity you can use it to introduce words for family relationships and give a very simple directions “Draw a picture of your family ” The directions seem specific, but they contain no qualifiers such as ‘immediate’ or “people living in your house” in order to leave as much room as possible for the imagination Although you will find students usually deal with only those people in the immediate household, they often include their pets

When the drawings are finished, have a volunteer come to the front of the class with her/his picture Tape it to the board or some other place that is visible to all, and allow the time necessary for everyone to have a good look at it Then ask the student to speak about his/her drawing Have students write new vocabulary on the

board, and elicit more from the class. The teacher should offer assistance only when all other sources have run out. Although this has been called a vocabulary exercise or expansion, it will be difficult to use the drawings for vocabulary enrichment in this way without students knowing certain structure, so it is better not to use the family drawing until the students have some grasp of comparative, superlatives and question forms, because family drawing inevitably elicit description and comparison of age, size, etc.

A Structure/ Vocabulary Exercise This is considered useful after the introduction of the verb *like*, because students usually need more vocabulary in order to use the verb meaningfully. The directions are: Make a list or draw pictures of things you like and things you do not like. The procedure for showing the pictures is much the same as that explained above. The students can practice the verb forms with the words they already know and with the new vocabulary that is introduced through the pictures. Another exercise shows how drawings may be used to focus attention on a particular structure, in this case the conditional with *if*. The instructions are: "Someone give you a million dollars. Draw a picture of what you will do with the money."

Another structure drawing focuses on used to indicate habitual actions. The directions might be "Draw a picture of something you used to do as a adolescent or child this depends on the age group."

Comprehension Exercises In comprehension exercises, students listen to a passage and then draw a picture of what they have understood

Conversation Drawing Conversation drawings which are intended to get all students talking, are the most versatile and can easily be adapted to fit the needs and abilities of various groups. For example the picture from "draw yourself in a situation last Saturday" covers the same ground as the question " what did you do during the weekend?", which many of us ask at the beginning of the week in the hope of stimulating "real communication. Drawing pictures forces students to think about what they did and carefully select what was most interesting. The picture then becomes the topic of conversation even if it is preceded by "I did not do much". This drawing also provides opportunities for extensive practice in the past tenses, as well as the introduction of new vocabulary and structures

Needless to say drawings are not an everyday activity

WHY DRAWINGS WORK

When something works well in the classroom if we do not stop to ask ourselves why, we lose a chance to learn about learning and to exploit that knowledge. According, Nelson et al (1970) if drawing in the classroom is to be more than just a gimmick, we must try to find

explanations for its usefulness. While there seems to be no single explanation for the effectiveness of drawing and even though the possible explanations do not necessarily apply to all the examples presented here, if we examine, even briefly, some of the effective, social and learning aspects of the exercises we find some satisfactory answers to why they work.

Drawings require an active participation of all the students. Williams (1997) notes that they are forced to concentrate and are encouraged to use their imagination. If the students do not do the same amount of speaking, they can, by showing their drawings and looking at those of others, communicate a great deal to each other.

Not only can you use drawings in the classroom according to Lobell (1996), pictures and postcards are also an interesting option to try out in the ESL classroom, specially when you are teaching children or adolescents due to their live imaginations and their interest in scenic places that catch the eye. You can collect postcards whenever you travel or you can download them from the Internet. If you have friends who live in other countries you can also have them send you some in exchange for postcards of your own country. You can also look for colorful or unusual cards in addition to the usual famous scenes. The wonderful thing about downloading and collecting postcards is that they can be recycled over the years and used for different purposes.

You can collect not only tourist attractions but sports scenes as well people at work religious motifs and joke cards You can use the cards to practice many different structures such as

- Where is this? What country city continent?
- What do we call this building/monument/sport/etc, in English
- What color/shape/condition is this?
- What are they doing?
- What are they wearing?
- What religion are these people practicing?
- Would you like to visit this place? Why or why not?
- Would you like to play this sport? Why or why not?
- Have you even been here/done this?
- What would you like to do if you visited this place?

The questions and structures that you practice are limited only by the students level There is nothing "built-in", so the whole exercise is up to you For that reason you should probably do a little thinking about how you want to use your collection before you go to class If you do not want to build a lesson around the postcards just take a few to talk about as you wait for late students to show up or for a warm-up activity before you go straight to your regular lesson They can also be used as realia to supplement your texts It is guaranteed to increase interest to your class and hopefully generate

some enthusiasm for a more international outlook in your students

Pictures are very useful resources and enable the development of a wide range of information skills. It can never be said that they are inaccessible or out of reach because they can be found in school libraries among magazines, newspapers, learning media and others.

Their advantages, as mentioned throughout this investigation, are numerous; they can be satisfactory surrogates for objects referents that are not available or so complex that they are not easily understood. They can reduce large objects to a manageable size or enlarge small objects. They can 'freeze' motion so that the moving object can be studied adequately or in more detail. A drawing or picture can be modified in many ways so that aspects might be emphasized, or in order that a specific 'feeling' might be projected. And they are excellent when looking for detail.

How else can you use pictures with children and/or adolescents?

- As starters, for group discussion, individual/group writing

- You can ask students to arrange a collection of pictures in a sequence to write

- Captions for them and/or predict what will happen next in the picture story
- Use them as an aid to vocabulary development or for the presentation of new ideas
- As clues to identify period, temperature environment, etc
- Study them for color line, design or shape (ex use of triangles for construction)
- To stimulate creative expression in drawing painting, modeling and so forth
- To assist identification (ex of insects animals grasses, and others)
- As geographical exercises making inferences about location
- As illustrations to assignments/charts
- On large maps to locate or identify

- Match places with pictures
- As jigsaws cut into crazy paving
- To develop thinking skills
- Brainstorming, making inferences making judgements, evaluating and so forth
- Illustrated books

Another activity that could be developed with the use of pictures is research. This can be done very successfully providing you enough raw material. The following sequence is one that has been used successfully.

- Compare the picture Contrast
- Come up with a statement – generalization
- Students are to make several research type questions
- They can make up more, smaller questions of their own to guide them
- They will process their answers
- Test them out
- How good was their statement?

Flashcards are also a good tool when used appropriately. They can be used not only for boring word drills as they have been used for in the past, they can be used to provide visual cues to the meanings of words and provide context.

Antonyms, synonyms and harder similar words can be introduced using flashcards. The best use of flashcards, however, is in small groups. Among other things that students can practice using the words is by developing their own sentences, paragraphs, and later entire compositions. When the teacher is creative, he/she can assign each student to design his/her own flashcard as an assignment, and it can be donated to the English department for future use. This assignment can be highly motivating for students in the English classroom.

Who says that an English classroom cannot be turned into a workshop class? Students can come up with designs such as posterboards, multimedia presentations and use the English language as the tool. It is entertaining, and serves as a stress-reliever for those students who have put a lot of effort into maintaining good grades, not only in the English subject, but in their other academic subjects as well.

The National Digital Library's Educators Forum (1995) it was stated that images, photographs, films and videos represent a

primary source in the classroom. They have been known to be successful in oral descriptive type lessons for presenting evidence about time periods, sights, affective aspects, and others.

With a historical photograph, your students can predict what will happen one minute and one hour after that the photograph was taken. They can explain the reasoning behind their predictions. You can encourage them to focus on details, show a photograph to the classroom for three minutes and then remove it. You can have students draw the contents of the image on a piece of paper divided into a grid of nine sections. If you repeat this exercise with new images you will watch students' ability to recall detail improve.

Another activity you can develop consists of having your students select a piece of fine art that appeals to their senses, they can cut it out of a magazine or download it from the World Wide Web. They are to research the artist, the date of the piece, and the medium. What does information about the artist, medium, the subject, and the composition tell your students about the prevailing attitudes and conditions of the time period? For example, what symbolism is used? How is perspective used? In what roles are people portrayed? What is left out of the composition?

About.com et al (2002) in their ESL lesson plan library suggests drawing expressions in the classroom. According to them, sketching

one simple stroke - the smile or frown. There are basically seven expressions which can be quickly expressed in a few strokes of the marker or piece of chalk and cover quite a wide range of situations.

Laughter

People usually tip their head to one side when laughing and open their mouths in a good chuckle.

Example *Why is he laughing? What Joke has he heard?*

Anger

Slang the eyebrows down and raise the shoulders. Open the mouth in a shout and you have one angry character!

Example *What happened to Tom? Why is he so angry?*

Sleep well

Put me into the horizontal and I'll close my eyes for some sweet dreams.

Example *Do you remember any dreams from last night?*

Pain

Three crossed lines and a small open mouth - ouch.

Example *Have you ever bitten into a lemon? Can you describe the taste?*

Embarrassment - or insecurity

Hunch those shoulders, slant the eyebrows up and you've got one perplexed individual

Example *Do you think Jack has studied for the exam? What should he have done?*

If well employed, these figures convey a wealth of information with very little effort. You can liven up class discussions, or get them going, by quickly sketching a few of these on the board and asking how the person feels and why. Students fill in the information taking the sketches as cues. The key to sketching quickly is adding just a few strokes which deliver the needed information.

There are a wide variety of activities that can be accomplished in the ESL/EFL classroom using images of all kinds and drawings just by applying a little imagination, some of these activities are offered on the world Wide Web and have been posted by teachers all over the world who teach English as a Second or Foreign Language, and they wish to share them with fellow teachers. They make these activities accessible at sites such as <http://www.eslcafe.com>. Some of these activities have been added here as a demonstration of all the creativeness that can come from ESL teachers in the classroom when it comes to using images and photographs.

Cartoon Pictures

You can use them to teach the sentences corresponding to the cartoon pictures and ending with a cute punch line. Students can practice their sentences over and over until they can tell others their joke. For example, you can use a story of an airplane with four passengers but not enough parachutes for all when the plane went down.

First Impressions

All you need for this activity are photocopies of famous people or regular people at work taken from magazines, book-covers, Internet, newspapers and others. You could select as topic, for example jobs. On the board you write a number of occupations including the right ones plus 'Mafia boss', 'serial killer', and others as distracters. The students then have to work with each photo and justify their answers. Modal verbs can also be practiced in this way.

I Saw a Thief!

This activity is good for lower-intermediate levels. The activity consists on describing appearances. And it works well with big groups of 50-60 students. First you have to teach or revise vocabulary with your students: parts of the body, hair color, eye color, clothes, etc. Add distinguishing features for a more exciting result, such as scars, tattoos, earrings, limp, etc.

Next, explain the job of Police Artists which is a person who creates a drawing from a witness's description. Then ask the class to form pairs. Student A is the Police Artist, Student B is the witness. Tell all the witnesses they have just seen a thief rob a bank. They must describe the person to the artist, who draws the picture.

Finally, ask the artists to hold up their pictures and describe the thief to the class. Another idea is to call an artist to the blackboard. Different students can add to the description as the artist draws.

Tell Me a Story

This activity involves pictures drawn by students. Give the students three words (objects). They have to use those words in the story in any way they can. Draw 12 boxes within a big box on paper. Have the students draw a story using those boxes or using more if needed. After they finish get them to explain each picture in words to you. Listen and repeat what they said in the proper way if it was incorrect. This activity is good for practically all levels.

Movies

Since most people love movies, the following is a simple idea. Students at all levels can get a real kick out of. Download pictures of movie cases (www.amazon.com) or (www.blockbuster.com), bring real cases, or cut them out of the newspaper cinema section, glue them to index cards and create a set of movie cards. Then, after a pre-

speaking activity on the kinds of movies they like and favorite stars, divide the group into two teams. The game is to show them the scenes/cases and have them try to say as much as possible about the movie (10 scenes/cases will do)

They can talk about titles, actors, directors, and so forth. Also allow them to say the title in L1 if they do not remember the original name in English, if you feel it is prudent. It is very fun because it stimulates negotiation and a little bit of 'healthy' competition. Each piece of information from each team receives 1 point. The idea is to let both teams speak before correcting everything about each movie. Of course, the teacher has to do some research on movies in case he/she is not familiar with the topic. The team with more correct information wins the prizes the teacher brings to class.

Museum Mystery Painting

Make color copies of paintings and post them on the board or around the room without the titles on them. The paintings have to be similar (for example a series on seas, flowers, lighthouses, mountains, etc). Groups of three or four students are also given a stapled packet of the same paintings, and are asked to choose ONE painting. They should list all the details they find in the painting on a sheet of paper (this is great for vocabulary-building).

Then, the groups are asked to write a paragraph in which they

describe the painting objectively but in such detail that a person entering the classroom/museum would be able to identify it on the wall without too much head-scratching (NOTE the students can't be too obvious with their descriptions, but not too vague either – this teaches them careful use of vocabulary and sensory detail) A group member reads their paragraph to the rest of the class, and other groups have to guess which painting it is As an alternative, have other classes, (or another teacher!) come in to try to guess

Extraordinary Oral Eyes

Tell your students to imagine that they are taking a friend to visit their home Their friend however is blind They have to describe in (meticulous) detail everything about their house to their friend

It helps enormously if you prepare a vocabulary sheet including words and phrases referring to "layout" "location" "size" "colours" "objects contained" and "positions"

The second prep sheet is simply one large square divided horizontally to denote a two floor house Even in apartments this is still useful to show which floor the person lives on You will need plenty of these

One student has to describe his/her house while the other students have to listen and draw what they here (Then it is the next

person's turn) It is useful to allow the speaker to see the listeners' pictures because it jolts him/her into realising east has been confused with west right with left, etc You could make it into a prize winning game, whereby the speaker chooses the most correct picture

Simple Future Tense and Tarot Cards

Tarot cards! Make them yourself or buy them Make your own or have your students draw about 20 simple little pictures which represent such things as travel, heart, broken heart money, no money, family man, woman, child, time, death!, fire, loneliness/independence power/strength weakness, be careful, foolishness, devil, work etc

You can have the students help you draw them and/or discuss how each image makes them feel! Then introduce simple future tense and tell each other's fortunes! Good for all levels! Great fun for everyone!

Painting a Picture Photo Description

Divide the class into groups of 3 to 5 students Give each group a different photograph You can use many photographs of your home and other travel experiences so you can give each group a really different photo Each group has about ten minutes to talk about the photograph and pick out all the interesting things about it Then each group goes to the front of the classroom and describes their photo

without showing it to the rest of the class. They must describe everything they can, landscape and people's appearance (clothing, hair, what they are doing) so that the students listening imagine what the photographs actually look like. After they finish describing they show the photograph and see if what the listeners imagined is similar to the description.

Draw Your Name

This activity should be done the first day of class if students don't know each other. I've done it many times and students love it!

Draw on the board as many objects as the letters in your name. The first letter of the name of each object must be a letter in your name. Draw the objects at random order. Have your students tell you the names of each object and write them on the board.

Then, tell them that they have to put the first letter of the name of each object in the correct order so as to come up with your name. Finally, ask your students to do the same so that the rest of the class can guess their names. Example: If you draw an apple, an elephant, a ring, a car, a girl, an island, and an ant and a lamp you get the name Graciela.

Picking Pictures

This is a good first day activity if you have a bunch of simple pictures on file, as many ESL teachers do. After each student has told the

class a few things about himself/herself have him or her choose a picture from an assortment of 15-20 pictures

The class has 3-5 guesses to try to figure out why the person chose the picture. If no one guesses correctly then the student explains it. Some pictures that can be used with this: a car, a ring, a TV, a baby, a bird. It's fine for the pictures to be simple because they will add more personalized meanings to it.

Teacher Photos

Students are usually very interested in the life of their teacher. A good way to share information about yourself is to bring your photo albums into class. Let each student choose a photo. They then think of three questions to ask about each photo. Give them the answers and pair them up. They then tell their partner about the photo and exchange photos. They then change partners and share the information they learned about the new photo. You can change partners several times. It's fun to ask questions about the photos at the end of the session because sometimes the information the last student has is different from the information you gave out. This is a great way for students to learn about your family and experiences even if your photos do take a beating.

Van Gough in All of Us

For those classes who are shy to speak at the beginning, give

them an activity and by the end they will find they are speaking
merrily away

You will need a blank piece of paper for each student as well as
coloured markers. And most important your own piece of
resistance! Each person needs to draw their name on the piece of
paper - in as creative a way as possible, along with 3 things about
themselves. It is important to tell them not to just write "tennis" for
example, but to rather draw a tennis racquet or balls or someone
playing on a court.

At the end of the allocated time they need to introduce themselves to
those at their table using this as a springboard. With not everyone
being Van Gogh this brings loads of giggles and relaxes them.

Picture Pages

This activity involves a little preparation on the teacher's part.
First of all the teacher needs to have a small amount of artistic
ability - very small required. Anyhow, simply draw some pictures on a
sheet of paper and label them respectively. Leave one space for the
students to draw a picture for themselves. Have the students get into
small groups of two or three and write a story (anywhere from six
sentences on) using the pictures provided, and the one they draw
themselves. The teacher should use pictures that can be used for a
multiplicity of stories. For example, give your students a sheet of

paper containing pictures of a chair rabbit grill car, key and one empty space After the students are given ample time to write their stories the teacher can have the students read their stories, and then help review them for errors and correct these in class The stories can be funny, sad, bad, nice, or even bloody – It doesn't matter as long as they have fun and are learning!

14 Visual Lesson Plans That Explore Cartoons

Are you looking to create alternative activities to keep students' interests in class? Why not use cartoons to teach English Cartoons can be used to teach reading writing, speaking and even listening Below you will find some sample lesson ideas that can be used across levels and most curriculums for supplementary activities

- 1 At the most basic level of a cartoon activity, are the basic dialogue techniques For example, cut a cartoon strip out of a local paper Next take some white-out or a corrector pen and remove the dialogue in the box Photocopy enough strips for the entire class Ask students to rewrite the dialogue in the open spaces If time permits ask students to read their dialogues to the pupils
- 2 Cut out a cartoon strip and remove key vocabulary items or grammatical structures with white-out or a corrector pen Ask them to make educated guesses about the

missing vocabulary words. Let the students compare their answers with each other. Next, allow students to compare the language use that he or she made with other students' choices in the class. The comparison activity can be used as a lead-in lesson on word selection, structural choice, or grammatical differences in form and/or function. It can allow students to examine the appropriateness of their choices. This lesson can be furthered by the use of a thesaurus. Students can be asked to find antonyms and synonyms for his or her decision for a lexical item. Next, ask students whether or not these choices can be substituted into the cartoon dialogue. This is a nice introduction into looking into language not only in a form, but in a functional perspective.

- 3 Ask students to cut out a cartoon strip from the paper every day for a two-week period. Ask the students to paste each cartoon on a separate piece of paper. Next, ask the students to rewrite the dialogue in the past tense or in the future. In the second part of the activity, ask the students to write the dialogue in the present negative, past negative, or in the future negative. You can adapt this lesson by asking the students to rewrite the dialogue using direct or indirect speech patterns.

- 4 Ask students to cut out a cartoon for one week. Next, have the students paste each cartoon under one another in consecutive order. Ask the students to photocopy enough pages of their cartoon for a few groups or for the entire class. Then, have the students read the cartoons and write essays discussing what has happened in the progression of the story. This should be followed up with the students writing about how they may/might have changed the story line accompanied with a short explanation of how it would benefit the characters by making these alterations. An alternate lesson, would be to write conditional sentences that would indicate how the story would have changed, if the character had responded differently.
- 5 Why not exploit a "Pete and repeat" activity? Take a cartoon out of the paper and photocopy it twice. Leave one cartoon alone, but make a few alterations on the second cartoon that indicate minor differences. Make enough copies of each for half the class. Pair students together allowing one person to have a copy of picture A and one student to have a picture of copy B. Ask the students (without allowing them to look at the partner's

picture) to find the differences between the two pictures through verbal negotiation

- 6 Ask the students to find cartoons on the internet. Allow students to download the cartoons from Email card sites such as www.bluemountain.com, www.ohmygoodness.com, www.bemine.com, or at any other electronic card sites. Students may also want to download cards from various web cartoon sites such as www.cartoonery.com on the internet. Next, have the students write poems, stories, or commentaries about the cartoons they have chosen. Perhaps they could be asked to create computer graphic storyboards with texts by importing the images to be the basis for a related educational technology project.
- 7 Ask the students to cut out a favorite cartoon character. Require the students to write a children's story to help a younger sibling learn how to read English. This activity emphasizes grammatical structures and spelling at the fundamental levels. Allow students to share their books with the class. You can ask students to create glossaries to accompany their book to help reinforce vocabulary.
- 8 Cartoon T-shirts are very popular. Ask students around

examination time to create the "REVIEW T-shirt" This involves students creating a cartoon character of themselves or an imaginary bubble figure that explains grammar points or sample lexical items all over the T-shirt in various designs This activity encourages students to review materials and to re-read what they have written Put the T-shirts on display and allow students to read the grammar and vocabulary on other pupils T-shirts for further reinforcement of the materials learned in the course

- 9 Download pictures from ClipArt and use them as a basis for comparison For example take 2 or 3 pictures of men or women (depending on the gender of the students that you teach) from the selection Ask students to write sentences in the comparative and superlative Moreover, suggest to the students that they should compare similitudes by using the positive with phrases like Ibrahim is as tall as Yagoob A second idea is to take image selections from ClipArt or a cartoon strip and have students post them on paper Next ask the students to number the objects in the picture Ask students to post their pictures on the wall Require students to walk station to station with their notebooks recording all of the vocabulary words that they know from the images Words

that they do not know or that seem unfamiliar to the students must be drawn into their notebooks. Students can ask each other what is the object, look it up in a picture dictionary, and/or ask the teacher.

- 10 Allow students to create language game boards. Ask groups of students to think up an original game that other students could play to learn English. Let them use cartoon figures from the newspaper as game pieces to move along the board as they answer questions.
- 11 Give half the class the cartoon with dialogue and give the other half of the class the same cartoon without dialogue. Ask a partner to dictate the dialogue for extra listening practice. Next, allow students to compare answers.
- 12 Ask students to create their own comic books with a cartoon character that they design. Allow the students to share their comic books in the class. Perhaps, you could create a reading corner that displays the student-produced comic books for pupils to use in their free time between lessons.
- 13 Ask students to create a cartoon or to use a cartoon for a puppet show. Students are required to write and to

perform the dialogue for the entire class. Because a small stage can be made and the students can hide behind a table when speaking, this can lower student anxiety about using the language.

14. Cut out cartoons from different series and paste them onto a big piece of paper. Pass the cartoons out around the class without the dialogues attached. Next, let the students listen to a series of dialogues that you pre-record on a tape. Allow students to match the conversation with the correct set of cartoon characters based on the visual image.

Stevick (1982) states that traditional methods in education have fed the left hemisphere of the brain more than they have fed the right hemisphere, and have also made their greatest demands on the left hemisphere. This suggests that, at least at some point in each lesson, we should take account of the aesthetic, holistic, uncritical but mute half of the brain as well as the rational, analytical, critical, and talkative half.

Perhaps the most important feature of this is that, once a student has drawn a picture, he or she potentially has something to say. When students, in particular beginners, realize that they do not have to know how to "say" everything they draw, the pictures become

a liberating element for them, a cue to learning and eventually to speech

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

DESIGN

This study is applied research using survey techniques, which was basically carried out through the use of certain instruments which provided valuable data and threw some light upon the selection of appropriate strategies for developing oral communication skills. In addition, there is an experimental part in which selected activities were undertaken to observe students' reactions toward their use. Besides, this study depends on observations which were conducted in English classes in the Instituto Urraca which emphasized oral communication in an attempt to gather more useful data. In other words, the present study was not based on random selection, but it was rather directed to underline the importance of speaking skills and the need to select the adequate ways to develop them.

PROCEDURE

This research has been conducted following the procedure described below:

1. Implementation of some techniques and activities. For the implementation phase of this research, one group of 32 students of the fifth level of the commercial track taking English as a subject in secondary school (Instituto Urraca) were considered as a sample for this research.

The ages of individuals selected as subjects of this research range was from 16 to 18 years old. Most of the students in this group were female and they come from different places in Veraguas province. In addition, this group was not randomly selected; it was selected because it was a good group of students in terms of grades and also because they were the counseling of the researcher.

On the other hand, the administration of this technique and also the instruments were carried out during those days in which classes were active. First, the students received from the teacher the general directions about the activity without telling them the real purpose of it. The teacher asked them to bring for next class pieces of paper, color pencils, rulers, and some other resources useful to do interesting drawings, without telling them what was the real purpose of the activity, which was the promotion of oral communication skills. Then, the next class, just a few students could bring the materials requested, and the activity was postponed for the next English class, but they had to bring the materials asked. Then, when the class started again, all of them brought the resources, and they received the instructions from the teacher, which was, to make groups of five students and

feel relaxed because "today you are just going to draw whatever you want choose a free topic and draw Do not worry about the beauty, colors, and so on of your drawings just try to do your best" They were just thinking of drawing After the directions were given, they started drawing, even those who from the beginning of the class did not want to participate After that, students asked some questions, some of them were surprised about the activity, since other students looked as if they were worried or bored, the teacher gave them more instructions, but now per group, it means that the teacher was monitoring the activity and the groups as well

The students could not finish their drawings because of time Then the teacher collected them and they continued in the next class Finally, the follow step consisted of explaining to them the real purpose of the activity, they had to describe orally or tell something about their drawings, but this time to the members of each group, after that, one volunteer described one or two drawings from the group in front of the whole class

The activities were implemented and evaluated, and the resulting data were analyzed and presented in the findings The data were, further, interpreted as to how

they provided a likely solution to the problem stated and conclusions were presented too

- 2 A set of questionnaires, which consisted of five questions each one to be administered to both six professors of the English department and 32 students of the business track from the Instituto Urraca was constructed, in order to ascertain their opinions, feelings, and insights about the topic of the research. Just three English teachers answered the instruments. The resulting data were analyzed in the finding section with the conclusions and recommendations.
- 3 The data resulting from the application of the instruments, were analyzed and presented in Chapter IV Findings. As a result of the analysis of the information gathered through the review of the related literature and the data presented in the findings, conclusions emerged. The conclusions and the resulting recommendations can be found in the final chapter of this study.
- 4 Moreover, an additional instrument was designed and administered to another sample of students in this case 15 students from the preparatory English course of the CRUV. In fact, it was believed that the administration of

the new instrument a questionnaire consisting of seven items, was useful in collecting more data about students' points of view regarding motivation-related techniques in English classes

SAMPLE

As stated before, the sample considered in this research included 32 students of fifth level in the Instituto Urracá. Specifically, the individuals selected are rather average students attending English classes in the Business track. In fact, at least 16 students which constituted the sample live, in Santiago city, and their performance in classes were thought to be representative. The others students selected do not live in Santiago, but in near districts.

Particularly, the sample selected were thought to be representative of the target population since the main problems they had were based on oral communication, as a consequence of first language interference and poor background. The students were selected according to their average performance and through an analysis of their scores obtained along the bimonthly evaluation among the rest of the five groups which the teacher attended. Also, they were chosen because they were the group of the teacher's counseling. In addition, the English teachers working in the Instituto Urracá were viewed as a supporting sample, which provided valuable

data in complementing the results and findings later described in the last part of this research. In short, the samples were not selected randomly, but were specified in order to guarantee the validity of the results obtained.

The Instituto Urraca is located in the San Martín neighborhood, the corregimiento (political division) of San Martín, in the district of Santiago, Veraguas Province. It was founded in 1964 with a first cycle (junior high school), and, in 1969, a second cycle (high school) was added. This is a public school, which has 132 professors and a population of approximately 2,800 students. The students are primarily from lower, lower middle, and middle income families, but represent all the economic classes. The school population includes both urban and rural students, many of whom travel long distances everyday to attend classes.

At present, the Instituto Urracá only provides instruction for second cycle students. The second cycle is divided into three tracks: commerce, science, and letters. In the commerce program, students receive special training in advertising and accounting. At the end of the second cycle, graduates receive either a Bachelor of Commerce, a Bachelor of Science, or a Bachelor of Letters.

The Instituto Urracá is a big school, with 18 English teachers who provide from three to five hours of instruction weekly to each

group One hour is used for the language laboratory

The Instituto Urracá has a variety of facilities to offer its student population, among which are laboratories for biology, physics, chemistry, typewriting, accounting, advertising, office machines, language, and computer, cafeteria teachers' room, library, student welfare, an orientation department, sports areas and the counselor service It also has almost 50 administrative personnel, among whom are inspectors, messengers, librarians, principals, drivers, watchmen and so forth In this school one can find many students from different parts of the province

Furthermore, the additional sample included in this research consists of fifteen students who had just graduated from high schools such as Colegio José Bonifacio Alvarado (a secondary school located in Soná, Veraguas Province), Escuela Normal Superior Juan D Arosemena, Colegio Rafael Quintero Villarreal (a secondary school located in Ocu Herrera Province) Instituto Richard Newman They age range are 17-19 years old These students were taking a preparatory course in English in the Centro Regional Universitario de Veraguas

The Centro Regional Universitario de Veraguas, the setting in which the practice was carried out, is located in the municipality of Santiago, specifically in the Canto del Llano District Its present name

was given when the Universidad de Panama was reopened in 1969. Before that date, this institution was known as Extensión Universitaria de Santiago, a name signed by the Asamblea Nacional when these university branches were created in 1958. The then-called Extensión Universitaria de Santiago, in fact, began offering courses in 1960. By that time, there were only six courses, and, little by little, the number increased.

Initially, the Extensión Universitaria was located in the classrooms of the Escuela Normal Juan Demóstenes Arosemena and was moved to other facilities and buildings such as the Colegio San Vicente de Paul, Instituto Urracá, Escuela Anexa El Canadá, and the old dormitory building where students of the Escuela Normal were once lodged. In 1975, the Extensión Universitaria was, at last, installed in its present location with limited facilities which have since been improved and expanded.

The Centro Regional Universitario de Veraguas has seven buildings: one for Business Administration, one for Education, one for those programs within the Humanities Faculty, one for those of Economics and Art, and one for Odontology and Tourism. In addition, the Centro Regional has a building for the administration offices and the library. Also, it provides the following facilities: several laboratories, an auditorium, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, a teachers lounge, computing classrooms, an office for student affairs and

parking lots

This university offers over thirty careers under the auspices of thirteen different faculties which are as follows Business Administration, Public Administration, Arts, Architecture, Agricultural Sciences Education, Natural Sciences, Laws, Economics, Nursing, Humanities, Odontology and Electronics and Computing which is closely linked to computer- tutoring for students Also, the Centro Regional offers graduate programs in Budget Management of Social Welfare Educational Mathematics School Supervision, School Administration Higher Education English and so forth

CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

OBSERVATIONS

At the time the instruments which were designed and constructed for carrying out this study, was properly administered, all the subjects selected were available. Regarding the drawing activities planned the students were somewhat surprised because they never used it as a way to promote oral communication. Some students asked for permission to use the dictionary while others preferred to ask the teacher for some words they needed.

According to the instructions the students selected were allowed to talk something related to their drawings (a picture a situation a person etc) and with a personal experience of their own. However the students produced some single phrases some of them which made no sense, as a consequence of their lack of vocabulary, short sentences, or simply common words. Consequently, some help was given to them in order to organize what they had to tell.

All the drawings were collected and checked and the oral performance too. The results were compared in an attempt to determine which activity may be more effective than the other. After the analysis, the students who participated were eager to know their results and a couple of them asked for having their papers returned.

On the other hand, regarding the instruments meant to be administered to the English teachers, a few papers were collected.

Initially it was thought that all the English teachers working in the afternoon section in the Instituto Urracá in Santiago, Veraguas province were going to participate in this research. However, due to certain complications and the short time available just three English teachers were given back the questionnaires, which were returned a little late in order to be analyzed. In fact, the resulting data obtained is also posted in the findings of this study.

It is necessary to point out some of the situations observed during the investigation. Some of the occurrences of interest included the following:

- ◆ Most students had no idea about the existence of drawing as an instructional technique in high school, they thought that drawings were only used in elementary school.
- ◆ Students in the majority were willing to collaborate in this research.
- ◆ The students clearly were not bored during the practice stage. They manifested enjoyment during the drawing activities.
- ◆ The teacher who was also the researcher, responded to all questions and doubts expressed before, during, and

after the activity

- ◆ Some students who showed no interest in drawing/talking at the beginning were ready to participate after their other classmates did
- ◆ Faster students encouraged slower students to participate, promoting a healthy cooperative environment
- ◆ The students' creativity was evident when they drew using their imaginations
- ◆ Students who liked to draw, frequently did not like to participate orally
- ◆ Students from other groups asked the researcher if they could participate in this activity
- ◆ The moment arrived when the teacher no longer had to give instructions

Finally, it must be noted that there was a slight change from the original design. Originally, two instruments were designed and administered to a sample of teachers and a sample of students from the Instituto Urraca. However, it was suggested to widen the scope of

this study by means of the selection of a further sample of students and the administration of a new instrument. In spite of this, it was believed that the resulting information was valuable for some additional conclusions to be drawn and for new recommendations to emerge.

FINDINGS

In order to carry this research, instruments to elicit data from the samples selected were designed, constructed and administered. As stated before, 32 students attending English classes in the fifth level of secondary education in the Instituto Urracá and fifteen students from the Centro Regional Universitario de Veraguas were considered as sample for this research (see appendix A, C). In particular, the instruments which were considered consisted in five and seven items respectively in an attempt to assess their performance and to determine the effectiveness of drawings activities and some other speaking activities such as games, role plays and so on.

After having conducted the activities, the results obtained were analyzed in an attempt to evaluate their effectiveness. Then, the results demonstrated that drawings for sure promote motivation and oral communication. In other words, the effectiveness of this activity in terms of eliciting speaking skills give self confidence to the

students to perform the language it does not matter the way they do the important thing is that it permits the students, when it was performed in class to talk without fear expressing their ideas using single words, phrases and short sentences (some of them did not make sense) but it happened as a result of their poor background The time used by the students to talk was between three and five minutes no more than that

On the other hand, regarding the instruments administered to three teachers of the Instituto Urracá other data were gathered (see appendix B) In fact the English teachers who participated in this study were given a survey questionnaire consisting of five items soliciting specific data Once all the papers were administered and collected they all were analyzed and evaluated as to how they responded to the items included

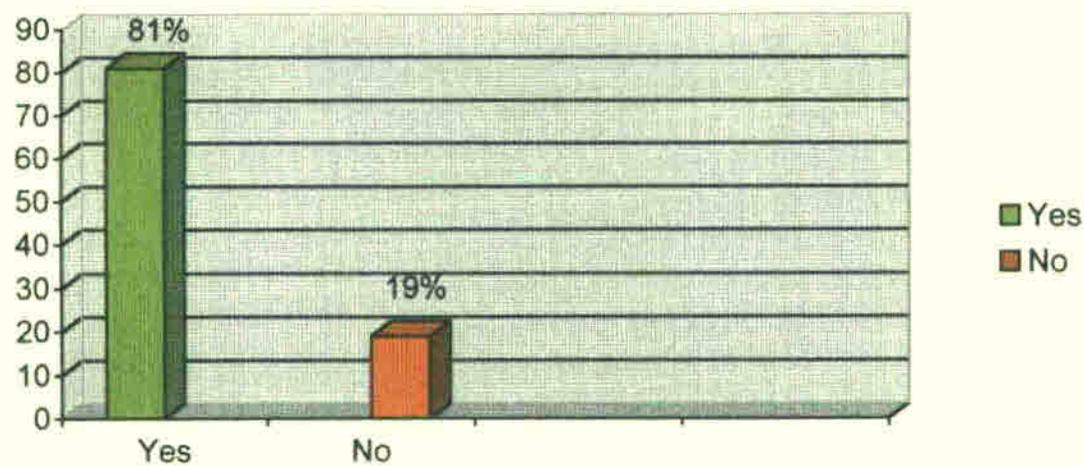
Responses to the instruments administered to the students are presented below

In response to the first question, as to whether the respondents teacher used their drawings as a technique in English class and what (s)he did with the drawings the following information emerged

TABLE No. 1

GROUP	N°	YES		NO	
		N°	%	N°	%
V B7	32	26	81%	6	19%

GRAPH 1



Twenty-six students answered that only in elementary school they used drawings and the teacher used these to grade their work.

The rest of the group responded never; this technique is new for them in the English class, because in the majority of the cases it was used in science lab or social studies in elementary school; in high school it was used in Commercial Art.

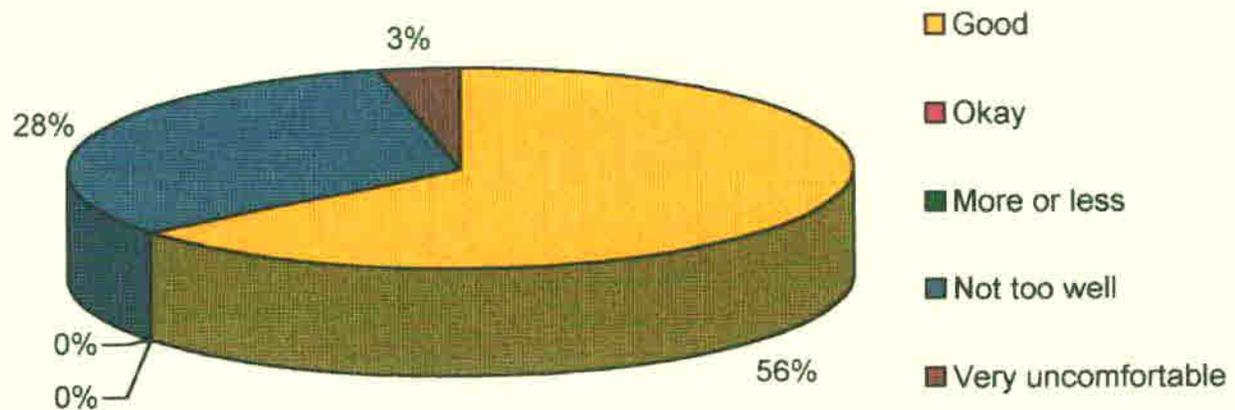
In response to the second question, as to whether the respondents think this technique was useful for them, the following information emerged:

TABLE 2

Group	N°	4		3		2		1		0	
		N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
V B7	32	18	56%	0	0%	0	0%	9	28%	1	3%
		Good		Okay		More or less		not too well		uncomfortable	

Four students did not respond.

GRAPH 2



At least 18 students approved of this technique. Some of them pointed out that it was easier for them to draw and explain their drawing briefly than to study a long list of verbs or other structures.

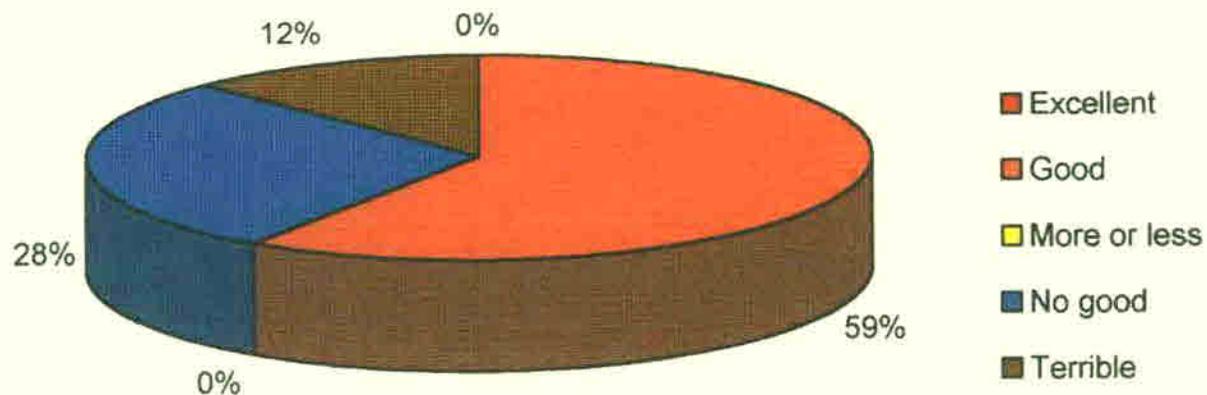
Nine students answered that for them it was a little more difficult; they just drew without thinking that afterwards they would have to talk. It was embarrassing for them. One student responded that for him it was not interesting, but, finally he had to participate. The rest did not answer this question.

In response to the third question, as to how the respondent feels when using this technique as a way to communicate, the following information emerged:

TABLE 3

Group	N°	4		3		2		1		0	
		N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
	32	19	59%	0	0%	0	0%	9	28%	4	12%
		Good		Okay		More or less		not too well		uncomfortable	

GRAPH 3



Nineteen students answered it felt good because it relaxed them. Nine students responded it was not too well because they do not like to talk and 4 students answered they liked the activity but do not have any idea of how to express their thoughts in words.

In response to the last question, as whether the respondent would like his teacher to use this techniques with his group again, almost all the students answered they would like it at least once a month not only in English class. They recommended that the teacher give more time for this activity.

The questionnaire administered to the teachers yielded the following data:

In response to the first question, as to what kind of techniques the respondent usually uses to teach English, the first answered that s/he uses different techniques, for example dialogues, speech role playing, individual and work group.

The second just answered "many". The last teacher responded that individual and group work, reading comprehension, dramatization, role playing, dialogues and others.

In response to the second question, as to whether the respondent used the drawing technique with his/her students, one

teacher answered yes, but he did not explain how he used it. Another responded yes, but when he was working as a teacher in the elementary school just as an activity to relax the students and to develop gross motor skills, it was not a graded activity. The last teacher who also was the least cooperative, responded simply "never"

In response to the third question, as to how the students reacted to this technique, the first teacher answered that they were excited when the teacher told them about the drawing but, when the time to participate orally came they were worried about how they could speak. But finally they did and even those students, who from the beginning of the course were not willing to participate, liked it.

The second answered my students were always very eager to use this technique. "I suppose because they are children"

The third teacher did not respond to the question.

In response to the fourth question, as to whether the respondent thinks that this technique motivated the students, the first teacher said yes, even when they knew that they would have to talk, they made many jokes about the drawings of their classmates. It was nice.

The second teacher responded "of course" they had some kind of competition in order to finish first and do the best drawing

The third teacher said that she supposed that it could motivate her students

In response to the fifth question as to whether the informant encountered any problem in using the drawing techniques, the first teacher said yes, because some students at the beginning stated that they did not have the ability to draw. Moreover, some of them did not have the didactic material, such as colored pencils to draw and they had to work in pairs in order to use the pencils. It was a little difficult and took time.

The second teacher answered that for him/her there were no problems.

The third teacher said that s/he did not have any problem because s/he had not yet used the technique.

In response to the last question as to whether the respondent will continue to use this technique, the first respondent said yes but just once a month after some corrections about time, objective, didactic material, etc.

The second answered if she has the opportunity and more information about it, and if it is useful for the students of course

The last teacher said yes, but not this year because he needs to read or investigate how it works

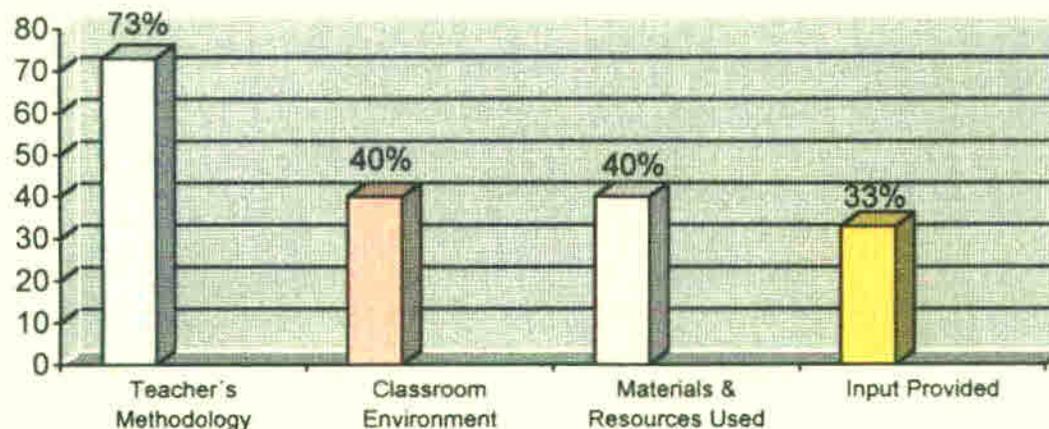
The additional instrument administered in order to collect more data for this research consisted of a questionnaire with seven items. This instrument was administered to a group of 15 students who graduated from different secondary schools. The responses to the new instrument administered to this group are presented below.

In response to the first question, as to what factors make classes more or less motivating, the following data emerged:

TABLE No. 4

Group	N°	TEACHER METHODOLOGY		CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT		MATERIALS AND RESOURCES USES		CONTENT TO BE TAUGHT	
		N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
	15	11	73%	6	40%	6	40%	4	33%

GRAPH No. 4



The frequency of responses showed that a teacher's methodology plays a very important role in making classes encouraging. According to the informants' points of view, teachers should do their best in providing everything needed to set a favorable situation for motivation to be built. In addition the classroom environment and the materials and resources used are also useful in making classes motivating since they were said to foster confidence and interest in classes. Finally, the input provided was said to be

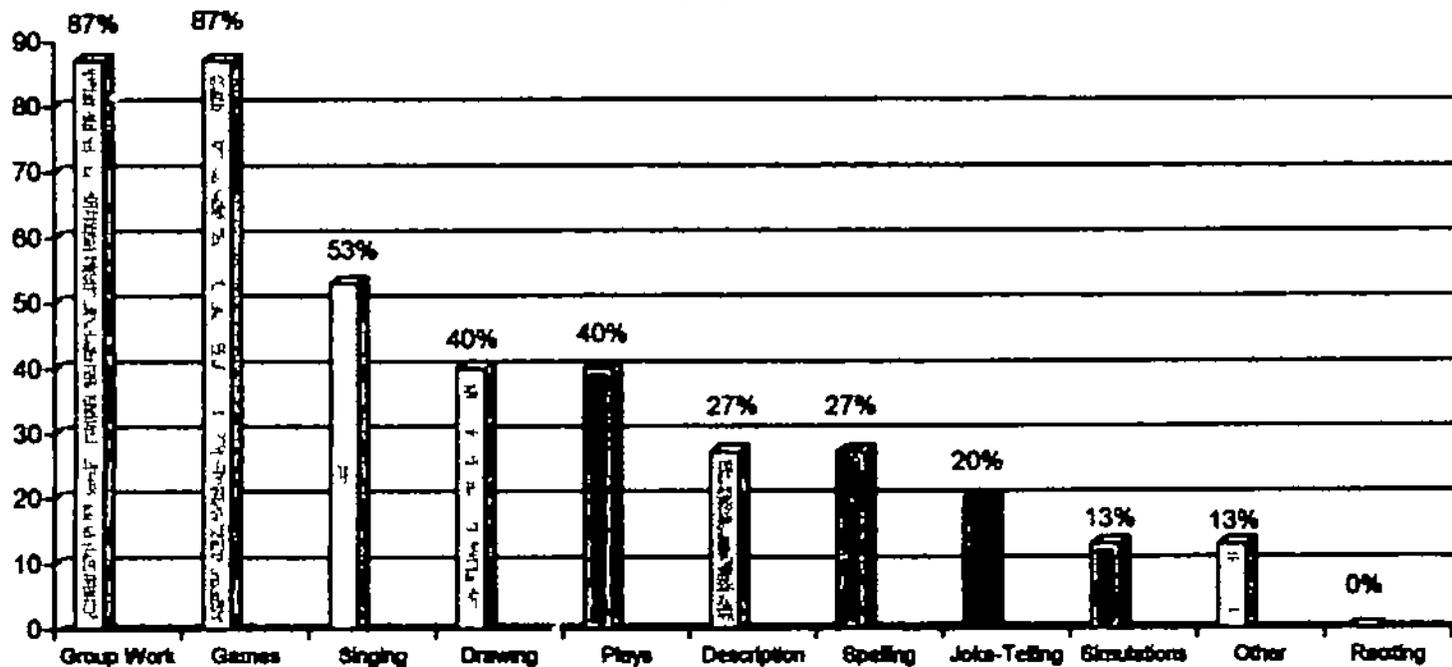
adjusted so that it can promote anxiety-free performance. In other words, all of the factors mentioned are good at making classes motivating, but the way teachers perform was to be over the rest.

In response to the second question as to what are the most motivating activities according to the informant's point of view the following data emerged

TABLE No 5

GROUP	MOTIVATING ACTIVITIES	No	%
15	Group Work	13	87
	Games	13	87
	Singing	7	53
	Drawings	6	40
	Role Plays	6	40
	Descriptions	4	27
	Spelling	4	27
	Joke-telling	3	20
	Simulations	1	13
	Others	1	13
	Reciting	0	0

GRAPH No 5



The frequency of responses showed that working in group and playing games are the most motivating activities in classes. In fact, most of the informants stated that these activities, which involve performing as a whole, make them gain some confidence in a friendly atmosphere. Singing, drawing, and role plays were considered as somewhat motivating but still profitable since they were said to add some novelty in classes according to some informants. The rest of the activities listed (description, spelling, joke-telling, simulations, and so on) were considered little motivating since they commonly involve individual performance, which decreases motivation according to some informants. In sum, we can say students feel more motivated when asked to perform in group because it allows them to achieve

confidence through cooperation and/or fellowship

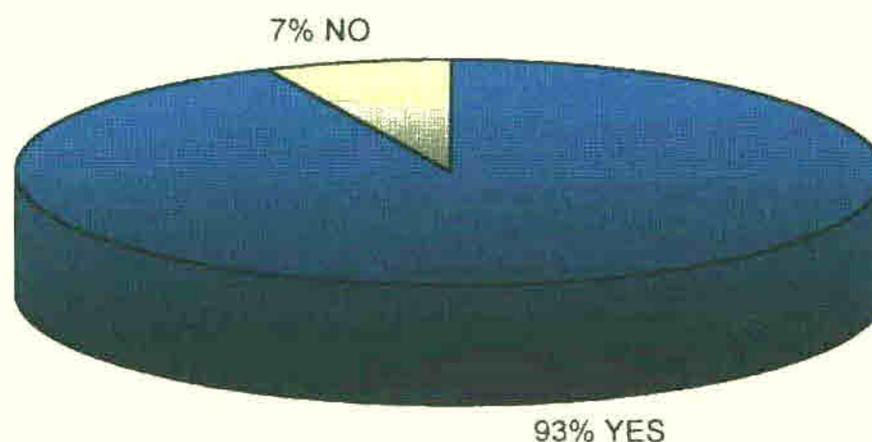
In response to the third question as to how the listed activities were used the informants provided interesting responses. Some stated that the teacher used some visual aids or realia as a means to increase attention while others said that teacher's creativity was remarkable when it came to deriving activities from specific contents. In fact most of the students asserted that the teacher's ability was crucial in carrying out diverse activities which add some vitality to the class.

In response to the fourth question as to whether the informants are encouraged to try English communication when attending English classes the following data emerged:

TABLE No. 6

GROUP	ORAL ENGLISH COMMUNICATION	No.	%
15	YES	14	93
	NO	1	7

GRAPH No. 6



Most of the students stated that they did feel encouraged to use the English language with communicative purposes. In particular, most of the students asserted that they are pushed to use the language orally by their inner drive to speak a second language. In other words, their personal aspirations or desires of becoming fluent second language speakers encourage them to learn how to use the language in communicational transactions by means of oral activities (role-plays, dialogues, etc.) However, the rest stated that a more relaxing and motivating atmosphere is needed to try English

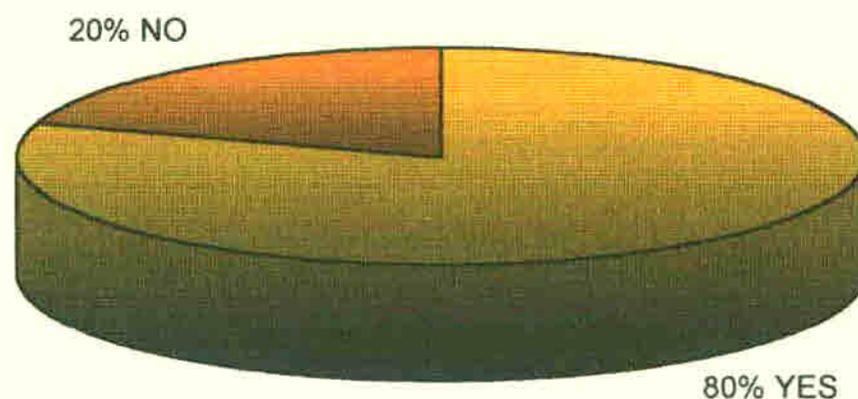
communication in classes. Also, it was said that awareness of English language importance is desirable to fuel motivation.

In response to the fifth question, as to whether the informants are tension-free with the techniques/approaches used in classes, the following data emerged:

TABLE No. 7

GROUP		No.	%
15	YES	12	80
	NO	3	20

GRAPH No. 7



Most of the students stated that they are not inhibited by tension or fear in English classes; they are moved by confidence and respect in classes. Moreover, some students said that their desire to learn is enough to feel tension-free in classes. However, some

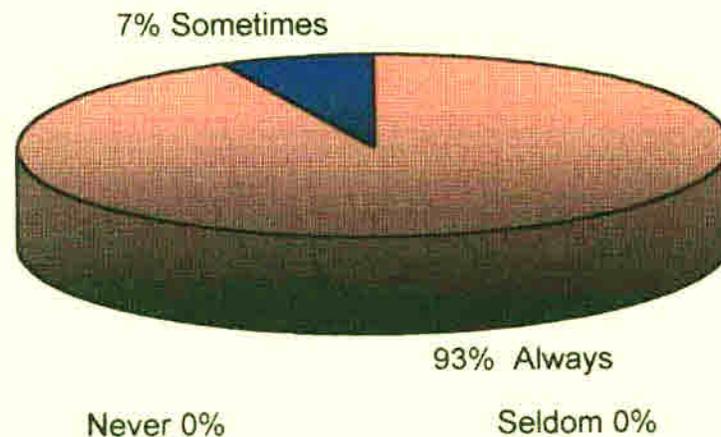
students said that an additional boost is necessary to make them gain confidence and perform well in classes.

In response to the sixth question, as to how frequently oral communication should be stressed in English classes, the following data emerged:

TABLE No. 8

Group	N°	ALWAYS		SOMETIMES		SELDOM		NEVER	
		N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
	15	14	93%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%

GRAPH No.8



As it is shown above, it is clear that oral communication must be stressed in English classes. According to students, if oral communication is always stressed in classes, their chances to

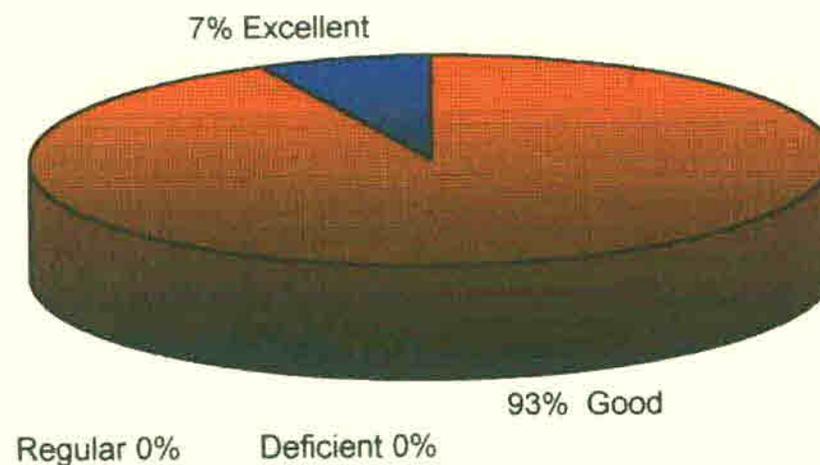
develop their speaking skills would be higher. Also if oral communication, according to the informants, is that frequent, they consider they will be able to start and maintain conversations, increasing their confidence and self-esteem.

In response to the seventh question, as to how informants' performance unfolds in classes based on motivational techniques and/or activities, the following data emerged:

TABLE No. 9

Group	N°	EXCELLENT		GOOD		REGULAR		DEFICIENT	
		N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
	15	1	7%	14	93%	0	0%	0	0%

GRAPH No. 9



As the informants stated their performance in classes is acceptable since they think they are becoming aware of using the English language for communicative purposes. Also, it was said that the use of motivational techniques and/or activities increases performance in classes because it helps students not to feel embarrassed or inhibited. Furthermore, those techniques and/or approaches are also said to be more effective if implemented with positive attitude towards the language.

DELIMITATIONS

This study is applied research using survey techniques. It was undertaken to respond to the requirement of a thesis for the degree of Masters in Teaching English as a Second Language of the Universidad de Panama. It was beyond the scope of this study to include the large varied samples required for extensive generalizability of findings. The samples used were convenient samples but are considered to be typical of English language learners of this age in the public secondary schools of the central provinces of the isthmus.

Moreover, it is believed that the results of this research are both valid and generalizable to populations sharing the characteristics of the sample with which this research was conducted, and that this study makes a contribution in the area of dynamic instructional techniques for promoting the development of oral ability in English.

CONCLUSIONS

Because opportunities for developing oral language skills are severely limited in an EFL situation, teachers carry the sole responsibility for selecting and designing listening and speaking activities that engage students in authentic language use. The tendency of some teachers to place excessive emphasis on grammar rules and exercises and on lengthy literary analyses in the classroom often detracts from the building of oral language skills.

Listening and speaking are active processes and should be taught in a manner that will induce students to take an active role in learning. In language learning, as with any other skill, we learn to do only what we have practiced many times. This practice becomes more meaningful if topics and events from the "real" world are used as springboards for launching genuine communication in the classroom.

As a result of this research, the following conclusions have emerged:

1. Motivation plays an important role in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) because learning a new language is a process that has a lot to do with our affective domain.

- 2 Students do not dislike the English language but rather the way it is usually taught
- 3 Students want and need to learn the four basic skills (especially speaking), and the subjects of this study stated that they do not like classes based mainly on grammar
- 4 EFL teachers need to be up-to-date in order to satisfy their students' needs and interests through the implementation of motivating activities
- 5 Drawing activities are useful instructional techniques at all levels of understanding and provide help in many skills' areas
- 6 Teamwork promotes cooperative learning and makes students feel less anxious in front of the teacher or classmates
- 7 Slower students can show more interest in group work if the faster learners are encouraged to help them
- 8 Techniques such as drawing applied in this research, need to be correctly used in order to obtain clear

feedback from the learners

- 9 The message is more important than the structural view of the language, for a meaningful communication
- 10 When teachers are willing to experiment with drawing as an instructional technique or activity they will find themselves constantly on the lookout for other new ideas
- 11 Drawings are not difficult to produce, and they help teachers to reinforce weak points in the learning process
- 12 With drawings, students are induced to produce the new language with less anxiety than in other learning situations
- 13 Motivation provokes interaction which implicitly involves communication and drawings are motivating and interactive
- 14 Drawings help to develop the students' skills in asking questions, enlarge their vocabulary, and improve their listening comprehension
- 15 A positive atmosphere is crucial to encourage students to

become more interested in the English language and more engaged in their learning process

- 16 Students will to learn and become good English speakers can be said to be factors that can make them feel tension-free in classes So teachers should take advantage of both of them
- 17 A constant emphasis on communicational activities can develop students speaking skills and even make them skilled to start and maintain conversations in English

RECOMMENDATIONS

After having drawn the conclusions based on the findings, the following recommendations have emerged with the purpose of contributing to make appropriate decisions about the implementation of instructional techniques at any language level to promote the development of oral communication skills

- 1 It is recommended that the Ministerio de Educación, upgrade the instructional program of the English subject, in such a way that it is adequate for the real situation of Panamanian students
- 2 Teachers must try to use the appropriate activities for each group which is to say, the activities that are most effective according to the age, interest and ability of their students
- 3 Teachers should explain to their students how the activity will help them, what is the purpose, the importance for learning English, giving them the rules and directions of the activity clearly, simply, and briefly, it will remove from the students mind much of the shyness and embarrassment that hinder practice in EFL, and this will make the classroom atmosphere freer, friendlier, and

hence more favorable for communicative- interactive activities

- 4 Teachers should never use an activity if they do not know or understand it well
- 5 Needless to say, drawings are not an everyday activity They will be less fun and less effective if they were used as part of a routine since they require a good deal of class time The teacher must decide how to use them most effectively and efficiently In large classes they lend themselves to group work as well any other activity suggested by Mora, (1988 pg 187)
- 6 Teacher must begin to establish a setting for genuine communication in English by speaking only in English to students at all levels from the very first day of class EFL teachers need to force themselves to speak English in the classroom at all times using different techniques
- 7 Teachers will become models for spoken English students will, unconsciously, pick up phrases repeated by the teacher, either in class or in casual conversation
- 8 Give the students cue words, this means the words or

expressions that the teacher should give his/her students to encourage them to practice the target language in real contexts

- 9 In order to improve teacher's efficiency, teachers must attend local teacher's groups and hold regular meetings to discuss problems of English teaching, join professional organizations, such as TESOL, and attend conference whenever possible Besides, invite fellow teachers, teacher trainers, guest speakers to contribute with lectures and workshops
- 10 Any effort the EFL teacher makes toward improving his or her oral language skill will be reflected in a greater confidence and ability to teach these skills in the classroom
- 11 Teachers should take into account the environment classes are held in In other words teachers must be engaged in setting a relaxing encouraging environment so that students can be pushed to use the target language with communicative purposes
- 12 Teachers should consider the frequency of communication-based activities in classes That is, they

should emphasize such activities constantly in order to provide students with enough opportunities to develop their speaking and communication skills

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Instructions. The following questions are part of a research project. Please read them and answer honestly. Try to expand your answer and give details whenever possible.

Thanks for your cooperation!

1 Has your teacher used drawings as a teaching technique in the English class? What did she/he do with your drawings?

2 Do you think this technique was useful for you? Explain

3 How do you feel when using drawings as a way to communicate?

4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1 _____ 0
 Excellent good more or less not too well very
 uncomfortable

4 Do you consider this is a good way to express yourself in front of the class without fear?

4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1 _____ 0
 excellent good more or less no good terrible

5 Would you like your teacher to use this technique with your group again?

Yes _____ no _____

How often?

_____ every week _____ never _____ every two weeks
 _____ once a month _____ once a bimonthly

COMMENTS _____

CUESTIONARIO PARA ESTUDIANTES

INSTRUCCIONES. Las siguientes preguntas son parte de un trabajo de investigación en la Universidad de Panamá. Por favor lea las preguntas y contéstelas con honestidad. Trate de ampliar sus respuestas cada vez que así lo considere. No escriba su nombre.

Gracias por su cooperación!

1 ¿Ha su profesor usado tus dibujos como técnica en la clase de Inglés?

¿Qué hace ella / él con tus dibujos?

2 ¿Piensa que ésta técnica fue útil para usted? Explique

3 ¿Cómo se siente cuando usa sus dibujos para comunicarse?

4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1 _____ 0

excelente buena más o menos no muy Buena desagradable

4 ¿Considera usted que es ésta una buena manera para expresarte enfrente de la clase sin temor?

4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1 _____ 0

excelente buena más o menos no muy buena desagradable

5 ¿Le gustaria que el profesor usara esta técnica con su grupo nuevamente?

Si _____ No _____

¿Qué tan frecuente?

_____ todas las semanas _____ cada dos semanas

_____ una vez al mes _____ una vez cada dos meses

_____ nunca

COMENTARIOS

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

INSTRUCTIONS *The following questions are part of a research project. Please read them and answer honestly. Try to expand your answer and give details whenever possible.*

Thanks you for your cooperation!

1 What kind of techniques do you usually use to teach English?

2 Did you use the drawing technique with your students? How did you use it?

3 How did your students react to this technique? Explain

4 Do you think this technique motivated the students? Explain

5 Did you encounter any problems in using the drawing techniques?

6 Do you think you will continue to use this technique? If so how often? As an occasional techniques or regularly?

CUESTIONARIO PARA PROFESORES

INSTRUCCIONES *Las siguientes preguntas son parte de un trabajo de investigación en la Universidad de Panamá. Por favor léalas y contéstelas con honestidad. Trate de ampliar sus respuestas cada vez que lo considere necesario.*

Gracias por su cooperación!

1 ¿Qué clase de técnica usualmente usa para enseñar Inglés?

2 ¿Usa usted la técnica de dibujo con sus estudiantes? ¿Cómo la usa? Explique

3 ¿Cómo reaccionan los estudiantes frente a esta técnica? Explique

4 ¿Cree usted que esta técnica motiva a los estudiantes a comunicarse en Inglés? Explique

5 ¿Ha encontrado algún problema con el uso de la técnica de dibujo? Explique

6 ¿Piensa usted seguir usando esta técnica? De ser así ¿Qué tan frecuente?
¿Cómo una técnica ocasional o regularmente?

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Instructions The following questions are part of a research project. Please read them and answer honestly Try to expand your answer and give details whenever possible

Thanks for your cooperation!

1 What makes your classes more or less motivating?

- * Teachers methodology _____
- * Classroom environment _____
- * Materials and resources used _____
- * Content to be taught _____

Explain _____

2 What kinds of activities do you consider motivating?

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| * Drawing _____ | Spelling _____ |
| * Games _____ | Singing _____ |
| * Joke-telling _____ | Recrting _____ |
| * Simulations _____ | Descriptions _____ |
| * Group work _____ | Role-plays _____ |
| * Others _____ | |

Explain _____

3 Explain how were these techniques and /or activities used in class?

4 Are you encouraged to communicate in English in your classes?

Yes _____ No _____

How? _____

5 Do you generally feel anxiety free with the techniques and/or activities are actually used in classes?

Yes _____ No _____

Why? _____

6 How frequently do you think oral communication should be stressed in classes?

Always _____ Seldom _____

Often _____ Never _____

Why? _____

7 How was your performance in the English classes with the techniques and/or activities that you selected?

Excellent _____ Good _____ More or less _____ Poor _____

Explain _____

CUESTIONARIO PARA ESTUDIANTES

INSTRUCCIONES Las siguientes preguntas son parte de un trabajo de investigación en la Universidad de Panamá. Por favor lea las preguntas y contéstelas con honestidad. Trate de ampliar sus respuestas cada vez que así lo considere. No escriba su nombre.

Gracias por su cooperación!

1. ¿Que considera usted hace sus clases de Inglés mas o menos motivadoras?

- * La metodología del profesor _____
- * El ambiente escolar _____
- * Recursos didácticos usados _____
- * El contenido enseñado _____

Explique _____

2. Cual de las siguientes actividades consideras motivadoras en clase?

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| * Dibujos | _____ | Deletrear | _____ |
| * Juegos | _____ | El canto | _____ |
| * Decir chistes | _____ | Recitar | _____ |
| * Imitación | _____ | Descripción | _____ |
| * Trabajo en grupo | _____ | Drama | _____ |
| * Otros | _____ | | |

Explique _____

3. Explique como fueron usadas las técnicas señaladas

4. ¿Se te ha estimulado a comunicarte en Inglés cuando asistes a clases?

Si _____ No _____

Explique _____

5. ¿Te sientes sin temor con las técnicas y/o actividades usadas en la clase de Inglés?

Si _____ No _____

Por que _____

6 ¿Que tan frecuente consideras que la comunicacion oral debe ser enfatizada en las clases de Ingles?

- * Siempre _____ Raras veces _____
* Nunca _____ Algunas veces _____

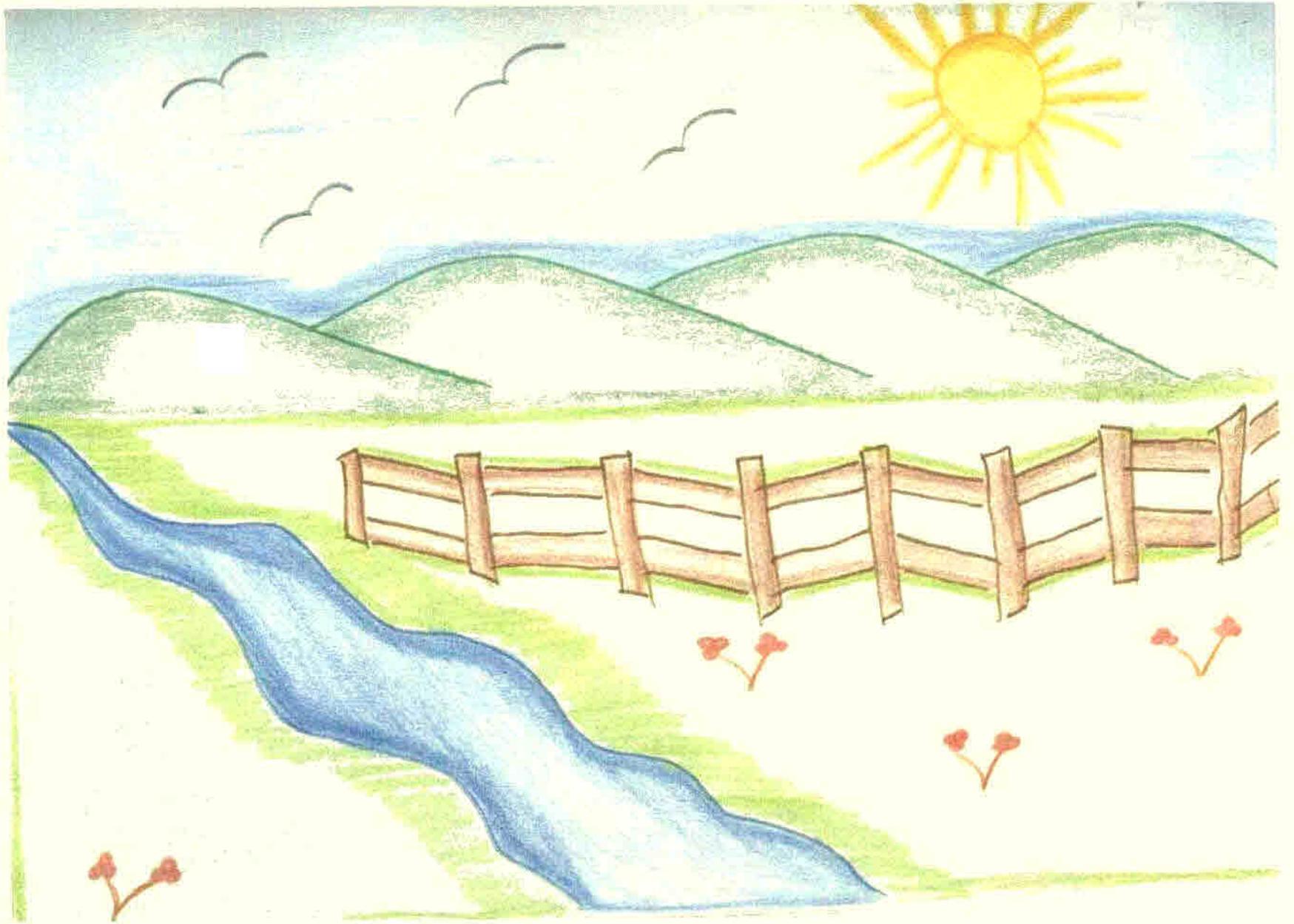
Explique _____

7 ¿Como ha sido tu desempeño en las clases de ingles con el uso de estas tecnicas v/o actividades?

Excelente _____ Bueno _____ Regular _____ Deficiente _____

Explique _____

APPENDIX D





SPOT
SURE

Amílcar Hernández
U03-7



