

INFORMAL COOPERATIVE LEARNING INFLUENCE ON VOCABULARY  
RETENTION WITH BEGINNERS

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## ABSTRACT

### INFORMAL COOPERATIVE LEARNING INFLUENCE ON VOCABULARY RETENTION WITH BEGINNERS

Two groups of 71 students in courses 4-1 and 4-2 aged nine to 12 years old at “Institución Educativa Municipal Santa Barbara” were chosen in order to determine the influence of the implementation of cooperative language learning on the vocabulary retention of beginners.

Both groups took a pretest and a post-test with the same procedure and content.

However different teaching instructions were taken into account after the pretest in order to promote the students vocabulary retention. The first group (4-1) was considered as the control group where traditional instruction was provided by developing tasks individually; the second group functioned as the experimental group, where informal cooperative learning was implemented through think-pair-share activities.

So, results were analyzed in the pre-test as well as in the post-test in both groups, control and experimental group and some differences found, were not so relevant to confirm a great influence of the cooperative language learning method on the vocabulary retention of the experimental group in contrast to the control group.

Subsequently, it was showed that the implementation of both informal cooperative learning and traditional instruction through the use of tasks allowed increasing English vocabulary retention in students of courses 4-1 and 4-2 at “Institución Educativa Municipal Santa Barbara” in quite similar percentages.

However this study demonstrated that tasks are a very good option to encourage the attention and motivation of the students in a class of English maintaining them busy.

And it also shows that the implementation of a new method is not so easy as it appears, therefore, the success of teaching methods in a specific class doesn't assure their success in every class with unique people.

## CHAPTER 1

In this chapter, an introduction and evaluation to this study will be made by providing characteristics and objectives. Some of the information which will be provided in this chapter will give room to an understanding of the significance of problem statement and the reasons why it is selected to work on.

### I. Introduction to the Study

The process of learning English as a foreign language involves continuous interaction among the agents participating in the classroom. According to Johnson and Johnson (1991), this interaction engages a win-lose struggle to see who is best (competition), independent work on learners' own goals, pace and space to achieve excellence (individualism); or, in a few cases, small group work to accomplish shared goals.

In this context, only few research studies have taken interaction into consideration, so, the development of this study will intend to prove benefits such as, the increment of student vocabulary retention including temporary group work (Informal Cooperative Learning) as a significant element in an English classroom. This element, which offers relevant benefits to academic achievement, increases vocabulary retention, satisfaction with the learning experience and motivation, and finally, it helps to maintain a high discipline level.

The population chosen for this study is students of fourth grade at Institución Educativa Municipal Santa Barbara in Pasto, Nariño. Having no previous knowledge on the subject, they are considered to be absolute beginners.

This study will also consider the population context: their family background and status, the school location, and their behaviour in and outside the classroom. The previous features make them the ideal group for carrying out this study and for enhancing student preference for cooperative learning.

#### Problem Statement

The influence of implementing informal cooperative learning on vocabulary retention of beginners at Institución Educativa Municipal Santa Barbara.

#### Research Question

Will the implementation of informal cooperative help beginners students at Institución Educativa Municipal Santa Barbara to retain vocabulary?

#### Objectives

##### General Objective

- To increase English vocabulary retention of beginners through the implementation of informal cooperative learning at Institución Educativa Municipal Santa Barbara.

##### Specific objectives

- To enhance and develop an adequate recognition and application of the spelling in the target language vocabulary through the implementation of cooperative language learning
- To encourage students vocabulary retention through think-pair-share activities implementing cooperative language learning.
- To promote an adequate understanding and use of the vocabulary in a real context through the implementation of informal cooperative language learning

- To .determine the differences and similarities in the results obtained in both groups, in the control group working on tasks individually by traditional instruction and in the experimental group applying informal cooperative learning.

#### Evaluation of the Problem

This research will be made to determine the influence of the implementation of informal cooperative learning on vocabulary retention.

Some outstanding aspects in this chapter will demonstrate that:

The research problem is considered relevant because informal cooperative learning encourages each member of a team to be responsible not only for their learning, but also for helping teammates learn creating an atmosphere of achievement.

Besides, it will be researchable because by means of testing students, the collection and evaluation of the data to verify the influence of informal cooperative learning strategies on students' learning study, will be made through a comparative analysis of the control and experimental group results.

This research is considered to be feasible because there is enough time to complete it, as far as student testing on vocabulary is concerned, and this study counts on useful sources such as specialized books, magazines and internet articles.

The willingness of the students to participate actively in the activities which will be designed for them is the main tool to make this project work, so the identity of the people who take part in the research will not be revealed.



### Significance of the Study

According to Vygotsky (1980), learning is strongly influenced by social interactions which take place in meaningful contexts; moreover, intellect develops through internalizing concepts based on students' own interpretation of an activity that occurs in a social setting.

This research is useful for teachers to encourage informal cooperative learning implementation through an understanding of its actual concept, theoretical background, and benefits.

Choosing as a research topic the influence of informal cooperative learning on student Basic vocabulary retention in EFL classes deals with two reasons:

- The first one has to do with the fact that, in this context, group work is traditionally seen as a competitive phenomenon in which only one member of the team is the responsible, in contrast to the idea that cooperative group work in which learners must work together in order to succeed and personal success only springs from group success.
- The second reason obeys the fact that no research on informal cooperative learning has been carried out in Pasto before, that is why we want to focus on it.

### Delimitation

#### Definition of terms

Foreign Language is a language not spoken by the people of a certain place.

Second Language is a language spoken by the people.

**Competition** Students are graded on a norm-referenced basis, which requires them to work faster and more accurately than their peers. In doing so, they strive to be better than classmates.

**Individualism** Each student has his/her own set of materials and works at his/her own speed, ignoring the other students in the class. Students are expected and encouraged to focus on their strict self-interest.

**Cooperation** means working together to accomplish shared goals.

**Behaviorism** language development is viewed as the formation of habits; it is assumed that a person learning a second language starts off with the habits formed.

**Cooperative Learning** is the instructional use of small groups so that student's work together to achieve shared goals.

**Memory:** In psychology, memory is an organism's ability to store, retain, and subsequently retrieve information.

**Sensory memory:** corresponds approximately to the initial 200 - 500 milliseconds after an item is perceived. The ability to look at an item, and remember what it looked like with just a second of observation, or memorization, is an example of sensory memory. Some of the information in sensory memory is then transferred to short-term memory.

**Short-term memory** allows one to recall something from several seconds to as long as a minute without rehearsal. Its capacity is also very limited.

**Short-term memory** is supported by transient patterns of neuronal communication, dependent on regions of the frontal lobe (especially dorsolateral prefrontal cortex) and the parietal lobe. Short term memory encodes information acoustically.

Long-Term Memory: it can store much larger quantities of information for potentially unlimited duration (sometimes a whole life span). Long-term memory encodes information semantically.

Vocabulary: it is defined either as the set of all words that are understood by that person or the set of all words likely to be used by that person when constructing new sentences. The richness of a person's vocabulary is popularly thought to be a reflection of either intelligence or level of education.

Indirect vocabulary learning: Students learn vocabulary indirectly when they hear and see words used in many different contexts.

Direct vocabulary learning: Students learn vocabulary directly when they are explicitly taught both individual words and word-learning strategies. Direct vocabulary instruction aids reading comprehension.

False Beginners: these are learners who have already studied some English at some point in their life. Most of these learners have studied English at school, many for a number of years. These learners have usually had some contact with English since their schools years, but feel that they have little command of the language and therefore want to begin 'from the top'.

Absolute Beginners: These are learners who have had no contact with English at all. They often come from developing nations and often have had very little education. These students are often more challenging to teach as the teacher can not expect learners to understand even a minimal amount of English.

Self-esteem: it reflects a person's overall self-appraisal of their own worth. It encompasses both beliefs and emotions. Psychologists usually regard self-esteem as an

enduring personality characteristic (trait self-esteem), though normal, short-term variations (state self-esteem) occur.

Self-confidence: relates to self-assuredness in one's personal judgment, ability, power, etc., sometimes manifested excessively.

Discipline: In its most general sense, discipline refers to systematic instruction given to a disciple to follow a particular code of conduct, or to adhere to a certain "order," or to adopt a particular pattern of behavior.

## II LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, class interactions types are described taking into account the theoretical perspectives and theories upon which cooperative language learning finds its basis. This information was divided into the categories which best illustrate the structure and functioning of cooperative language learning regarding its types, activities, and essential components as well as the grouping ways, the role of the students and the teachers up to the retention of vocabulary and some other benefits which were obtained through its implementation.

### Class Interaction

No matter what the subject area, teachers can structure lessons so that students can interact in the following ways.

### Competition

When students are required to compete with each other for grades, they work against each other to achieve a goal that only one or a few students can attain. Students are graded on a norm-referenced basis, which requires them to work faster and more accurately than their peers. In doing so, they strive to be better than their classmates; work to deprive other (I win means you lose); celebrate classmates' failures (your failure makes it easier for me to win); view resources such as grades as limited, recognize their negatively linked (the more you gain, the less there is for me); and believe that the most competent and hard-working individuals become "haves" and the less competent and deserving individual become "haves nots" (only the strong succeed).

In competitive situations there is a negative interdependence among goal achievements; students perceive that they can obtain their goals if and only if the other students in the

class fail to obtain theirs (Deutsch, 1962; Johnson and Johnson, 1991). Students either work hard to do better than their classmates, or take it easy because they don't believe they have a chance to win.

### Individualism

When students are required to work individualistically they work by themselves to accomplish learning goals unrelated to those of the other students. Individual goals are assigned and student's efforts are evaluated on a criteria-referenced basis. Each student has his own set of materials and works at his own speed, ignoring the other students in the class. Students are expected and encouraged to focus on their strict self-interest (How well can I do?); value only their own efforts and success (if I study hard, I may get a high grade); and view the success or failure of others as irrelevant (whether my classmates study or not does not affect me).

In such situations, student's goal attainments are independent; students perceive that the achievement of their learning goals is unrelated to what other students do (Deutsch, 1962, Johnson and Johnson, 1991).

### Cooperation

Cooperation means working together to accomplish shared goals. Within cooperative activities individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and beneficial to all other group members. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups that allows students to work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. The idea is simple. Class members are split into small groups after receiving instruction from

teacher. They then work through the assignment until all group members have successfully understood and completed it.

Cooperative efforts (your success benefits me and my success benefits you); recognizing that all group members share a common fate (we all sink or swim together); and feeling proud and jointly celebrating when a group member is recognized for achievement (You got an A! That's terrific). In cooperative learning situations, there is a positive interdependence among students' goal attainments; students perceive that they can reach their learning goals if and only if the other students in the learning group also reach their goals (Deutsch 1962 Johnson and Johnson 1991).

In the ideal classroom, all the students would learn how to work collaboratively with others, compete for fun and enjoyment, and work autonomously on their own.

Teachers must decide which goal structure to implement within each lesson.

## Cooperative Language Learning Method

### Theoretical Perspectives

#### Cooperative Learning Background

Cooperation among students in favor of their instruction goes back to the work by Comenio (1592-1970) who proposes the first funds of "Mutual Teaching", in the sense of Students helping out the new ones that have difficulties with learning, taking advantage of the friendship and confidential relationship among them. This process of giving authority to more prepared or older students, according to the thesis of Jacques Rousseau,

is also valued in the pedagogical statements of Girard (1675-1850) and Pestalozzy (1746- 1827).

In the early twentieth century theories of Decroly, Cousinet, Claparède, in the francophone Europe and Dewey in EE.UU contribute to the origin of new pedagogical methods with emphasis on “Puerocentrismo” a pedagogical method who considers more important the subject than the object contrary to previous methods.

In the sixties and seventies cooperative learning spread out in Quebec and EE.UU. This Method encourages cognitive processes and social skills for the creation of a real learning community.

In psychology, where cooperation has received the most intense study, according to Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1998) there are three main approaches, which are mostly considered, to explaining how cooperative learning works in Second or foreign Language instruction. in behavioural learning theories (Skinner, 1968; Bandura, 1977), cognitive-developmental (Piaget, 1950; Vygotsky, 1978; Johnson & Johnson, 1979), and social interdependence theories (Deutsch, 1949, 1962; Johnson & Johnson, 1989).

#### Behaviorism

Language development is viewed as the formation of habits; it is assumed that a person learning a second language starts off with the habits formed in the first language and that these habits interfere with the new ones needed for the second language (Lado, 1964). Therefore learners receive linguistic input from speakers in their environment and they form “associations” between words and objects or events. These associations become stronger as experiences are repeated.



Learners in their groups stimulate and receive encouragement for their correct imitations, and corrective feedback on their errors as some form of punishment.

### Cognition/Constructivism

#### Jean Piaget

Piaget defined a schema as the mental representation of an associated set of perceptions, ideas, and/or actions. Piaget's cognitive development centers on the formation of schemas as organized mental representation of the world. Forming mental representation of the environment involves two processes, assimilation and accommodation (Gerow, 1990). Assimilation involves taking new information and fitting it into an existing schema.

Accommodation involves changing or revising existing schemas in the face of new experiences. Children assimilate and accommodate, because when they confront something new they get confused and go through a period of disequilibrium.

Assimilation and accommodation help the child to achieve equilibrium.

#### Lev Semenovich Vygotsky

Knowledge and learning are social in nature. Learning comes from figuring out unexpected occurrences together. Once the child realizes that everything has a name, each new object presents the child with a problem situation, and he solves the problem by naming the object. When he lacks the word for the new object, he demands it from adults.

The early word-meanings thus acquired will be the embryos of concept formation

Scaffolding instruction as a teaching strategy originates from Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and his concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The

“Zone of Proximal Development” is the distance between what children can do by themselves and the next learning that they can be helped to achieve with competent assistance” (Raymond, 2000).

His sociocultural theory proposes that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Vygotsky “...theorized that learning occurs through participation in social or culturally embedded experiences.” (Raymond, 2000).

Children’s social interaction with more knowledgeable or capable others and their environment significantly impacts their ways of thinking and interpreting situations. A child develops his or her intellect through internalizing concepts based on his or her own interpretation of an activity that occurs in a social setting.

The communication that occurs in this setting with more knowledgeable or capable others (parents, teachers, peers, others) helps the child construct an understanding of the concept (Branford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). The scaffolding teaching strategy provides individualized support based on the learner’s ZPD (Chang, sung, & Chen, 2002). In scaffolding instruction a more knowledgeable other provides scaffolds or supports to facilitate the learner’s development.

Vygotsky defined scaffolding instruction as the “role of the teachers and others in supporting the learner’s development and providing support structures to get to that next stage or level” (Raymond, 2000). An important aspect of scaffolding instruction is that the scaffolds are temporary. As the learner’s abilities increase the scaffolding provided by the more knowledgeable other is progressively withdrawn.

Finally the learner is able to complete the task or master the concepts independently (Chang, sung, & Chen, 2002). As the learner’s knowledge and learning competency

increases, the educator gradually reduces the supports provided (Ellis, Larking, Worthington, n.d.).

According to Vygotsky the external scaffolds provided by the educator can be removed because the learner has developed "...more sophisticated cognitive systems, related to fields of learning such a mathematics or language, the system of knowledge itself becomes part of the scaffold or social support for the new learning" (Raymond, 2000).

According to Vygotsky (1978), an essential feature of learning is that it awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is in the action of interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Therefore, when it comes to language learning, the authenticity of the environment and the affinity between its participants are essential elements to make the learner feel part of this environment. These elements are rarely predominant in conventional classrooms.

### Social Interdependence

Two heads learn better than one.

How the students perceive and interact with one another is a neglected aspect of instruction. How teachers structure student- student interaction patterns will have a lot to say about how well the students learn, how they feel about school and the teacher, how they feel about each other, and their self-esteem since cooperation promotes students to: celebrate each other's successes, encourage each other to do homework, and learn to

work together regardless of ethnic backgrounds, male or female, bright or struggling, handicapped or not.

There are three basic ways students can interact with each other as they learn. They can compete to see who is “best”; they can work individualistically on their own toward a goal without paying attention other students; or they can work cooperatively with a vested interest in each other’s learning as well as their own (D. W. Johnson and R. T. Johnson, 1987: 2 - 7; cf. also D. W. Johnson and R. T. Johnson, 1989; D. W. Johnson et al. 1990).

Even though these three interaction patterns are not equally effective in helping students learn concepts and skills. It is important that students learn to interact effectively, bearing in mind cooperative and competitive social interdependence, in each of these patterns.

### Cooperative

In a cooperative learning situation, interaction is characterized by positive goal interdependence with individual accountability. Positive goal interdependence requires acceptance by a group that they “sink or swim together”. Cooperative interaction seems to be much more powerful in producing achievement since students are more positive about school, the subject area, about each other when they are structured to work cooperatively, regardless of differences in ability. Students are more effective interpersonally as a result of working cooperatively than when they work alone, competitively or individualistically.

Students with cooperative experiences are more able to take the perspective of others, are more positive about taking part in controversy, have better developed interaction skills, and have a more positive expectation about working with others than students from competitive or individualistic settings. Students are working together in small groups to help each other learn the vocabulary. Each student's score in the test is increased by bonus points earned by the group. This cooperative umbrella can also be extended over the entire class.

### Competitive

An interpersonal competitive situation is characterized by negative goal interdependence, where, when one person wins, the others lose.

- In an individualistic learning situation, students are independent of one another and are working toward a set criterion where their success depends on their own performance in relation to an established criterion. The success or failure of other students does not affect their score.

### Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students' work together to achieve shared goals. In cooperative learning groups students are given two responsibilities: to learn the assigned material and to make sure that all the other group members do likewise. Cooperative learning may be used to teach specific content (formal cooperative learning groups), to ensure active cognitive processing information during lectures (informal cooperative learning groups), and to provide long-term support and assistance for academic progress (cooperative base groups). Any assignment in any

curriculum for any age student can be structured cooperatively if the teacher knows the cooperative structures.

Cooperation is defined as a process in which two or more learners need to work together to achieve a common goal, usually the completion of a task or the answering of a question (Benson, 2001). Cooperation is manifested in the actions a learner takes when working with others and can be evidenced, for example, as a willingness to listen to others' ideas, suggestions and opinions so that they can be discussed and integrated into further actions, such as decisions about how to complete a task.

### Task

A task is a sequence of actions that a person takes to reach some goal. Just as we could analyze users into layers we can do the same for tasks.

### Characteristics

- Physical objects and Events: Tools used for the task, material objects that form the starting point and events that occur as the user does the task. Note that for a computer task the computer and its keyboard are among the physical objects.
- Perceptions and Actions: Things a user is aware of during a task, and the actions that the user performs.
- Concepts, goals, plans: the users understanding of the objects and the task, the goal to be attained and the mental image of the steps to be taken.
- Purpose and Value of the Task: Why are we doing this anyway?

### Formal Cooperative learning

It is students working together, from one class period to several weeks, to achieve shared learning goals by ensuring that they and their group mates successfully complete the learning task assigned. As we have stated, any learning task in any subject area with any curriculum can be structured cooperatively learning groups, teachers (a) specify the objectives for the lesson, (b) make a number of pre-instructional decisions, (c) explain the task and the positive interdependence, (d) monitor students' learning and intervene within the groups to provide task assistance or to increase students' interpersonal and group skills, and evaluate students' learning and help students process how well their groups functioned.

### Informal Cooperative Learning

This is the type of cooperative language learning that will be implemented to carry out this study because students will work temporary in groups to learn the target vocabulary. The use of cooperative learning doesn't mean that teacher can not longer lecture, give demonstration, show films, or use video tapes. Lectures, demonstrations, films and videotapes may be used effectively with informal cooperative learning groups in which students work together to achieve a joint learning goal in temporary, ad-hoc groups that last from a few minutes to one class period.

During a lecture, demonstration, films, or video tape, quick informal cooperative groupings can be used to focus student attention on the material to be learned, to set a mood conducive to learning, to help set expectations as to what will be covered in a class session, to ensure that students cognitively process the material being taught, and to

provide closure to the instructional session, and to provide closure to the instructional session.

Informal Cooperative Learning helps teachers ensure that students do the intellectual work of organizing , explaining, summarizing, and integrating material into the existing conceptual structures during direct teaching, Informal Cooperative Learning groups are often organized so that students engage in a three-to five-minute focused discussion before and after a lecture and two –to –three –minute turn turn-to-your-partner discussions throughout a lecture.

#### Cooperative Base Groups

Cooperative Base Groups are long-term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with stable membership that last for at least a year and perhaps until all members are graduated. These groups provides students with permanent, committed relationships that allow group members to give each other the needed support, help, encouragement, and assistance to consistently work hard in school make academic progress (attend class, complete all assignments, learn), and develop in cognitively and socially healthy ways (Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec 1992; Johnson, Johnson and Smith, 1991).

Base groups meet formally each day in elementary school and twice a week in secondary school (or whenever the class meets). Informally, members interact everyday within and between classes, discussing assignments and helping each other with homework. The use of base groups tends to improve attendance, personalized the work required and the school experience, and improves the quality and quantity of learning. The larger the class and school and the more complex and difficult the subject matter, the more important it is



to have base groups. Base groups are also helpful in structuring homerooms and when a teacher meets with a number of advisees.

### Cooperative Structures

In order to use cooperative learning the majority of the time teachers must identify and cooperatively structure generic lessons and repetitive course routines. Cooperative Learning are scripts are standard, content-free cooperative procedures, which proscribe students actions step-by-step, for either (a) conducting generic, repetitive lessons (such as writing reports or giving presentations) or (b) managing classrooms routines (such as checking homework and revising tests). Scripted, repetitive cooperative lessons and classrooms routines provide a base on which the cooperative classroom can be built. Once planned and conducted several times, they become automatic activities in the classroom. They can also be used in combination to form an overall lesson.

As teachers use formal, informal and cooperative base groups and generic cooperative structures such as learning scripts they gain expertise and begin to automatically use cooperative learning as needed.

When teachers achieve the routine–use level of teacher competence they are able to structure cooperative learning situations automatically without conscious thought or planning using various types of cooperative learning. Cooperative learning can then be used long-term with fidelity.

### Cooperative Learning Essential Components

According to Johnson and Johnson, in order to achieve real expertise in using cooperative learning teachers must have an understanding of the five essential components that make cooperation work.

**Positive Interdependence:** Group members perceive that they are linked with each other so that one cannot succeed unless everyone succeeds. Students must realize that each member's efforts benefit not only the individual, but all other group members as well. Student's vested interest in each other's achievement results in their sharing resources, helping and assisting each other's efforts to learn, providing mutual support, and celebrating their joint success. Positive interdependence is the heart of cooperative learning.

**Face-to-face Interaction:** also known as Promotive Interaction. Once teachers establish positive interdependence, they need to maximize the opportunity for students to promote each other's success by helping, assisting, supporting, encouraging, and praising each other's efforts to learn.

There are cognitive activities and interpersonal dynamics that only occur when students get involved in promoting each other's learning. Promotive interaction includes orally discussing the nature of the concepts being learned, teaching one's knowledge to classmates, and connecting present and past learning.

### Individual Accountability.

The purpose of cooperative learning groups is to make each member a stronger individual. Students learn together so they can subsequently perform better as individual. Individual accountability exists when the performance of each individual student is

assessed and the results are given back to the group and the individual. Individual accountability ensures that group members know who needs more assistance, support, and encouragement in completing the assignment and are aware that they cannot “hitch-hike” on the work of others.

**Interpersonal and Small-group Skills:** in cooperative learning groups, students are required to learn academic subject matter (task work) as well as the interpersonal and small-group skills required to function as part of a team.

This makes cooperative learning inherently more complex than competitive or individualistic learning. Placing socially unskilled individuals in a group and telling them to cooperate does not guarantee that they will be able to do so effectively. Skills such as leadership, decision making, trust-building, communication, and conflict management must be taught just as purposefully and precisely as academic skills.

**Group Processing:** exists when group members discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships. Groups need to describe what member actions are helpful and unhelpful, and make decisions and what behaviours to continue or change.

### Group Types

Traditional Groups	Cooperative groups
Organization for friendship	Organization in an heterogeneous way
Work individual for success	Work for a collective success
Teacher-centered instruction	Student-centered instruction
Class participation depends on students` motivation and individual skills	Equal class participation
Competition phenomenon prevails	Mutual help is constant, respectful and affective
Each member does the same work	Each student is responsible
Goal : “all for one”	Goal : “one for all”

### Cooperative group types

Informal Group: Integrated by neighbors.

Base Group: is integrated by 3, 4 or 5 students who work together for a longer period of time (one month, two months, etc).

Combined Group: is integrated by two or more informal or base groups to promote more general mutual help.

Reconstituted Group: it implies students work first in a group and then in a derived group sharing their knowledge. This is the cooperative group type that the jigsaw activities designed for the study requires.

Representative Group: one member of each group gives the floor to possible discussion over a topic.

#### Grouping ways

Random Grouping: using different strategies such as cards, colors, etc. this procedure allows to easily modify the number of participants in each group taking into account the total number of students in the classroom. It encourages students to work with different partners allowing them to acquire social skills (tolerance, respect, value for differences)

Affinity Grouping: allows students to group regarding their desire, friendship and empathy, creating a confident and complicity atmosphere.

Proximity Grouping: Students group with neighbors

Topic-Interested Grouping: Students are free to pick a topic of interest for them and groups are formed regarding the topics

Teacher Selection Grouping: Known by the students, teacher explains the reasons for the grouping. In order to avoid indiscipline and to encourage students to work cooperatively, in this study teachers will select the members for each group taking advantage of the previous knowledge of each students' behavior and academic achievement.

#### Activities that use cooperative learning

Jigsaw: groups with five students are set up. Each group member is assigned some unique material to learn and then to teach to his group members. To help in their learning, students across the class working on the same sub-section get together to decide what is important and how to teach it. After practice in these "expert" groups the original groups

reform and students teach each other. This type of activity is the treatment that will be applied in this study because it enhances social skills in which all students are involved, require and give help in the group.

Think-Pair-Share: it involves a three step cooperative structure. During the first step individuals think silently about a question posed by the instructor. Individuals pair up during the second step and exchange thoughts. In the third step, the pairs share their responses with other pairs, other teams, or the entire group.

Three-Step –Interview: each member of a team chooses another member to be a partner. During the first step individuals interview their partners by asking clarifying questions. During the second step partners reverse the roles. For the final step, members share their partner's response with the team.

Round Robin Brainstorming: Class is divided into small clubs (4 to 6) with a person appointed as the recorder. A question is posed with many answers and students are given time to think about answers. After the "think time", members of the team share responses with one another round style. The recorder writes down the answers of the group members. The person next to the recorder starts and each person in the group in order gives an answer until time is called.

Three-Minute Review: teachers stop any time during a lecture or discussion and give teams three minutes to review what has been said, ask clarifying questions or answer questions.

Numbered Heads: A team of four is established. Each member is given numbers of 1,2,3,4. Questions are asked of the group. Groups work together to answer the question so that all can verbally answer the question. Teacher calls out a number (two) and each two is asked to give the answer.

Team Pair Solo students do problems first as a team, then with a partner, and finally on their own. It is designed to motivate students to tackle and succeed at problems with initially are beyond their ability. It is based on a simple notion of mediated learning. Students can do more things with help (mediation) than they can do alone. By allowing them to work on problems they could not do alone, first as a team and then with a partner, they progress to a point they can do alone that which at first they could do only with help

Circle the Sage: first the teachers poll the class to see which students have a special knowledge to share. For example the teacher may ask who in the class was able to solve a difficult math homework question, who has visited Mexico, who knows the chemical reactions involved in how salting the streets help dissipate snow. Those students (the sages) stand and spread out in the room.

The teacher then has the rest of the classmates each surround a sage, with no two members of the same team going to the same sage. The sage explains what they know while the classmates listen, ask questions and take notes. All the students then return to their teams. Each in turn, explains what they learned. Because each one has gone to a different sage, they compare notes. If there is disagreement, they stand up as a team. Finally, the disagreements are aired and resolved.

Partners: the class is divided into teams of four. Partners move to one side of the room. Half of each team is given an assignment to master to be able to teach the other half. Partners work to learn and can consult with other partners working on the same material. Teams go back together with each set of partners teaching the other set. Partners quiz and tutor teammates. Teams reviews how well they learned and taught and how they might improve the success.

#### Role of the Students

In cooperative learning process, there exist some roles for the students which every member of the groups plays regarding the task demands. These roles can be assumed in individual or shared ways, and they can be changing.

Organizer: Student in charge of asking for, receiving and handing in the material needed for the taskwork, and the taskwork in the end.

Encourager: Encourages the efforts and answers coming from the group members.

Teller: Represents his/her group in front of the class telling the results of the final taskwork.

Moderator: Is concerned about each teammate doing their job.



Monitor: In charge of monitoring each student uses the target language.

Investigator: In charge of looking up the words, the information.

Writer: In charge of writing down the task work required.

#### Role of Teachers

For an adequate and effective implementation of the cooperative learning language learning teachers should take into consideration the following steps in the planning, development and evaluation of the activities in the classroom.

- a) Specify the objectives and goals of the topics in class. Linguistic, and social competences among others.
- b) Establish previously grouping ways, numbers of the members of the groups and length.
- c) Establish in an adequate way the classroom environment, the materials and possible students` roles.
- d) Explain in a clear way the learning activity, its objective and the group relationship wanted.
- e) A continuous supervision of the effective cooperative learning, explaining and showing collaborative strategies required.
- f) Evaluate the knowledge acquired by the students and their collaboration in the group.

#### Benefits

According to Johnson and Johnson (1991) Cooperative language learning implementation has the following benefits:

### Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition

The acquisition of a second language involves development of multiple subsystems – phonetics and phonology, morphology, vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatics. For this research paper, three points that underline the importance of vocabulary in SLA are considered: (1) the relationship between vocabulary and the ability to communicate; (2) student perceptions about the relative importance of vocabulary; and (3) the critical role of vocabulary knowledge in the development of grammatical competence.

Regarding vocabulary and communication, lack of grammatical knowledge sometimes impedes successful transmission of meaning; however, absence of vocabulary often impedes the transmission of meaning completely (Wilkins, 1972).

A second point highlighting the significance of second language vocabulary concerns the importance that students attribute to vocabulary knowledge and their ability to function in a second language. According to the work by James (1996), students are particularly interested in receiving vocabulary instruction. In additions, among advanced second language learners, restricted vocabulary can get in the way of more native-like performance (Arnaud & Savignon, 1997).

Finally, the importance of vocabulary acquisition in SLA is sustained by the relationship between vocabulary and how grammatical knowledge is stored in the minds of learners and language users. Research findings (Healy & Sherrod, 1994) suggest that much of what we refer to as “grammar” knowledge actually resides at the lexical level in

connections between words and groups of words developed over time based on large amounts of language exposure.

The three points discussed in this section emphasize the importance of vocabulary acquisition in SLA. They also draw into question where the focus of second language instruction should be. Historically, or at least until recently, one finds that “there has been little emphasis placed on the acquisition of vocabulary” (Zimmerman, 1997). Many L2 instructional programs continue to emphasize grammar as their central focus, as evidenced by the commonplace use of grammatical syllabi. This emphasis on grammar seems to correspond to the following general perspective on language acquisition: “acquisition= grammar + other types of competence.” An alternative perspective, however, would be the following: “acquisition = vocabulary + other types of competence.”

Second language vocabulary acquisition can be classified in different areas along a continuum between incidental and intentional vocabulary learning (Coady, 1997). Incidental vocabulary learning refers to learners acquiring new words from context without intending to do so.

Intentional vocabulary learning, on the other hand, refers to learners acquiring while intending to do so. Defining vocabulary learning as purely incidental or purely intentional, however, does not accurately represent real-world vocabulary learning. Instead, different types of vocabulary learning can be viewed along a continuum between

highly incidental and highly intentional given that attention is not a dichotomous entity (Glass, 1999; Haynes; 1998). Methods of vocabulary instruction also may be viewed according to this continuum. They also range from highly indirect to highly direct (Haynes, 1998).

There are five principles of effective L2 vocabulary instruction to take into account:

- a) Present new words frequently and repeatedly in input.
- b) Use meaning-bearing comprehensible input when presenting new words.  
Input needs to convey meaning and be sufficiently comprehensible so that learners are able to attach form to meaning, and in case of vocabulary acquisition, in order to attach new word forms to appropriate word meaning.
- c) Limit forced output during the early stages of learning new words.
- d) Limit forced semantic elaboration during the initial stages of learning new words.
- e) Progress from less demanding to more demanding vocabulary-related activities.

#### Retention of Vocabulary by EFL Learners

##### Language learning strategies

Language learning strategies are any set of actions, plans, tactics, thoughts or behaviors that the learners employ to facilitate the comprehension, storage, retrieval, and use of information (Rubin, 1987; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Therefore employing strategies

of any kind is goal-oriented. To Tarone (1983) this goal is realized by developing linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language. To achieve this end, as Nibset and Shucksmith (1986) state, successful language learners develop a range of strategies from which they are able to select appropriately and adapt flexibly to meet the needs of a specific context.

The purpose-specific nature of language learning strategies becomes evident when Oxford (1990) defines them as specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations. It was Oxford (1990) who attempted to present a comprehensive taxonomy of language learning strategies, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The main distinction in this taxonomy is that between direct strategies (working with the language itself) and indirect strategies (general management of learning). Direct strategies are divided into three subclasses: memory strategies (strategies to store and retrieve aspects of the target language), cognitive strategies (strategies for using the language and for understanding how it works), and compensation strategies (strategies for using the language despite gaps in knowledge). Indirect strategies include metacognitive strategies (strategies for planning, organizing and evaluating learning), affective strategies (strategies for approaching the task positively), and social strategies (strategies for working with others to get input and practice).

With the emergence of the concept of language learning strategies, scholars have attempted to link these strategies to language learning skills believing that each strategy enhances learning of vocabulary, pronunciation or improve reading and speaking skills. Studies such as O'Malley and Chamot (1990), O'Malley et al (1985) confirm that most language learning strategies are used for vocabulary (followed by pronunciation) tasks.

The importance and popularity of vocabulary learning within the framework of language learning strategies lies in the fact that all language learning strategies including taxonomies such as that of Oxford (1990) can be used for vocabulary learning tasks (e.g., all strategies in the "memory" category), the effect of which has been the motive to conduct the present research on vocabulary retention.

The assumption was that when learners are trained to use direct learning strategies, their vocabulary retention enhances. However, retention of information can range from minutes up to lifetime; accordingly, the researchers attempted to examine the impact of teaching direct learning strategies on the short-term retention (STR) which focuses on examining the learners' use of strategy just after they have been trained to do so, and long-term retention (LTR) which happens after a two-week interval. The objective was to see if learners' use of these strategies enables them to retain vocabulary for longer periods of time which is the main objective of this study.

### III RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter provides an explanation of the steps that have to do with the methodology of this research to know the design of the study and features of participants and of the setting. Moreover, the most appropriate technique to collect the data was described. The instruments used for validation criteria, the aids to analyze data and the ethical issues to take into account when making research were also addressed.

#### Design of the Study

Schematically the design which was used in this research corresponds to a true experimental design called pretest-posttest control group design. The formula for this design is

$$\frac{G1 \text{ (Random) } T1 \times T2}{G2 \text{ (Random) } T1 \times T2}$$

G1 Experimental Group

Random Randomization

G2 Control Group

T1 Pretest

X Treatment

T2 Posttest

It is the most suitable design in terms of reliability and exactness. It provides the highest levels of internal and external validity and permit to interpret the findings with much more confidence than others.

### Participants and Sample

The participants chosen for this study were 71 children aged nine to 12 years old taking English classes for beginners in fourth elementary grade at “Institución Educativa Municipal Santa Barbara”. Their family background and status, the school location, and their continuous rude behaviour in and outside the classroom allowed confirming the problematic situation in which they lived. The previous features made them the ideal group for carrying out this study and to enhance student preference for informal cooperative learning.

To ensure that their English language proficiency was the same, several criteria were taken into consideration. At first, teachers and directors assure that they had never had English classes before, after these students took a pre-test to know the specified level.

### Setting

Institución Educativa Municipal Santa Barbara is a school located at the south-east of Pasto Nariño. Talking about the internal setting, the school offers elementary and high school courses with emphasis on biology to students who live in the Santa Barbara neighborhood and surroundings.

It has classrooms that lack most of the materials required to provide a comfortable environment to learn and adequate equipment for instruction, such as: tape recorders, books, transparencies, TV sets, etc., in this classrooms students take English classes one hour per week.

There are four buildings, one of them is designed for the elementary school, the second one is for the high school, the third one is for offices such as secretary and principal's office, and the last one is a restaurant for the students.



### Materials and data collection techniques

To carry out this research the following instruments to collect the data was considered:

A written pretest and posttest of English vocabulary in one basic category (food that one likes and dislikes) divided in three sub-categories (fruit, vegetables and drinks), class participation and academic achievement, interviews made to their teachers confirming this information, tape recordings of the English classes implementing informal cooperative learning through different activities.

Both, pre-test and post-test received the same procedure and content when they were carried out. They consist of two items, in the first item, the students have to complete a chart composed of thirty blanks, ten for fruits, ten for vegetables and ten for drinks; in the second item, they have to write the vocabulary learned in a real context of a coffee shop. There was not a fixed scale to measure students' responses; however, the students' errors on each of the items were analyzed to establish their quantity and frequency.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

This study took into account the two types of research qualitative focus including steps such as: a) Data Organization, b) Identification of the main ideas to be classified, c) finding categories and subcategories, d) analyzing some data, e) final interpretation of the data. On the another hand, making an analysis in the quantitative research included other steps to be taken into account such as: a) defining all the variables or criteria to order the data obtained from the data collection, b) transferring data to tables to permit a clearer observation and systematic processing, c) defining the statistical tools and the computer

program to be used in the data processing, d) storing the data on the computer and processing the data and, f) printing the findings.

This pre-experimental study used descriptive statistics to determine the level and the differences found in both groups (experimental and control groups) before and after the treatment (informal cooperation learning implementation) in relation to the quantity and frequency of errors.

To do the quantitative analysis the results obtained in the pre-test and the post-test were located in some data matrixes where errors of the students in all the questions of the survey was analyzed to establish their quantity and frequency, and deeply studied in both the experimental and the control groups in order to test differences and similarities before and after the application of the treatment.

#### Variables

Independent variable: informal cooperative learning implementation

Dependent variable: vocabulary retention of beginners at Institución Educativa Municipal Santa Barbara.

#### Description of the Procedure

Two groups of 71 students in courses 4-1 and 4-2 were chosen, they took the pre-test and the post-test. The first group (4-1) was considered the control group where traditional instruction was provided by developing tasks individually; the second group functioned as the experimental group, where informal cooperative learning was implemented through think-pair-share activities.

This involved a three step cooperative structure. During the first step the students had to think silently about the vocabulary required by the teachers. Individuals paired up during the second step and exchanged their knowledge. In the third step, the pairs shared their knowledge with other pairs.

To carry out the teaching session, four activities were planned for both groups simultaneously; each activity regarding direct vocabulary instruction had three main aspects: spelling, pronunciation and retention. All the activities focused on English vocabulary learning taking into account their level and the bases for informal cooperative learning.

In both groups, errors were analyzed in the pre-test as well as in the post-test after having provided the treatment in the experimental group. This project ensured, in this way, validity of the instruments.

Another important aspect to show validity was the use of a comprehensible language that the students could understand, and in this way they were able to answer to the questions correctly, in terms of the language components.

#### Ethical Issues

For this study, permission from the directives of the school was required and, in order to protect their identity and integrity their names were changed, and confidentiality was assured for the people who have contributed to carry out this study.

#### IV. RESULTS

In this research, two groups of students were chosen to initially diagnose the quality of their knowledge on basic vocabulary regarding food. In order to do this, six tasks were designed and applied in two different groups. One group was considered the control group, in which the tasks were applied as individual work on the part of the students. There is another group, the experimental group in which the treatment of cooperative learning was applied. For the experimental group unlike the control group the tasks designed for observing the significance of this study were developed in couples first and then each couple would join to other couple to work cooperatively in a group of four students.

The results of the pre-test were compared to the results in the post-test in order to observe if the hypothesis established earlier in this paper could be proved or refused.

##### Recall Data

##### Pretest results

Both groups took a pre-test which consists of two parts. The first part consists of a chart divided into three food categories (fruit, vegetables and drinks) to be filled with 10 words for each category by the students and the second part consists of a short dialogue which takes place in a coffee shop, for this dialogue between three people (a waiter, and two customers Maria and Manuel) the students have to fill in 9 blanks with the words that best suit the information required.

In the control group, with reference in the pre-test, we could determine that their lack of vocabulary regarding food (reaches a total of 65%). See table 1.

Nevertheless, they figured out the meaning of the words (fruits, vegetables, drinks) and this is demonstrated as they use the L1 to complete the chart in the first part of the test (34%). See table 1.

For instance most of the students wrote down the words “manzana” and “naranja” among others for the category of fruits. However, we could also determine that the spelling for the words the students used in the L1 in the test presented errors, 42 errors to be exact. For example, the most common errors were “mansana” and “aselga”.

In the second part of the pre-test, students were required to complete the dialogue with some of the words from the first part. However, no answer was elicited from the students. See table 3.

In the experimental group, it was observed the lack of vocabulary (with a total of 69%), see table 2, and the use of L1 (30%), see table 2, which also demonstrates misspelling in Spanish with a total of 48 errors except for five correct answers (1%), see table 2. In the second part of the pre-test, students were required to complete the dialogue with some of the words from the first part. However, no answer was elicited from the students in this group either. See table 4.

These results show how homogeneous the groups were and their lack of vocabulary in the target language. See table 5 and 6 which reveal the final results of the pre-test.

## PRETEST RESULTS

Control group

I part of the pretest

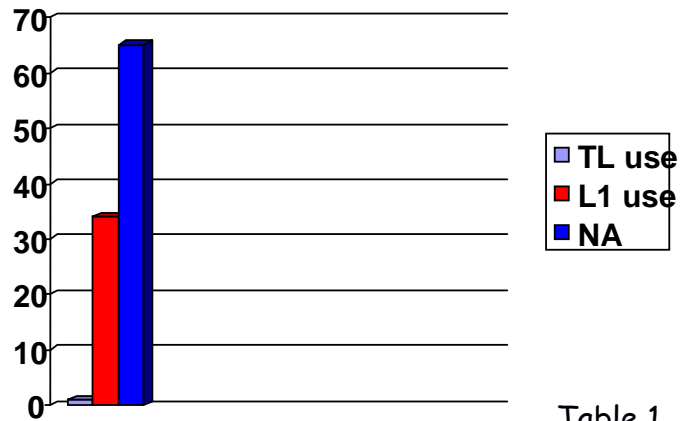


Table 1

This table shows the lack of vocabulary regarding food in the control group reaching a total of 65%

Experimental group

I part of the pretest

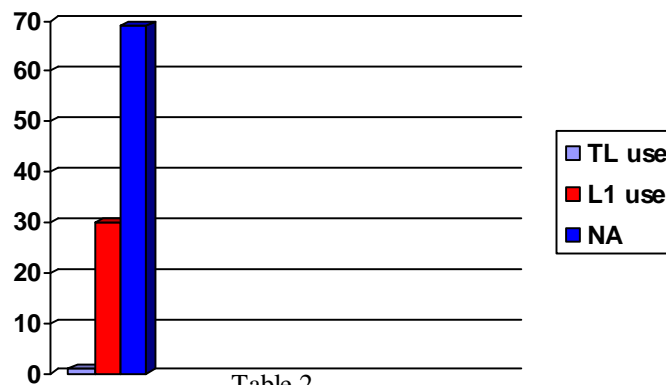
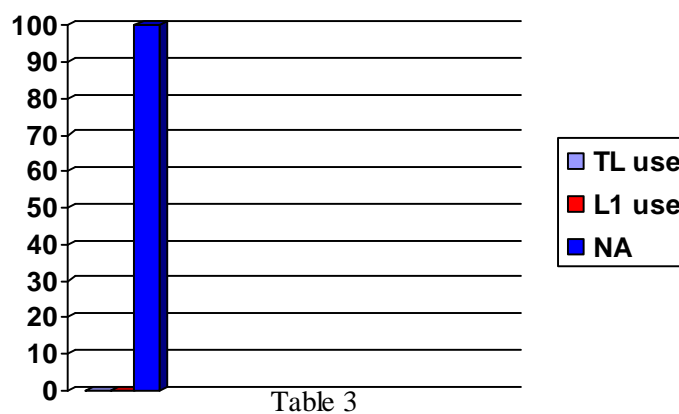


Table 2

This table shows the lack of vocabulary regarding food in the experimental group with a total of 69 and the use of L1 in a 30% and a percentage of correct answers of 1%

### Control group

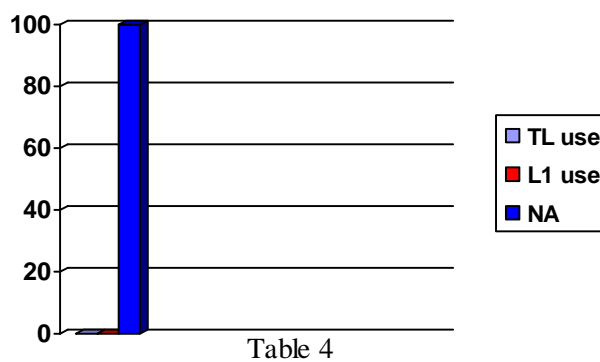
#### II part of the pretest



This table shows that students of the control group don't elicited any answer using the vocabulary of food in a real context

### Experimental Group

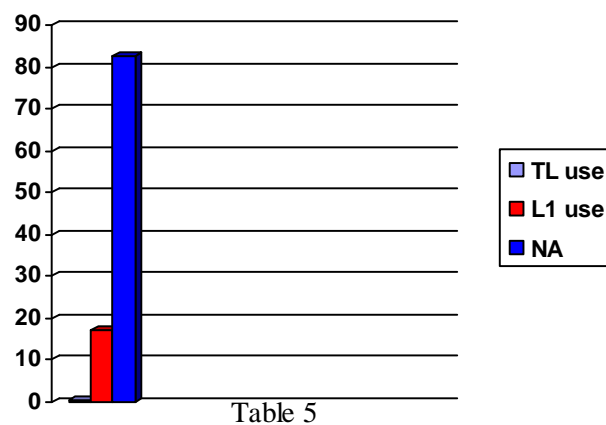
#### II part of the pretest



This table shows the lack of knowledge of the experimental group using the vocabulary of food in a real context.

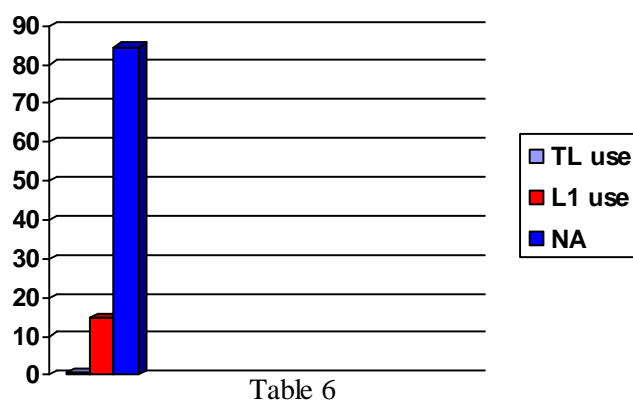
# Final results

## Control group



This table shows the total results of the control group in the pretest with a very high percentage of no answers and use of the L1 in this case Spanish.

## Experimental group



This table shows the total results of the pretest in the experimental group with a very high percentage of no answers and use of L1 (Spanish)



### Posttest Results

Four (4) weeks after having applied the tasks individually in the control group, and the treatment of cooperative learning with tasks in the experimental group, the following results were obtained.

In the control group, for the first part of the post-test, there are three subcategories. The first sub-category is “Fruits”. Among the responses given by the students we found 15 different possible answers: apple, banana, cherry, coconut, grapes, lemon, mandarin, mango, melon, orange, papaya, pear, pineapple, strawberry and watermelon.

It was observed the knowledge acquired in the traditional classes with a total of 76, 4 % of correct answers in the category of fruits, however we found also some spelling mistakes of 8, 5%. And, a total of 13% of the students did not come out with an answer for this subcategory. See table 7.

The word which students used more frequently was “apple”; however the most common mistake was “aple” instead of “apple”.

For the second subcategory of vegetables, the results show some improvement in the students’ writing down some vocabulary for vegetables: carrot, cauliflower, corn, cucumber, garlic, green peas, lettuce, onion, pickles and tomato. This shows a 57,8% of correct answers using the target language, only a 7,5% of errors and a reduction up to 34,7% of blanks. See table 8.

On the one hand, for the last subcategory “drinks”, the results show an increase in 57, 8% of correct answers including words such as: beer, coffee, chocolate, juice, lemonade, milk, milkshake, soda, tea, tisane, water and wine. For this subcategory, 7, 1% of errors

were found e.g. two students wrote “souda” instead of “soda”. On the other hand, there is a high percentage of 54, 4% showing no answers. See table 9.

For the second part of the post-test, students were required to complete the dialogue with some of the words from the first part. However, no answer was elicited from the students for this time either. See table 10.

### POSTEST RESULTS

Control group

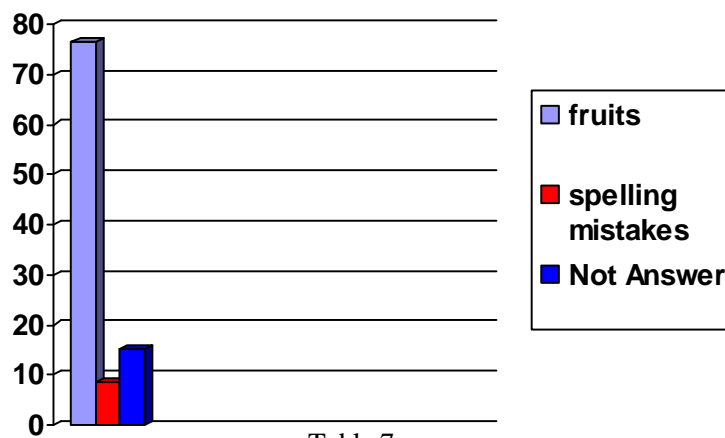
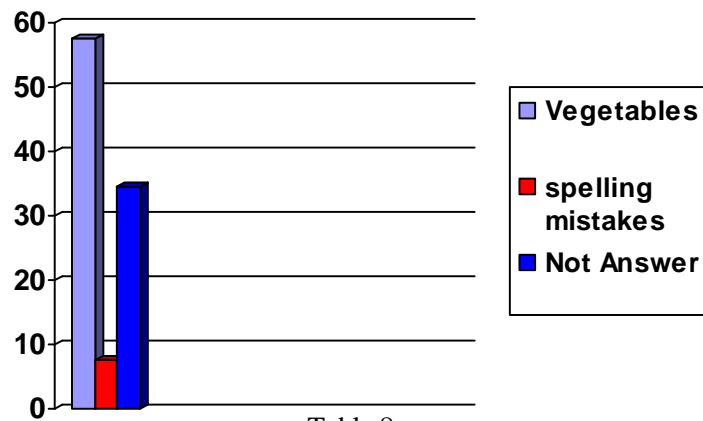
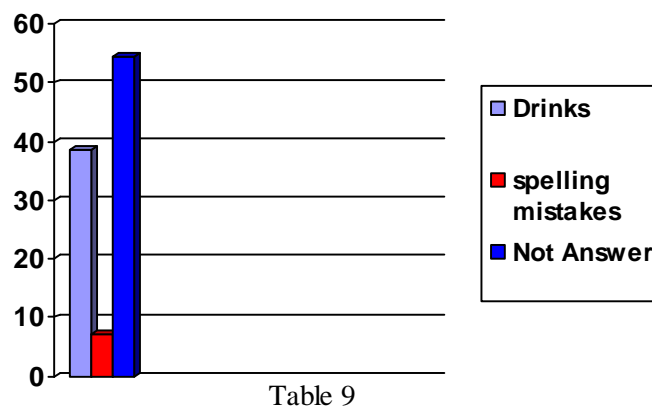


Table 7

This table shows the answers of the control group in the subcategory of fruits with a total of 76, 4 % of correct answers, a percentage of 8, 5% on spelling mistakes and a total of 13% of the students with any answer for this subcategory.

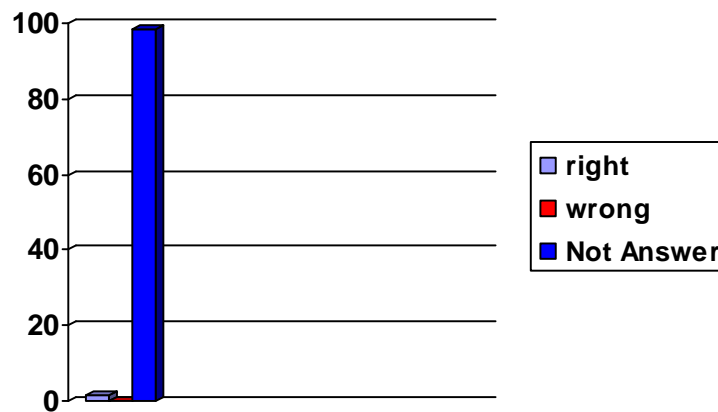


This table shows the results of the control group on the second subcategory of vegetables with a 57, 8 of correct answers using the target language, only a 7,5% of errors and a reduction up to 34,7% of blanks.



This table shows the control group answers in the last subcategory of drinks with 57, 8% of correct answers, 7, 1% of errors and a high percentage of 54, 4% showing no answers.

Second part of the post-test



This table shows any answer elicited in the second part of the posttest which requires the use of the vocabulary learned in a real context in the control group.

In the experimental group, for the first part of the post-test, there are three subcategories. The first sub-category is “Fruits”. Among the responses given by the students we found 17 different possible answers: apple, banana, blackberry, cherry, coconut, grapes, lemon, mandarin, mango, melon, orange, papaya, pear, pineapple, strawberry, tangerine and watermelon.

It was observed the knowledge acquired in cooperative learning implementation with a total of 66, 7 % of right answers in the category of fruits, however we found also some spelling mistakes of 19, 2%, and a reduction up to 14,1% of no answers. See table 11.

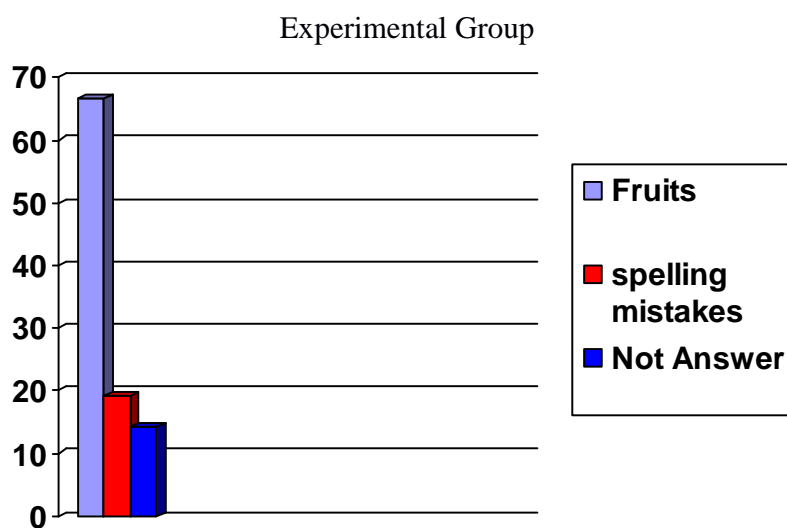
For the second subcategory of vegetables, the results show improvement in the students’ writing down some vocabulary for vegetables: beet, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, corn, cucumber, garlic, green peas, lettuce, onion, pickles, pumpkin and tomato. This shows a

37,1% of correct answers using the target language, only an 11,4% of errors and a reduction up to 51,5% of blanks. See table 12.

On the one hand, for the last subcategory “drinks”, the results show an increase in 67,1% of correct answers including words such as: beer, coffee, chocolate, juice, lemonade, milk, milkshake, soda, tea, tisane, water and wine.

For this subcategory, 11% of errors were found e.g. two students wrote “juise” instead of “juice”. On the other hand, there is a high percentage of 21, 9% showing no answers. See table 13.

For the second part of the post-test, students were required to complete the dialogue with some of the words from the first part. However, a change was determined as 10,4% of the students came out with correct answers and only 5,2% of mistakes was elicited from the part of the students. See table 14.



This table shows the answers of the experimental group in the subcategory of fruits with a total of 66, 7 % of right answers, a total of 19, 2% of spelling mistakes and a reduction up to 14,1% of not answers.

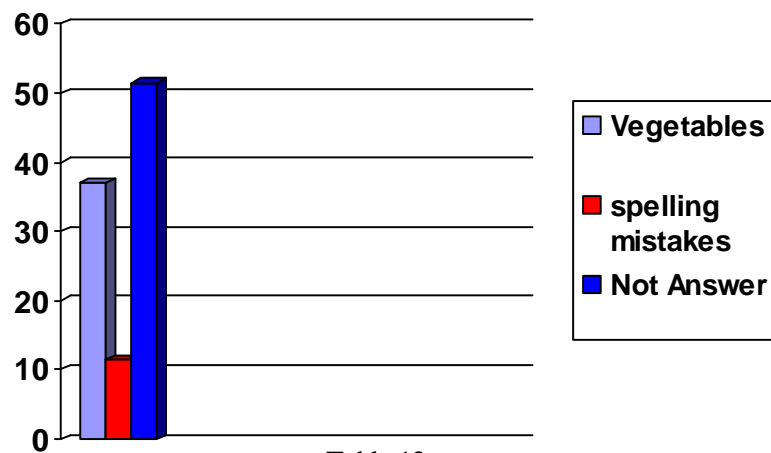


Table 12

This table shows a 37, 1% of correct answers using the target language, only an 11, 4% of errors and a reduction up to 51, 5% of blanks answer in subcategory of vegetables in the experimental group

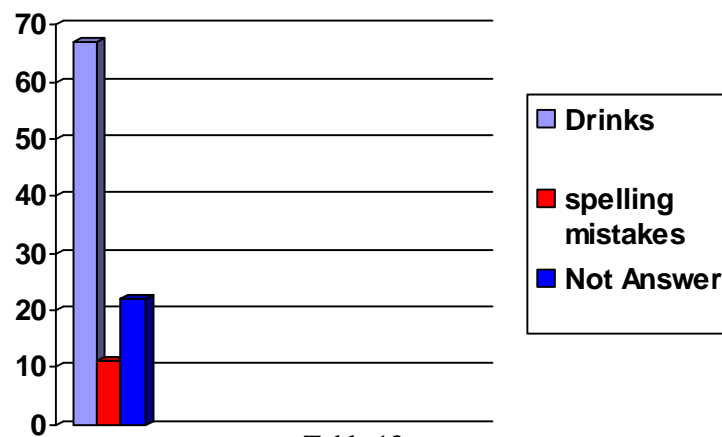


Table 13

This table shows the results of the answers in the last subcategory of drinks with a 67,1% of correct answers, 11% of errors and a high percentage of 21, 9% showing not answers.

Second part of the posttest

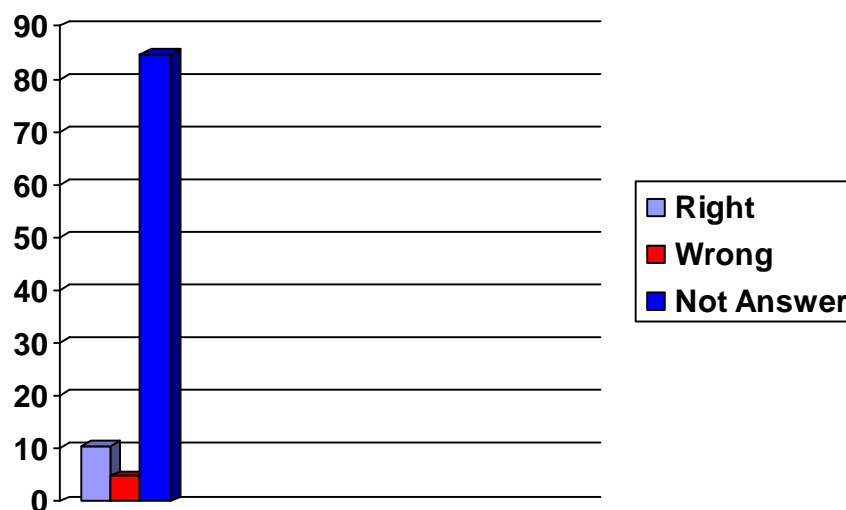


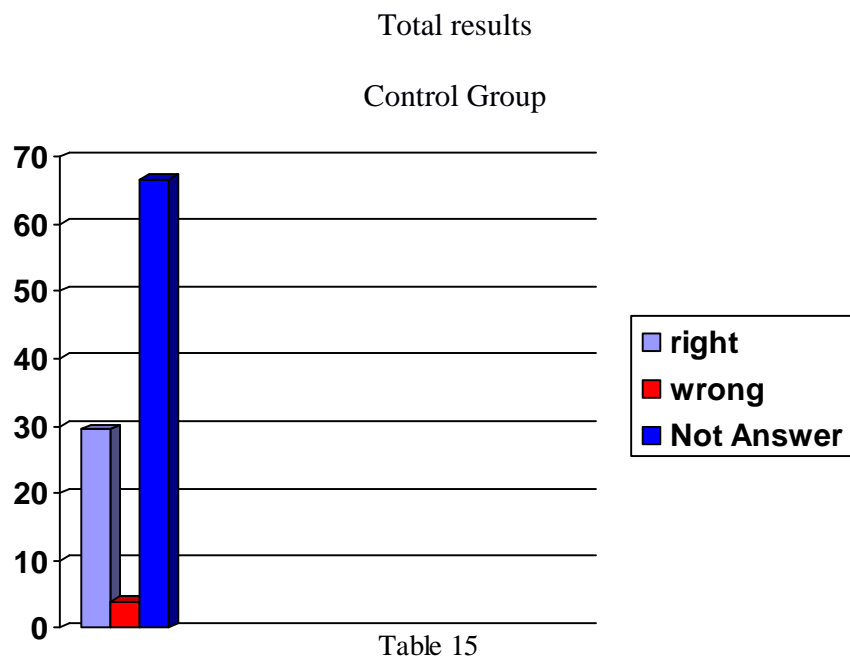
Table 14

This table shows the results of the second part of the post-test in the experimental group with 10, 4% of the students came out with correct answers, only 5,2% of mistakes elicited and 84,7% of not answers.

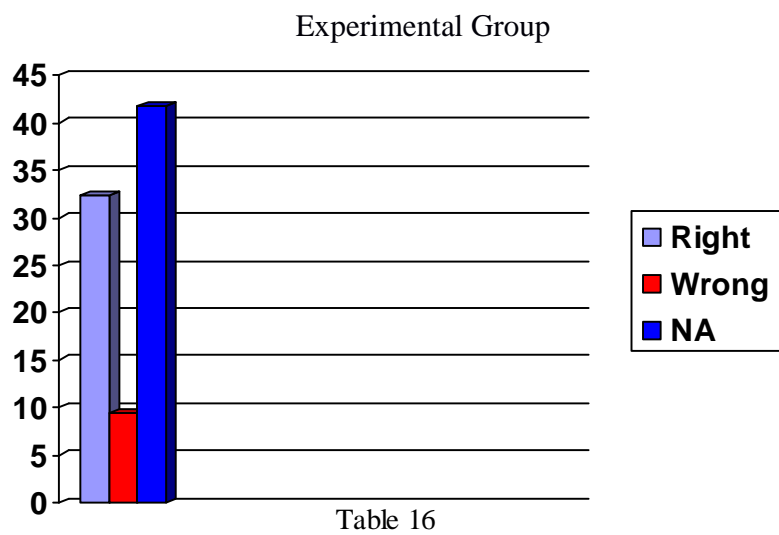
Contrasting pre and pos-tests' results, it is visible that the learners' retention and spelling of basic vocabulary changed. These results could be perceived through the post-test effects of both formal teaching and cooperative learning in quite similar percentages.

However we could find some differences in the amount of answers for the three subcategories. In the control group, the category with more correct answers is the subcategory of "fruits", and the one with fewer answers is "drinks". On the other hand, the experimental group answered more correctly to the subcategory of "drinks" and less correctly the subcategory of "vegetables".

In addition, on the second part of the post-test, it is widely showed how students in the experimental group use the vocabulary within a real context, which is different from the control group from whom no answer was obtained.



This table shows the final results of the posttest in the control group with a 66, 61 of not answers, 29, 53 of correct answers, and 3, 86 of wrong answers



This table shows the final results of the posttest in the experimental group with a 41,72 of not answers, 32,29 of correct answers, and 9,43 of wrong answers



## CONCLUSIONS

The results also show certain differences in the retention of vocabulary for the subcategory of drinks which was filled more accurately and with more options in the experimental group through working on think-pair-share tasks by cooperative learning.

The implementation of informal cooperative learning promotes an adequate understanding and use of the vocabulary in a real context with some more familiarity than with the implementation of the traditional instruction.

The implementation of both informal cooperative learning and traditional instruction through the use of tasks allows increasing English vocabulary retention with beginners in quite similar percentages enhancing and developing an adequate recognition and application of the spelling in the target language vocabulary.

However this study demonstrated that tasks are a very good option to encourage the attention and motivation of the students in a class of English maintaining them busy.

And it also shows that the implementation of a new method is not so easy as it appears, therefore, the success of teaching methods in a specific class doesn't assure their success in every class with unique people.

This study shows that the implementation of a new method is not so easy as it appears, therefore, the success of teaching methods in a specific class doesn't assure their success in every class with unique people.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of tasks in the classroom provides students with the opportunity to apply and practice their knowledge, and to keep them busy and motivated to reach the learning goals.

The implementation of new methods requires not only the recognition of their theoretical framework, principles, advantages and disadvantages in order to adopt them but also the recognition of our characteristics, and problems such as an inadequate schedule with 1 or 2 hours of English instruction per week and the lack of relevant, authentic materials in order to adapt these new methods to our context and reality.

Teachers should be aware that the success of teaching methods or activities in a specific classroom doesn't assure their success in every classroom, due to the fact that methods and approaches are not a prescription or a recipe to follow therefore students' needs, motivation and expectations vary from classroom, to classroom.

ANEXES  
PRETEST

The following pretest was given to the students in both groups without any previous information or preparation to measure their English knowledge about food as a basic vocabulary category in the English learning process.

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

1) Complete the following chart

Fruits	Vegetables	Drinks

2) complete with the words above the following dialogue

IN A COFFEE SHOP

Waiter: How can I help you?

Maria: What is the menu, please?

Waiter: We have salad with \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Manuel: What about drinks?

Waiter: We have \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ juice

Maria: But it is too cold. Do you have something hot to drink?

Waiter: yes, we have \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

Manuel: Give us a minute to think. Thanks.

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

### TASK 1

This task were given to both groups simultaneously with explanations and examples to solve it

1. Rewrite the following fruits

Strawberry \_\_\_\_\_

Lemon \_\_\_\_\_

Orange \_\_\_\_\_

Banana \_\_\_\_\_

Pear \_\_\_\_\_

Pineapple \_\_\_\_\_

Grapes \_\_\_\_\_

Apple \_\_\_\_\_

Cherry \_\_\_\_\_

Coconut \_\_\_\_\_

Watermelon \_\_\_\_\_

2. Find the words above in the following puzzle

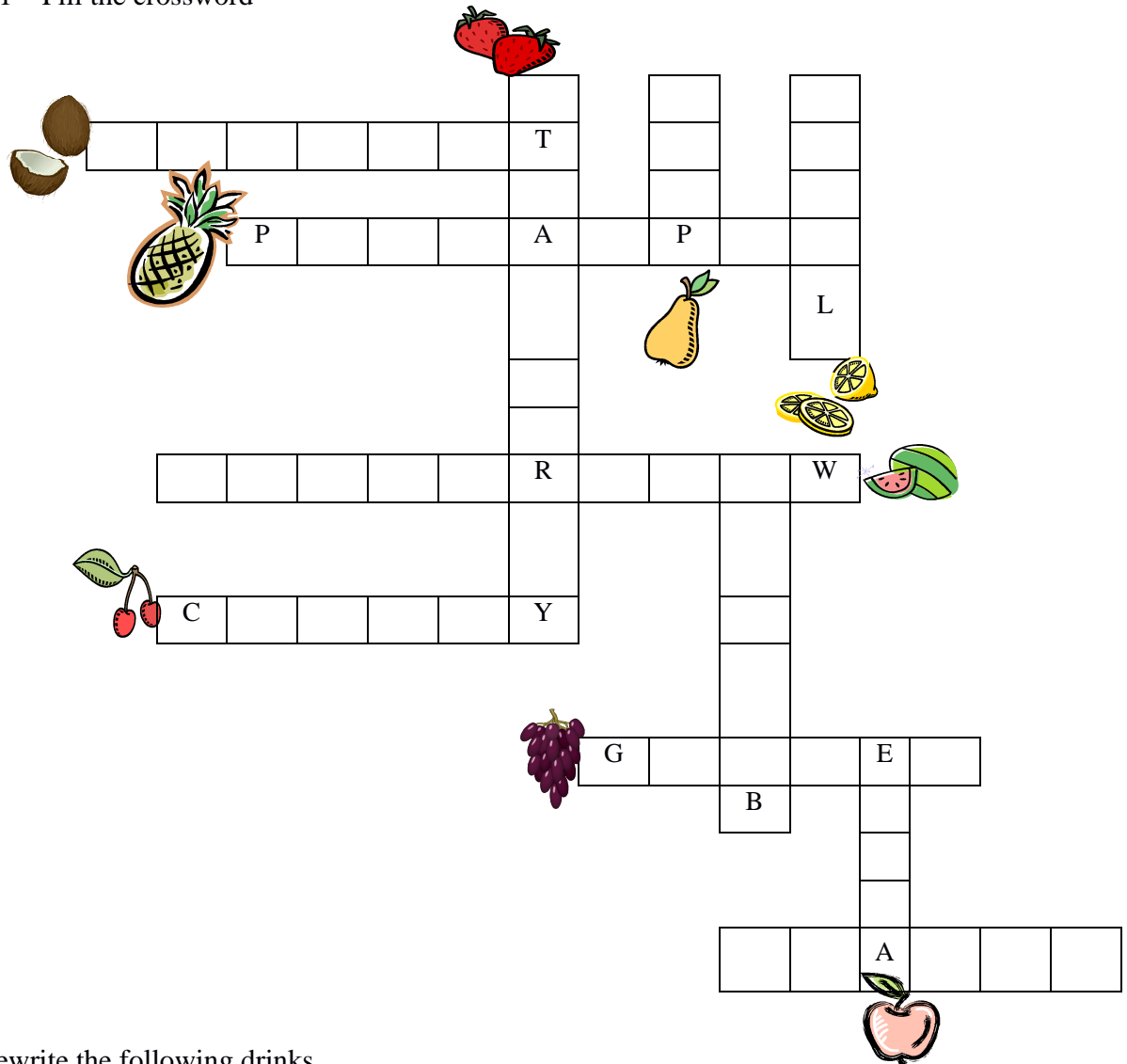
G	R	A	P	E	S	S	T	O	N	D
A	E	L	P	P	A	E	N	I	P	N
Y	R	R	E	H	C	N	M	M	N	O
S	T	R	A	W	B	E	R	R	Y	L
S	U	U	T	T	S	A	R	R	E	E
N	N	E	E	A	E	L	P	P	A	M
B	O	B	M	P	L	L	N	N	M	R
C	C	E	A	N	A	N	A	B	L	E
O	O	E	M	M	L	L	I	I	T	T
R	C	L	E	M	N	O	M	E	L	A
R	R	O	O	R	A	N	G	E	C	W

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

## TASK 2

This task were given to both groups simultaneously with explanations and examples to solve it

### 1 Fill the crossword



### 2 Rewrite the following drinks

Water	_____	Coffee	_____
Juice	_____	Chocolate	_____
Lemonade	_____	Tea	_____
Milkshake	_____	Soda	_____
Milk	_____	Tisane	_____

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_ **TASK 3**

This task were given to both groups simultaneously with explanations and examples to solve it

I. Match the following words with the drawings:

1) **APPLE** \_\_\_\_\_

a)



b)



2) **GRAPES** \_\_\_\_\_

3) **COFFEE** \_\_\_\_\_

c)



d)

4) **STRAWBERRY** \_\_\_\_\_

e)



f)

5) **JUICE** \_\_\_\_\_

6) **ORANGE** \_\_\_\_\_

g)



h)

7) **COCONUT** \_\_\_\_\_

8) **MILK** \_\_\_\_\_

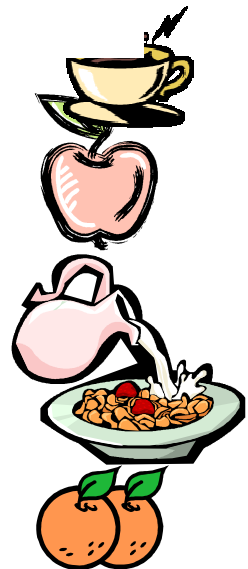
i)



j)

9) **SODA** \_\_\_\_\_

10) **LEMONADE** \_\_\_\_\_



II. Complete the blanks with the letters that are missing

**HOT DRINKS**

**COLD DRINKS**

- COF\_E\_

- JU\_CE

- TI\_AN\_

- SO\_A

- CHOCOLAT\_

- LE\_ON\_DE

- TE\_

- MIL\_SH\_KE

- M\_L\_

- WATE\_

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

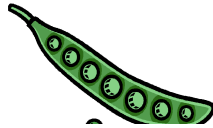
#### TASK 4

This task were given to both groups simultaneously with explanations and examples to solve it

1. Look and read the respective name for the pictures.



**Mushrooms**



**Green Peas**



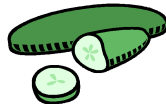
**Garlic**



**Pumpkin**



**Cauliflower**



**Pickles**



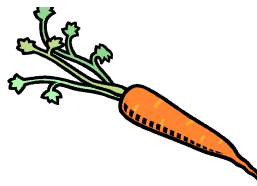
**Corn**



**Tomatoes**



**Lettuce**



**Carrot**



**Onion**

2. What are the ingredients for the salad?



The ingredients are:

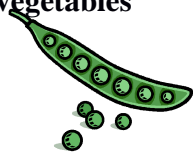
1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

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

**TASK 5**

This task were given to both groups simultaneously with explanations and examples to solve it

**I. Name the vegetables**



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

**2) Unscramble the following words**

**WTREA**

**OFFCEE**

**CRRTOA**

**NNOIO**

**CPKISLE**

**SHMLKIEAK**

**CEIJU**

**ADEMOLN**

**ICGRAL**

**TSNIAE**

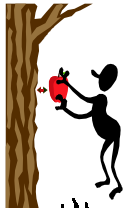


NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### TASK 6

This task were given to both groups simultaneously with explanations and examples to solve it

#### 1. Look at the pictures and write sentences



I like apple



I don't like garlic



\_\_\_\_\_



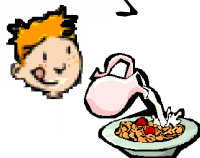
\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

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

### POSTTEST

The posttest was given after the six activities. This posttest was given to both in order to measure the changes in the English knowledge of both groups (control and experimental group) about food as a basic vocabulary category in the English learning process.

1) Complete the following chart

Fruits	Vegetables	Drinks

2) Complete with the words above the following dialogue

### IN A COFFEE SHOP

Waiter: How can I help you?

Maria: What is the menu, please?

Waiter: We have salad with \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Manuel: What about drinks?

Waiter: We have \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ juice

Maria: But it is too cold. Do you have something hot to drink?

Waiter: yes, we have \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

Manuel: Give us a minute to think. Thanks.

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