

UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

THESIS SUBMITTED TO OBTAIN THE LICENCIATURA DEGREE IN

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COOPERATIVE LEARNING APPROACH TO  
ENHANCE SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE FOR FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS AT  
SAINT MICHAEL SCHOOL DURING THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2023

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## SWORM OF DECLARATION

### DECLARACIÓN JURADA

Yo Arlette Andrea Lescouflair Madrigal mayor de edad, portador de la cédula de identidad número 117260875 egresado de la carrera de Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés de la Universidad Hispanoamericana, hago constar por medio de éste acto y debidamente apercebido y entendido de las penas y consecuencias con las que se castiga en el Código Penal el delito de perjurio, ante quienes se constituyen en el Tribunal Examinador de mi trabajo de tesis para optar por el título de Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés, juro solemnemente que mi trabajo de investigación titulado: “Effectiveness Of The Cooperative Learning Approach To Enhance Simple Present Tense For Fifth Grade Students At Saint Michael School During The Second Quarter Of 2023”

es una obra original que ha respetado todo lo preceptuado por las Leyes Penales, así como la Ley de Derecho de Autor y Derecho Conexos número 6683 del 14 de octubre de 1982 y sus reformas, publicada en la Gaceta número 226 del 25 de noviembre de 1982; incluyendo el numeral 70 de dicha ley que advierte; artículo 70. Es permitido citar a un autor, transcribiendo los pasajes pertinentes siempre que éstos no sean tantos y seguidos, que puedan considerarse como una producción simulada y sustancial, que redunde en perjuicio del autor de la obra original. Asimismo, quedo advertido que la Universidad se reserva el derecho de protocolizar este documento ante Notario Público. en fe de lo anterior, firmo en la ciudad de San José, a los 5 días del mes de diciembre del año dos mil veintitrés.



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Firma del estudiante

Cédula:117260875

## Carta del tutor

### LETTER FROM THE TUTOR

#### CARTA DEL TUTOR

San José, 04 de diciembre de 2023

*Destinatario: Jessica Ramírez*

**Carrera: LICENCIATURA DEGREE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

*Universidad Hispanoamericana*

Estimada señora:

La persona estudiante **Arlette Lescouflair Madrigal**, cédula de identidad número **117260875**, me ha presentado, para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado **“effectiveness of the cooperative learning approach to enhance simple present tense for fifth grade students at saint Michael school during the second quarter of 2023”**, el cual ha elaborado para optar por el grado académico de Licenciatura. En mi calidad de persona tutor, he verificado que se han hecho las correcciones indicadas durante el proceso de tutoría y he evaluado los aspectos relativos a la elaboración del problema, objetivos, justificación; antecedentes, marco teórico, marco metodológico, tabulación, análisis de datos; conclusiones y recomendaciones.

De los resultados obtenidos por el postulante, se obtiene la siguiente calificación:

a)	ORIGINAL DEL TEMA	10%	10
b)	CUMPLIMIENTO DE ENTREGA DE AVANCES	20%	20
c)	COHERENCIA ENTRE LOS OBJETIVOS, LOS INSTRUMENTOS APLICADOS Y LOS RESULTADOS DE LA INVESTIGACION	30%	30
d)	RELEVANCIA DE LAS CONCLUSIONES Y RECOMENDACIONES	20%	20
e)	CALIDAD, DETALLE DEL MARCO TEORICO	20%	20
	TOTAL		100

En virtud de la calificación obtenida, se avala el traslado al proceso de lectura.

Atentamente,

***MSc. Ariel Gustavo Vargas Vindas***

***Cedula: 204420300***



**Carta****LETTER FROM THE READER**

**San José, 6 de febrero, 2022**  
**Universidad Hispanoamericana**  
**Sede**  
**Carrera: Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés**

**Estimado señor:**

La estudiante Arlette Lescouflair Madrigal, cédula de identidad 117260875, me ha presentado para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado "EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COOPERATIVE LEARNING APPROACH TO ENHANCE SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE FOR FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SAINT MICHAEL SCHOOL DURING THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2023.", el cual ha elaborado para obtener su grado de Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés.

He revisado y he hecho las observaciones relativas al contenido analizado, particularmente lo relativo a la coherencia entre el marco teórico y análisis de datos, la consistencia de los datos recopilados y la coherencia entre éstos y las conclusiones; asimismo, la aplicabilidad y originalidad de las recomendaciones, en términos de aporte de la investigación. He verificado que se han hecho las modificaciones correspondientes a las observaciones indicadas.

Por consiguiente, este trabajo cuenta con mi aval para ser presentado en la defensa pública.

Atte.

**Roy Alfaro**  
**Alfaro**

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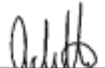
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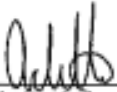
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## **DEDICATORY**

This investigation work is solely dedicated to my family who have motivated me to continue despite the hardships. Thanks to my grandma, Tita, although she is not physically with me anymore, she has been my biggest motivation. Thanks to my mother and father who always listened and offered advice. It is thanks to their efforts and care that the completion of this work was possible.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to extend my gratitude to the professors who have guided me through this formation stage with their comments, suggestions, and knowledge. Likewise, to the classmates who have accompanied me through this process. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my family who were the ones that made this possible.

## **ABSTRACT**

The present investigation derived from the researcher's perception of a need regarding the English Grammar area for fifth grade students at Saint Michael School. Considering this, the research's main purpose is to analyze the effects of the cooperative learning approach in English grammar in fifth grade students at Saint Michael School during the second quarter of 2023. This investigation seeks to implement the Cooperative Learning approach in a fifth-grade classroom as an alternative solution for improving their grammar skills.

## RESUMEN

La investigación tiene como objetivo determinar los efectos del enfoque de aprendizaje cooperativo en la habilidad gramática en estudiantes de quinto grado del Saint Michael School. La implementación de la estrategia brinda alternativas a los estudiantes para que interactúen entre sí, además de promover la autonomía de su propio aprendizaje. Las habilidades gramaticales son parte esencial en las clases de inglés donde el profesor puede utilizar diferentes tipos de actividades donde los alumnos participan y practican sus habilidades para pulirlas de forma correcta. El presente trabajo es una investigación cualitativa donde se implementaron encuestas y se realizaron diferentes observaciones para recolectar información en el cual los encuestados son veintiún estudiantes del grupo 5B de Saint Michael School. Este proyecto incluye información sobre el aprendizaje cooperativo y habilidades gramaticales tomando en cuenta puntos importantes sobre los términos que son esenciales para el presente trabajo. Es primordial que los profesores incluyan diferentes estrategias para abordar las habilidades gramaticales de manera cooperativa y colaborativa para con los estudiantes, ya que esto les beneficia tanto fuera como dentro de la institución.



# **CHAPTER I**

## **RESEARCH PROBLEM**



## 1.1 Introduction

This research analyzes the effects that the application of the cooperative approach can have on teaching English grammar. In this chapter, the reader will be provided with contextual information for the research. The goal of this chapter is to offer readers an introductory idea of what the investigation is about; therefore, it encloses the problem statement, main objectives, justification, and antecedents. Moreover, the chapter comprises important background information that antecedes the research. Following the title of the investigation, it is necessary to introduce the three main concepts of ESL, grammar teaching, and cooperative learning.

ESL refers to teaching English to learners who have a different native language and live in a country where although English might not be official, it is considered important. According to British Council, in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, following England's increased colonization, the concept of learning English as a second language was introduced. (British Study Center, 2012)

Almost four centuries later, the opportunities in the United States amplified. In consequence, the need in all countries around the world to learn English became greater by the time, and Costa Rica was not the exception. In 1910, after the English language was officialized, the education authorities together with the national government were faced with the necessity to hire English teachers. The teachers, however, were not enough to solve the necessities. For this reason, in the decade of 1930's the government started hiring foreign English teachers. It was not until 1978 that the University of Costa Rica created a program to form and train English teachers. Years later in 2018, the Alliance for Bilingualism was introduced as a strategy to increase English teaching coverage in Costa Rica, as a response to the prioritization that has been given to the language in modern times. (CINDE, 2018)

English teaching encloses more than just one area. Therefore, as to teach English as a second language, there are some skills to be developed in learners. Primarily, there are five main skills that teachers work with. Those skills are reading, writing, spelling, conversation, and grammar. Each skill is important for a learner to effectively acquire a second language.

Grammar, specifically, is primordial, as it allows teachers to explain the language itself to learners. This English skill consists of the system and structure of a language and refers to the fixing of meanings into words. There are different recommendations to work on teaching the different skills. For grammar, it is often recommended to emphasize on the explanation of the rules and structures of the language, as well as to assign students a lot of practice.

Undeniably, there is a variety of different methods and approaches for teachers to apply these two principles, some of which will be developed throughout this investigation.

The specific method that this investigation aims to utilize, as a means to teach grammar, specifically Simple Present Tense, by the Cooperative Learning Approach. Said approach is a relatively new instructional method. The concept of collaborative learning was introduced by James Britton around the 1970's. Johnson & Johnson (2018) reference Britton, who proposed that by working jointly, students could generate their own learning procedures and engage into what he liked to call "natural learning." The cooperative or collaborative learning approach is an active methodology which allows students to engage more deeply both intellectually and emotionally into learning. This approach consists of students working together in small groups in an attempt to reach a common objective. Likewise, the approach comprises elements such as positive interdependence, individual accountability, and development of social skills.

### **1.1.1 Background of the problem**

The cooperative learning approach originated hundreds of years ago; however, it was not until recent days that this method became notable in the teaching context. Through the cooperative learning approach, students are assigned certain tasks and are asked to work jointly with other classmates. This collective work aims to build different skills in the learners, as for example, it allows students to learn that teamwork requires autonomy and responsibility. In 2007, Richard Felder and Rebecca Brent led an investigation under ASC Symposium Series titled Cooperative Learning. Through the research, the authors pointed at the principles, structures, and application of the collaborative method. The researchers mentioned that learning is not only about working in groups but also about reaching a goal under certain conditioning elements. In the investigation, Felder and Brent mentioned that if imperfectly used, the cooperative approach can result in difficulties for the teacher. For this reason, the researchers concluded by offering a series of suggestions when working with the cooperative learning approach such as the criteria for group formation, promoting accountability, and develop teamwork skills.

Previous investigations offer an insight to this approach directing it to the Grammar skill but implementing it on various different educational contexts. Asfin Khan and Mumtaz Akhtar conducted a research in 2017 on the cooperative approach's effectiveness in grammar learning. Their research, titled Investigating the Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning Method on Teaching of English Grammar, aimed to study the STAD or Student Teams Achievement Divisions' model of cooperative learning and its effectiveness on student's achievement. Khan and Akhtar based their investigation on a Pakistani context with a population of seventh grade students. Through the investigation, they built a comparison between the traditional and cooperative learning methods in an attempt to conclude the effectiveness of one over the other. The research was conducted under a quasi-experimental

design and the findings were given in statistical tables. By implementing the Cooperative Approach, the investigation concluded that the students who participated in cooperative learning obtained higher scores than those who partook in the traditional method. On this note, the investigators recommended teachers to implement this approach by creating groups of heterogeneous students who can help and learn from one another. Among other points, the research stressed the importance of grammar as a skill in language learning and described it as having “a high up place in language teaching and learning and without a good knowledge of grammar, the desired standard of language cannot be achieved” (p.3).

Similarly, in 2013 Nomalungelo Isabel Ngubane led the investigation titled *The Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning in an English First Additional Language Classroom*. Through this investigation, the researcher aimed to determine if the cooperative learning strategies could improve both learning and teaching in a tenth-grade classroom context, in which English was the first additional language for the students. Among the objectives, the research also wanted to obtain the perceptions of the students on this newly implemented learning method. The investigation used the qualitative research methodology to gather and analyze data, and it was developed through interviews, focus groups, and most importantly, observing the students. The results collected by learner’s perceptions of cooperative learning pointed at teacher-learner and learner-learner interactions as important relations that were enhanced by using the cooperative approach. The researchers concluded that working on the relations between teacher-learner and learner-learner is fundamental for learning English as first additional language, and in order to achieve that cooperative learning methods can be implemented and be beneficial.

As a part of this research, it is also convenient to point at different learner-centered methods implemented in grammar teaching and their effects on the learners. Since the current investigation wishes to determine the effectiveness of the cooperative approach in English

grammar learning, the following researches result useful for achieving this purpose. In a thesis led by Daniela Achoy Solano for Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica in 2020, the researcher investigated on English grammar learning. In the investigation titled *Implementing Guided-Discovery in Grammar Learning*, the researcher mentioned that teacher-centered methods are not always the best for grammar learning and that learners should instead try to understand and analyze the language by their own in a guided manner. For this reason, the researcher's objective was to nurture analysis and reasoning in English learners by using a guided discovery in order for students to work on an autonomous learning process. Through a guided discovery, learners would now be guided in language patterns, but they would be allowed to come up with the language rules autonomously. The research was led under a qualitative approach on a population of 26 students from different educational backgrounds. Overall, the investigation concluded that guided discovery impacted students positively and allowed them to acquire analyzing and reasoning strategies.

Finally, in a paper conducted in 2013 by Damaris Cordero Badilla and Ginneth Pizarro Chacón for Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, the researchers worked an investigation titled *Communicative Grammar: An Effective Tool to Teach a Second Language in Today's Classes*. Said investigation aimed to point at the advantages of the CLT in grammar teaching. The researcher stressed the need to implement non-traditional methods on English Grammar teaching; hence, allowing students to internalize concepts and learn in a more spontaneous way. The investigation concluded that grammar skills encourage students to implement the language, they are learning. For this reason, the researcher recommended teachers to implement different useful methodologies that help students perceive grammar as an important tool to transmit their ideas in the second language.

### **1.1.2 Problematization**

Free and mandatory instruction is one of the main principles that represents Costa Rica's education system. As such, the country dedicates many resources to this specific field. Ever since the XIX century, the education system has included foreign languages teaching in its teaching programs. Despite the efforts, second language acquisition has not always given the desired results. In the past years, Costa Rican educational authorities' interest on primary and secondary school students learning English, has significantly increased. Seeing that learning English as a second language in schools was not working as fore sought, in 2021 the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) together with the Consejo Nacional de Educación, designed a proposal to enhance the educational policy on languages promotion. Among other aspects, the document stresses the need for the student population to acquire a second language. In order for students to efficiently acquire a second language, it is necessary for them to understand its bases. Namely, learning the grammar rules and structures of the language is primordial. Grammar skills are of great importance for learning English as a second language because of several reasons. First and foremost, grammar allows learners to comprehend the creation of words, sentences, paragraphs, and texts. Additionally, it provides a meeting point between the native and the target language, as it allows the students to draw comparisons and contrasts among the rules and structures presented in each. Grammar also links together other skills such as efficient conversation, spelling, writing, and even widens vocabulary. Being so important, fully understanding grammar can be challenging, especially for young primary school students whose last two academic years have been affected by a worldwide pandemic. In 2019, Costa Rica was victim of a global pandemic; as a result, the education system in the country was also greatly affected. In an attempt for education to keep on going despite the sanitary measurements, institutions were obliged to create alternatives to education. Through the beginning and most part of the pandemic, public institutions opted for

distance learning, whence private schools adopted a virtual modality. Virtual modality allowed private institutions to maintain the daily schedules and provided benefits such as the implementation of electronic learning and other resources offered by technology. In reality, virtual modalities brought as many negative as positive consequences. Among the negative consequences, one that relates to this investigation is the individual and unsupervised work that the virtual modality represented. Working individually, through a technological device at their homes, represented a challenge for students, parents, and teachers. Although, many parents often accompanied and aided students with the different lessons, English can be challenging when taught from the distance. At the same time, virtual learning meant the possibility of connectivity problems, and the number of students in a virtual room made it difficult for the teacher to pay close attention to the learning of each individual. Considering the given points and the fact that students are just returning to the physical classrooms, teachers must create new ways for a more efficient learning. In order to achieve a more efficient learning, specifically in the grammar field, the cooperative approach offers a way for students and teachers to work together and learn from each other. This approach may represent a solution for some of the problematics that followed education in the past two years. In fact, the cooperative learning approach allows students to communicate among themselves using the target language, to create autonomy, to work on social skills, and most importantly, to help each other in a variety of ways. Through the implementation of this approach, the students who have undergone challenging academic changes can see how the effort of an individual can be of great help to the whole group.

### **1.1.3 Problem Statement**

Fifth grade students from Saint Michael School are struggling with the second language acquisition since it has not brought the desired effects as a result of the well-known pandemic by COVID-19 that hit the world on 2019.

### **1.1.4 Justification of the problem**

The purpose of this investigation is to analyze the effects of the Cooperative Learning approach in English grammar in fifth grade students at Saint Michael School. This research aims to understand how working cooperatively can benefit students in their English grammar learning. As one of the main skills to be developed when acquiring a second language, grammar holds as much importance to language learning any other skill. In an ESL scenario, young learners most likely spot differences among their native language and the new rules and structures presented by the second language. Namely, the proper understanding and implementing the grammatical rules and structures of the second language might sometimes represent a challenge for the learner. Under those circumstances, the teacher must search for ways to help students to learn in more effective ways in an attempt to achieve the best possible learning outcome. In this investigation, the effects of the cooperative approach in English grammar are analyzed as a way to help enhance students' learning of the second language.

The relevance of this study lays on the significance that has been given to the second language acquisition since a young age in a worldwide level. In order to properly learn a language such as English, it is first primordial to consider all the skills it involves. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and grammar are the five main skills assessed when learning English. Although, all five skills are necessary for language acquisition, they are often taught separately in order to focus on each and their specific details. As an individual skill, grammar



requires a lot of practice and attention to detail, as it comprises structures and rules completely different from the learner's native language. By working together with classmates through the cooperative approach, the students and teacher work together towards a more effective learning experience. Consequently, the present research is beneficial not only to future investigators who would like to broaden the study of applying cooperative learning approaches in grammar learning, but it is also valuable for teachers, students, and even parents who can work jointly to achieve a common goal.

In the present time and following the consequences that the world pandemic had on education, implementing the collaborative learning approach might represent a gain for students, teachers, parents, and society in general. Through collaborative learning, students work not only on academic skills such as grammar, but they also gain social and teamwork skills that might have been unconsciously passed over during the past two years due to the emphasis on reaching academic leveling. Despite the existence of knowledge on the cooperative learning approach related to the development of different ESL skills, the majority of institutions have not been able to use of it during the last two and a half years because of the different modalities and restrictions that followed the pandemic. This research redefines the knowledge on this approach by determining the effects that it now implies in the English Grammar learning of students who had to work individually and from their homes during their full second and part of third years of primary school.

Given these points, the current investigation results convenient, relevant, and practical. It is convenient as its clear purpose is to analyze the effects that the cooperative approach has on the English grammar skill. Likewise, it is relevant since it is beneficial for future researchers, as well as for teachers, parents, and students who will now have a new alternative to learning grammar in a joint effort. Finally, the investigation is practical as it is developed following a

period of time where individual learning was the custom option; hence, cooperative work comes to be a new learning experience for the participants in the process.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Considering these points, the present investigation will comprise a deep analysis answering the question:

What is the effectiveness of using Cooperative Learning Approach to enhance Simple Present Tense in fifth grade students at Saint Michael School?

## **1.3 General and Specific Objectives**

### **1.3.1 General Objective**

- a) To determine the effectiveness of using Cooperative Learning Approach to enhance Simple Present Tense in fifth grade students at Saint Michael School during the second quarter of 2023.

### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

- a)

## **1.4 Scope and Limitations**

### **1.4.1 Scope**

The current research aspires to analyze the effects of the cooperative learning approach in English grammar, as this field represents such an important skill in the learning of a second language. Seeing that in primary schools most students are taught the basics of grammar, the study focuses on fifth grade students at Saint Michael School. Through the investigation, the researcher will study the cooperative approach as a means to learn English grammar. Likewise, the investigator will implement the cooperative learning approach when

teaching grammar and will observe the final outcome of cooperative work as a means to prove the effects of the approach. Finally, the researcher will determine the usefulness of the cooperative approach in grammar learning to reach the main objective of the investigation.

#### **1.4.2 Limitations**

One of the main limitations is that students can get used to working in groups only and they need to develop autonomy and individual accountability. Students should practice also differently. Also, another limitation is that not all students learn at the same speed, so it can be difficult for them to work together and learn at the same time. While working in a group, there may be one group member who doesn't learn as quickly as the others, and gets left behind, and ultimately does not learn anything at all. Similarly, if one does not learn as quickly and the group tries to slow down to explain things to this member. The whole group may end up falling behind. Another curb is that quiet students may not feel comfortable working with more people, and won't participate as much as they should, they would prefer to work by themselves.

## **CHAPTER II**

# **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This research is conducted under an analysis which offers an insight to the effects that cooperative learning can have on English grammar teaching. Relating to this analysis, the investigation focuses on cooperative learning which derives from the constructivism learning theory. This theory is founded under the belief that “learners are not supposed to wait for knowledge to be filled but play an active role to seek meaning and nurture self-awareness” (Pham, 2011, p. 411). That is to say, teachers should only facilitate and guide, and students should be active participants in their learning process rather than mere receptors and memorizers.

This chapter provides an insight to the existing theories, methodologies, and concepts relating to the teaching of English grammar and the usage of the cooperative learning approach. In order to present those concepts, it is of first importance to know the teaching context throughout the years. English teaching has been subjected to many changes over time; and in Costa Rica, it was introduced during the mid-nineteenth century. By that time, the country was opening to commerce and tourism with foreign Anglo-speaking nations; thus, the need to have people educated on the English language. Around 1887, English was taught in schools by native speakers, and it was not until after the 1950’s that the Universidad de Costa Rica created a program to form national English teachers.

Teaching has been affected by a variety of elements throughout the years. Consequently, the methodologies, approaches, and roles have all evolved. Before, English teaching was conducted under traditional approaches, which centered on the teacher and expected students to memorize and learn the different subjects studied. In recent years, this methodology was replaced, in a vast amount of institutions, for more student-centered approaches like it is the case of community learning, task and project-based approaches, comprehension approaches, and cooperative learning. The teaching context throughout the

last two years has changed education more drastically than ever. Consequence to the global pandemic, some methodologies have been changed, adapted, and sometimes, abandoned.

Considering that lessons have been mainly imparted virtually during the last two years, teaching English has become challenging for many reasons. Among them, the fact that students have been mainly learning by listening and not by speaking or observing. Following this idea, teachers and educational authorities have sought for ways to design approaches to learning which can help students after going through such drastic changes in education.

This chapter introduces the theoretical basis which conform the investigation and lead to achieving its main goal. As the investigation wishes to analyze the effects of cooperative learning in English teaching in fifth grade students at Saint Michael School, the following chapter offers antecedents and explanations for the primary categories that derive from the topic, which are cooperative learning and how to teach grammar, as well as the important subdivisions of each.

## **2.1 Literature Review**

The following section explains in detail the two main components for this investigation: the cooperative learning approach and how to teach grammar. This segment includes the history, principles, and strategies of cooperative learning. Similarly, it develops the concepts of teamwork and autonomy, and stresses the roles of the teacher and students when applying the cooperative learning approach. Regarding the second main component, how to teach grammar, this section develops the history, definition, principles, and methods of grammar teaching.

### **2.1.1 Cooperative Learning Approach**

In later years, the education system has been looking for innovative, active ways to teach, which can help students redefine their idea of learning and accomplish this process in

the most effective way possible. Brito (2019) affirms that “the first requirement for designing a learning experience is to ensure students are active rather than passive.” Moreover, he adds that “active learning requires students to engage meaningfully cognitively and emotionally with other students, the task assigned, and the materials or resources used to complete the task” (p. 60). According to Brito, in order to achieve an effective learning experience for students, it is primordial to implement active methodologies that allow the pupils to get meaningfully involved in their learning process. Cooperative learning, as Brito sustains, represents the pillar upon which active learning methods are built. Adding to Brito’s definitions, Rigacci (2020) explains cooperative learning as “an instructional method in which students work in small groups to accomplish a common learning goal with the guidance of the teacher.” It can be said then that cooperative learning is an active methodology which consists of assembling students into small, heterogeneous work groups for them to work together towards a common goal.

### **2.1.1.2 History**

In the past few years, teachers have inclined towards the implementation of instructional approaches, which engage students into their learning process. Although, these practices have become popular in later years, they have existed for decades. The word cooperative originated in the late 16th century and has a Latin etymology. This word is dissected into three fragments according to the Online Etymology Dictionary. In Latin, the prefix “com” means together, followed by the root “op,” which means to work and produce in abundance; finally, the term operari means to work. As a whole, cooperate means to work together and produce in abundance.

Before the 1980’s, there was not such term as collaborative learning. Instead, literary works implemented terms such as small group learning to refer to this methodology. After 1980 a variety of definitions have been assigned to the term collaborative learning. One of the

oldest definitions still considered pioneer of cooperative learning and cited as the primary definition in many works until this day is that of Johnson & Johnson (1989), which explains:

Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals, and cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. Within cooperative learning groups, students are given two responsibilities: to learn the assigned material and make sure that all other members of their group do likewise. Their success is measured by a fixed set of standards. Thus, a student seeks an outcome that is beneficial to himself or herself and beneficial to all other group members (p.121)

Johnson & Johnson conceptualization of cooperative learning is concrete and complete. Through their definition, they clarify the organization of the students, objectives of the method, and ways to measure the effectiveness of the approach. Like Johnson & Johnson, there are other researchers who throughout the years have provided different definitions for the cooperative learning approach. Such is the case of Slavin in 1987, Sharan & Sharan in 1987, Kagan in 1989, and Cohen in 1994. Although most definitions agree that cooperative learning is an instructional approach that seeks for students to actively participate in their learning experience, there are some differences among the conceptualizations offered by researchers over the years. Cohen (1994), for example, states that the groups should advance with their task without immediate and direct supervision from the teacher (p.3). Contrary to Cohen, other researchers agree that even though the focus is on peer mentoring, the teacher should be present as a facilitator that aids students when needed.

The history of cooperative learning encloses more than just definitions. When referring to its history, it is primordial to observe the importance that this approach has been acquiring with the passing of the years. In order to achieve this, it is first essential to look at



the increasing implementation of active methodologies. Not so long ago, lessons were imparted with non-instructional, teacher-oriented methods. These traditional methodologies were mostly magistral lessons in which the teacher explained the topic to study, and students listened to later complete a practice. Even if the terms of active methodologies and instructional methods have been present for decades, their implementation in Costa Rican classrooms have not been fully implemented until approximately the present decade. Still in modern times, most of the schools that implement active and instructional methodologies are private institutions.

### **2.1.1.3 Principles of the cooperative approach**

The cooperative approach is marked by a series of principles. These principles offer a basis with which it is possible to differentiate between cooperative work and group work. Different books and researchers support different principles; however, they all offer similar beliefs which somehow extend and cover all of the important points to be considered when working cooperatively. For this segment, multiple principles will be mentioned, but only five of them will be developed. Jacobs & Seow (2015) proposed eight principles for cooperative learning: heterogeneous grouping, teaching collaborative skills, group autonomy, maximum peer interactions, equal opportunity to participate, individual accountability, positive interdependence, and cooperation as a value (p.30). Out of the eight principles mentioned, five of them are widely pointed out by a variety of books and researches. These five widely recognized principles of cooperative learning are creating heterogeneous groups, teaching collaborative skills, building autonomy, individual accountability and positive interdependence. Two of these principles, for instance, are also mentioned by Davidson (2021), who offered six key principles and listed them as challenging tasks that require a group solution, individual accountability, group discussion focused on the task, cooperative behavior, positive interdependence, and group roles.

Heterogeneous grouping is explained by Jacobs & Seow as “students forming CL groups with fellow students who are different from themselves” (2015, p. 30). To put it differently, this principle means creating groups with students taking into consideration variables like their academic achievement, nationality, sex, strengths, and weaknesses. This way, students will most effectively engage in peer mentoring and are more likely to help one another. As the second principle to be developed, teaching collaborative skills refers to students reflecting on how to use their skills when working cooperatively. There are plenty of collaborative skills. Among many of them, Jacobs & Seow mentioned comparing understandings, asking for help, offering and responding to suggestions and feedback, and disagreeing politely (p.31). This cooperative learning principle is not only useful in academic, classroom contexts, but also in the everyday life of the student as it allows them to develop many social skills necessary for the different challenges they will face.

The principle of individual accountability refers to students understanding that each individual is responsible for their own actions and that at some point, they will have to face a challenge by themselves. To illustrate this, Davidson (2021) offers an example of three mice trying to get past a labyrinth. In order to start, the mice have to work together to ideate a plan to enter and escape the maze; however, “each mouse must eventually run the maze individually.” Like the example illustrates, working as a team is important because it allows the members of the group to exchange ideas and discuss plans, yet at some point each member must face a challenge on their own, and that is where individual accountability is built.

Positive interdependence is when the members of a team have to depend on each other to achieve a certain goal. For achieving this, the efforts of each individual are vital. Only by working together as a team, the students can accomplish the objective. The purpose can be achieved more effectively by working as a team rather than doing it individually.

The principle of positive interdependence sees the team as a source of support; therefore, if one individual is struggling with something, the rest of the teammates can help. Contrary to individual accountability, positive interdependence does not pressure individuals to do their part and rather provides a source of support.

The principle of group autonomy seeks to encourage students to first rely on their own knowledge and that of their peers before depending on the teacher. By allowing students to work cooperatively, the teacher offers the opportunity for them to rely on their own knowledge. In this way, the team can work more autonomously by evacuating doubts among the team members. Eventually, this group autonomy can lead to individual autonomy as the student might not overlook their own abilities as much as they sometimes do when they constantly ask for the teacher's assistance.

Finally, Davidson offers a principle that, although is not always needed, can be very useful when working cooperatively. The Roles principle refers to assigning each group member a specific function within the team responsibilities. Some examples of roles within a cooperative environment are the coordinator, speaker, environment supervisor, and secretary. As Davidson states "roles are not always needed in cooperative learning. That depends on the task and on the model of CL being employed." Despite this, roles play a vital part in motivation, individual accountability, and positive interdependence.

#### **2.1.1.4 Cooperative learning techniques**

Techniques are the pedagogy used to impart a lesson. These include the different activities and resources implemented in a class. For cooperative learning, there are multiple, existing techniques, and they can be applied by placing students together in pairs, small groups, or bigger groups. The different techniques establish distinct rules; thus, the number of students varies depending on the methodology implemented. For the purposes of this investigation, three techniques will be introduced.

The first technique to be presented is called Jigsaw. Karau (2019) explains the jigsaw techniques by mentioning its steps. According to Karau, the first step is to divide students into heterogeneous groups. Next, each student from each group is assigned to study a segment of the lesson. The students who were assigned the same fragment come together and discuss their part in a temporary group. After having some time to familiarize with the topic, students will go back to their original group and present their fragment to their teammates. At the end, each student is quizzed on the lesson (p.92). As it can be inferred, Jigsaw is a technique which exploits the skills of individual accountability, as well as positive interdependence. This because it gives each student, in the original group, an important role which the rest of the team members would not be able to go on. Moreover, the jigsaw technique encourages students to help each other by dividing them into the expert groups, where they have to transmit their understanding and ideas regarding the assigned fragment.

As a second technique, the Simultaneous Round Table is done in groups of four students. The curators of the University of Missouri (2021) explain this technique through seven steps among which they mention creating groups of 3 to 5 students and provide each team with papers and pencils. Each student writes in their paper an idea or question. Then, students pass the paper to the left and the team members add a response. The process is repeated until every team member has added a response to each paper.

Showdown is the third technique used in cooperative learning. In this technique, students are placed in groups of four. Each group is given cards which are face down. One student is chosen to pick a card and read the question aloud. Individually, students work on solving the question. Finally, the captain says 'showdown' and every student must hand in their answers. If someone disagrees on the right answer, the team must come to an agreement and then move on to the next question.

Overall, learning techniques offer an aid for teachers to organize and plan meaningful and functional activities for the students. Cooperative Learning techniques, more specifically, provide tools for teachers to work cooperatively with the students in various ways. For the purpose of this investigation, these three techniques will be implemented in grammar lessons for fifth grade students at Saint Michael School.

#### **2.1.1.5 Teamwork**

Cooperative learning comes hand in hand with the concept of teamwork. The Cambridge Dictionary defines teamwork as “the combined actions of a group of people working together effectively to achieve a goal” (2022). It can be inferred that teamwork not only refers to placing students together in randomly created groups, rather it is the actions and components which each individual offers to the group, and how these factors lead the team to an effective outcome. In reference to Teamwork, Couch (2019) states that “It is important for teachers and students to know that teams don’t just form and immediately start working together to accomplish great things. There are actually stages of team growth and teams must be given time to work through the stages and become effective.” In other words, teamwork is not merely forming a team and giving the students a task. According to Couch, the team must grow, and that will not happen immediately after it is formed. If said growth does not happen, the teamwork will never occur and it would instead become a simple groupwork. Couch additionally mentions a series of stages that groups have to go through in order to grow into teamwork.

In their book, Gido et al. (2017) explain the five stages of team growth and name them respectively as forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. Forming is the first stage in team growth and it refers to the moment the team members are introduced to each other and the team. Accordingly, the authors summarize the stage of forming as that which “involves the transition from individual to team member” (p. 365). The second stage,

denominated storming, is when each individual start exploring and using their skills when working on a group task. During this stage, it is common for the members to be frustrated as they have to work following a set of rules and not under their individual expectations. For the stage of norming, the team has agreed on a way to work together effectively as their roles are now clear. During the performing stage, the team has a sense of unity and eagerness towards reaching the task's objective. In this fourth stage, the team functions efficiently and if a problem comes up, they have strategies for solving it. In the last stage, adjourning, the team finalizes the task and discusses how to improve for the next task.

Lastly, besides the five stages for the growth and development of a team, there are ten characteristics that Schoultz (2017) proposes for effective teamwork: Clear direction, open and honest communication, support risk taking and change, defined roles, mutually accountable, communicate freely, common goals, encourage different opinions, collaboration, and team trust. An effective teamwork must have a clear direction because only in that way a successful outcome can be achieved. For this reason, Schoultz recommends setting a clear goal for the team before beginning with the task and even forming the group by asking "What is the outcome you want and why?" Open and honest communication are necessary, as they represent the way members can listen to each other and their ideas. This, as exchanging ideas is primordial for effectively working as a team. Effective teams support risk taking and change because they accept mistakes and see them as opportunities for learning. Different skills and thinking styles are needed for achieving effective teamwork and that is why each team must have defined roles for the members. Finally, the team members should be mutually accountable and understand that the results of a task depend on all the team.

#### **2.1.1.6 Autonomy**

Learners' autonomy has become an increasingly important concept over the last few years. Autonomy, more than one of the principles of cooperative work, is a necessary skill

specially for young learners. This skill is not only functional for the development and growth of individuals in an academic context, but also in their daily life. Autonomy goes hand in hand with building inter and intrapersonal skills. By building learner's autonomy, they can work on problem solving situations; for example, without having to depend on a third person to provide a solution.

With cooperation and teamwork comes autonomy. Blidi (2016) provides a vast definition of autonomy in ESL and states the following: Autonomy, from the language acquisition context perspective, involves learners' ability to operate autonomously with the language in real as well as unpredictable situations. This implies that, in the context of classroom organization, autonomy indicates learners' ability to become responsible for their own learning (p.80).

When referring to building autonomy in an ESL classroom, Blidi implies that learners should be able to utilize the target language in class not only in rehearsed manners, but also in random context situations. Additionally, in a general classroom context, autonomy is when learners understand that they are the ones responsible for learning. Putting the two declarations together, autonomy in a second language classroom is when students understand their responsibility of exploiting their knowledge on the target language in an attempt to increase the autonomous learning.

Although the word's etymology proposes autonomy to come from the root 'self;' hence, indicating 'by oneself' or individuality, this term does not always refer to an individual matter. Collaborative work can be an effecting factor in building autonomy. Chik et al. (2018) explain that "Being part of a group could provide support for autonomy not available outside a group by providing a more diverse learning environment, coupled with low power differential" (p.63). In other words, working cooperatively can result beneficial for building

the individual's learning autonomy as each member of the team can find support in their peers, as well as offer skills and aptitudes that they might have not realized they possessed.

#### **2.1.1.7 Teacher and student's role**

Roles are necessary in every classroom, and they refer to the different functions assumed by the parties that conform a group. When referring to a classroom context, there are two main functions: the teacher's and the students' roles. These responsibilities vary depending on the approach applied in the classroom. The methodologies implemented in a class can be teacher or student centered, and this is one of the factors which directly defines the role of the two parts.

For many years, teacher-centered approaches were the norm in the classrooms around the world. With these methodologies, the role of the teacher is active. Teachers are seen as knowledge transmitters who implement direct instruction methodologies. In teacher-centered approaches, teachers remain in control of the class and activities. On the contrary, the students' role in teacher-centered instruction is passive and attentive. In this type of instruction, the student role is to listen, retain knowledge, and finally work individually to complete exercises, which offer practice for the studied topic. With the teacher-centered instruction, students are expected to take the role of silent learners.

Although teacher-centered approaches used to be the custom, in recent years the educational authorities have given more attention to student-centered instruction. In this methodologies, the teacher's and students' roles vary immensely from those in the teacher-centered approaches. In student-centered approaches, the teacher's role is that of a facilitator and guide who helps students throughout their learning process. Hoidn and Klemenčič explain that "The facilitator's role in a student-centered learning environment is fluid, requiring as much or more skill than in a traditional classroom" (2020). In other words, the implementation of student-centered instructions does not imply that all the work is on the



students. Actually, the teacher as a facilitator can fulfill various roles at once. The students' role, on the other hand, is an active, collaborative, and autonomous one. More than students, these individuals develop the role of responsible learners with these methodologies. Using the student-centered approaches, students understand that they are responsible for their own learning.

The cooperative learning approach is an active, student-centered instruction. For this reason, the roles of the teacher and students are that of a facilitator and active learners, respectively. Through the cooperative learning approach, teachers' function is to offer guidance to students by facilitating their learning and offering activities that exploit their skills and knowledge acquisition. Namely, the students' role is to collaborate amongst themselves and work together efficiently towards the achievement of a common goal by understanding their accountability and working autonomously.

### **2.1.2 How to Teach Grammar**

Teaching grammar has been considered challenging by many teachers throughout the years. Although, this is a fundamental skill, the prejudices surrounding grammar often make people think that a lesson in this area can turn boring and difficult for students to understand. Concerning this, Aarts (2018) comments that "grammar teaching should be an engaging and enjoyable dialogic activity." Given that this area of English teaching can represent a challenge, it is primordial to find the appropriate motivation for students.

People often believe that grammar consists on explaining language structures and rules to then complete practice exercises. Despite being one of the most used methodologies in grammar teaching, this represents a teacher-centered instruction which many times does not motivate students. Cushing et al. (2019) state that explaining rules and structures is not enough, instead they explain that "talking about grammar is fundamental to learning and

thinking about grammar, by asking students to articulate their thoughts about grammatical concepts, to reason with each other, and to discuss the grammar of texts with each other” (p.13). In other words, in order to learn the grammar of a language, it is first necessary to decode the meaning of grammar. By understanding the skill on its totality, students should be able to move onto the stage of processing the target language’s grammatical rules and structures. From a teaching perspective, grammar is an area which requires trying and testing different methodologies and approaches. Every group is different and so is each student. For this reason, it is important to choose approaches to grammar teaching which take into consideration the different needs.

### **2.1.2.1 History and definition**

Grammar has been taught in every language around the world for hundreds and plus years ago. It was introduced before the 1st Century B.C. by Greeks, who focused on literature and to study it, they used grammar as a tool. Following, the Romans implemented the Greek grammatical system. During the Middle Ages and Medieval Europe, people used grammar to teach Latin. Through the years, grammar has been taught differently in places all around the world. Over the years, scholars have tried to standardize the grammar of each language.

Before the 20th Century, teachers viewed grammar teaching as a matter of wrong or right. During these times, teachers were rigid about the grammar of a language and did not allow variations. In the early 20th Century, it was concluded that language evolved through the years; thus, it was flexible. Through this, scholars settled that language can be diachronic or synchronic, referring to its changes through time and its state at a specific period respectively.

Referring to grammar as a flexible area of a language, Paramour (2020) claims that “grammar is not a means for regulating how people should speak and write. It is a way of describing how people do.” This is to say that grammar should not limit language to a series of rigid, unchangeable rules, but rather depict the actual flexibility of the language, its variants, and

evolution throughout the years. It is incorrect to assume that an area as big as grammar can be enclosed in a definition or established rules and techniques for teaching.

Grammar is a variable, changing aspect of each language and constantly evolves.

Similarly, Cushing et al. (2019) explain the following:

Grammar is a network, not a list of discrete terms and concepts. You are encouraged to make connections across this network, for example by considering how words combine to form phrases, how phrases combine to form clauses; how grammatical form relates to grammatical function; and how connections between words and patterns can create cohesion in texts (p.13).

As it can be inferred, grammar is not a memory area that comprises concepts and rules. Rather than that, grammar is so vast that Cushing defines it as a ‘network.’ This comparison refers to the different extensions that grammar possesses and how they all connect with one another.

Namely, this allows language to be flexible and evolve. When teaching grammar, teachers must consider that this area is in constant evolution, thus, it cannot be taught as an unchangeable subject.

#### **2.1.2.2 Key features of Grammar**

Although, there is a vast number of established rules in Grammar, this area is composed by four main features which are fundamental for students to use this skill properly. The key features are syntax, phonology, morphology, and semantics. These four elements represent the foundation of grammar rules. Thus, it is necessary to comprehend each of the features to learn grammar. Syntax is learnt by native speakers of any language unconsciously ever since they first speak. Nordquist (2020) explains that “syntax refers to the rules that

govern the ways in which words combine to form phrases, clauses, and sentences.” That is to say, syntax provides the rules which set the proper order that each word has in a sentence.

This grammar element also defines the formality and complexity of texts and helps learners differentiate among the different types of sentences. The second grammar feature is phonology. The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica (2014) define phonology as the “study of the sound patterns that occur within languages.” Phonology, then, is the area of grammar that relates words and sentences with the auditive sense. This area is complex as language is evolutive and so is the pronunciation of words. Throughout the years, the sounds of a language are subject to change and phonology also studies these changes. The grammar feature of phonology is sometimes one of the most difficult elements of English grammar, as this language is not pronounced as it is read.

Morphology is the third feature of grammar, and it studies words. Devlin et al. (2004) state that “morphology is the aspect of language concerned with the internal structure of words.” This grammar element decomposes words into their roots to define the meaning. The words are decomposed into morphemes, which refer to syllabic fragments that offer an etymological significance to the word as a whole. Overall, this feature studies the form and meaning of words. Finally, semantics is the last grammar feature which encloses the significance of words. Blakeley (2015) affirms that “semantics means the meaning and interpretation of words, signs, and sentence structure.” Semantics, then, is how the mind assigns a meaning to words. Thanks to semantics, people all assign the same meaning to words. Overall, phonology, morphology, semantics, and syntax are the elements that compose grammar. Each of these features is necessary for learning the grammar of any language.

Elements such as phonology or syntax can sometimes be more challenging for foreign learners, yet they are primordial for properly acquiring a second language.

### **2.1.2.3 Principles of grammar teaching.**

As language is evolutive and so is its grammar, there are no established, unchangeable rules to be followed when teaching it. Despite this, there are some key principles that are recommended. Waugh et al. (2019) propose seven key principles for grammar teaching, and name them as: build up subject knowledge, give talk high priority in the classroom, remember the purpose of teaching grammar, teach grammar in context, read aloud and discuss how authors use grammar, be systematic, and make learning fun. Concerning the first principle, it is necessary for teachers to develop their subject knowledge to confidently teach the topic at hand. Subject knowledge is different from subject pedagogy as the first one refers to the teacher's familiarity with a subject or topic; whence, the second one is comprehending how to teach that topic. When referring to subject knowledge, it is necessary for teachers not to get stuck in one way of explaining, or a single definition or methodology. Rather than that, to teach grammar it is first needed "explicit as well as implicit knowledge, to be confident about using the correct terms and explaining these" (Waugh et al. 2019). Consequently, for a teacher to teach a subject, they first have to widely known about it.

The second principle for grammar teaching is to give talk a high priority. This principle proposes that students should be able to converse, listen, and talk, so that they assimilate the differences within standard English. Similar to this principle, Smith (2021) proposes the name "focus on standard English." Smith explains the principle similarly to Waugh et al. and stresses the need for students to listen to distinct voices on standard English. He goes further with the principle as he includes it on working with both conversation and writing skills.

Additionally, it is necessary to remember the purpose of English teaching. This is explained as recognizing that grammar is not only naming rules, structures, and parts of

speech. Grammar encloses much more than only syntax. This area of language learning should not be only emphasized during grammar lessons, instead it should be related to the other areas of language learning, such as reading and writing. During reading, writing, or conversation lessons teachers can also take advantage of the materials, resources, and time of these lessons to work on both skills, for example reading-grammar.

Teaching grammar in context is the fourth principle of English grammar teaching. In order for students to internalize a language, they have to view it in context and understand it as such. Waugh et al. point that using textbooks and worksheets can be meaningless to learners, especially young students. For students to utilize the target language, they would first want to know why and in which situations it can be useful. For this reason, they propose using the features of grammar in context, so that students can acquire the language through a more natural background.

Similar to the principle of remembering the grammar's purpose, the fifth principle proposes implementing reading as a tool to define and comprehend grammar. This principle is titled read aloud and discuss how authors use grammar and in it. Waugh et al. propose that students "who read extensively and are read to will have a 'toolbox' of structures, patterns, and rhythms to draw on." As stated, reading provides an illustration of the syntax and grammar of the target language. As a sixth principle, it is necessary to be systematic and methodological.

In other words, it is important to know the students and what they have already learned. Knowing this, it is possible to make a link between their prior knowledge and the topic to be taught. Creating this connection is important because it offers students the opportunity to view language as a whole by relating what they knew with what they will learn. Finally, the last principle relates to motivation. Making learning grammar fun

encourages teachers to ignite students' interest in how the target language works. This by implementing a variety of methodologies and activities, which motivate them and make them see grammar as a fun subject to learn.

#### **2.1.2.4 Traditional grammar.**

The way grammar has been taught in most schools until the present day can be considered traditional grammar. These lessons focus on correctness of structure and parts of the speech. Mammadova (2019) dives grammar teaching into two main categories: traditional and recent. The first one refers to the methods used before the 21st century, which remain to be of great impact today (p.23). Despite being relatively old teaching methodologies, traditional grammar teaching forged the pillars for today's knowledge. Among the traditional grammar methods, Mammadova mentions the grammar-translation method, rules learning and error correction, and teaching grammar in context. Additionally, the author proposes recent approaches to grammar teaching in an attempt to illustrate the evolution of these methods. As one of the traditional grammar methodologies, Rivers (2018) explains the grammar translation method as follows:

The grammar-translation method aims at inculcating an understanding of the grammar of the language, and training the student to write the new language accurately by regular practice in translating from the native language. It aims at providing the student with a wide literary vocabulary, often of an unnecessarily detailed nature. It aims at training the student to extract the meaning from texts in the new language by translation into the native language (p.29).

It can be stated that the grammar translation method encourages the students to utilize both the native and target language. By implementing an approach in which the student is supposed to translate from the native into the target language, the method expects them to learn vocabulary and train the understanding of texts in the target language.

Rules learning and error correction is the second traditional grammar methodology proposed. With this methodology, the routine is for the teacher to explain and assign practice exercises for students to do in class. After the students complete the practice, it is time for everyone to check their answers and make corrections. Finally, the teacher discusses the answers and reviews the topic. Despite being a well-recognized method for correcting mistakes, it does not always work. For example, this method does not work with grammatical patterns which have no paradigm because there are topics that merely require memorization and not constant pattern repetition exercises. Mammadova affirms that “grammar instructions not only need to promote students’ awareness but also need to engage them in a meaningful production” (p.25). In other words, making students aware of their mistakes is not enough when applying the rules learning and error correction method, rather it is necessary to take into consideration different factors such as the topic that is being studied.

The last traditional grammar methodology is teaching grammar in context. Saiful (2019) refers to this topic by asserting that “context clues exercises are designed to help you improve your ability to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words by using context clues. In using the context to decide the meaning of a word, you have to use your knowledge of grammar and your understanding of the author’s ideas” (p.11). In other words, teaching grammar through context involves students analyzing fragments or sentences by activating their prior knowledge. By implementing this method, students use the vocabulary they already know, as well as clues such as punctuation, to guess what a certain text or affirmation is referring to. Teaching grammar in context allows students to further use their knowledge to attempt to decipher a text in the target language.

#### **2.1.2.5 Grammar teaching methods.**

In an attempt to help students properly apply grammar when communicating rather than asking them to memorize its rules, new methodologies have been presented throughout



the years. Mammadova proposes some recent approaches for grammar teaching. Among those, the consciousness raising approach, communicative approach, task-based approach, comprehension approach, and ungrammaticality approach will be explained followingly. The Consciousness Raising Approach aims to raise learners' awareness of language, so that they can appropriately use it in context situations. Concerning this approach, Roza (2014) states that Consciousness-raising represents an attempt to equip the learners with an understanding of a specific grammar feature to develop explicit knowledge or declarative knowledge. One way to teach explicit knowledge of grammar is through grammar discovery activities. To end this, the learners are provided with opportunities to practice the structures where the practice consists of series of exercises whose aim is to cause learners absorb the rules thoroughly (p.1).

Consciousness Raising, then, is an approach that seeks for students to develop their language knowledge by a self-discovering instruction. With this approach, students can practice grammar by doing exercises which allow them to become aware of their learning and understand the rules more effectively.

Likewise, the communicative approach is the second recent methodology used in grammar teaching. Zakime (2018) affirms that the communicative approach "is a teaching approach that highlights the importance of real communication for learning to take place." Accordingly, this approach encourages students to communicate rather than complete an excessive amount of practice exercises. In spite of this, lessons that implement this approach often start like a normal, magistral lesson in which the teacher explains and illustrates the topic to then apply an exercise for students to practice. Following this, students are given the opportunity to work on communicative tasks, in which they can use the language in context situations by speaking with classmates or even writing.

In the third place, the Task-Based approach is a relatively new model for grammar teaching. Kildiz (2017) explains that "Task-Based instruction model is one of the language

teaching methods based on communicative activities and consists of tasks in which learners try to perform these tasks in a classroom environment where mutual interaction is at the highest level” (p.198). In other words, this methodology encourages students to complete a series of tasks in a cooperative classroom context in which they have to interact with each other to successfully achieve the task. These tasks are conditioned to three aspects: the activity has to be meaningful, the problem presented is related to a real problematic in the world/class, and its objective has to be clear and viable to assess.

Finally, the comprehension approach is another recent method that can be implemented in grammar classrooms. Vijayalakshmi (2015) defines the comprehension approach as “a method of learning a new language through the process of understanding the meaning of words and expressions in the language as opposed to any other form of language learning” (p.2). To rephrase it, this approach is a progressive model in which students are taught the language through steps so that, for example, they can first learn the letters and symbols of the target language, so that eventually they can comprehend words in context without needing to translate.

## **CHAPTER III**

# **METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

In this chapter, the researcher presents the methodology applied in the investigation. It includes purpose, the temporal dimension, macro, nature, character, the subjects and sources information, the operationalization of variables, and the instruments. This project was applied in a group of students from fifth grade at Saint Michael School, Desamparados during the third trimester, 2022. In other words, the results of the investigation stem from the information comprised within this chapter. Accordingly, this chapter offers the reader a chance to understand the process of the investigation by means of revising the methods that were applied for constructing the instruments. As this chapter offers the methodology employed in the research, it is vital for achieving the investigation's results.

On the other hand, in this part each variable is developed by a conceptual definition, its dimension, the operational definition and instrumental definition. There is an instrument to recollect data information for this project. To apply the instruments, the researcher takes one group of 25 students of fifth grade.

At first, the author specifies the type of investigation, which determines whether the research is theoretical or applied. Also, within this subtopic, the temporal dimension establishes the time of the study's application in which the phenomenon is being studied. The framework is also mentioned in this section as the explanation of how the research is in terms of size and range of the study and why is that range established. Also, the nature is very important because the author sets the way in which the document analyzes and expresses the data recovered from the study. And finally, the type of character describes the purpose of the investigation, and the way new information is given to the reader.

Then, it is important to clarify the subjects and sources of information, which are divided in: first, second and third hand sources. Also, the researcher specifies the study sample selection in which the population and the specific sample are described to let the reader know more about the quantity and quality of the objects of the study.

The techniques and instruments to collect data are described in brief to visualize how the instruments are built and how it reflects the reality of the observed population. In terms of the operationalization of variables, the author presents the general and specific objectives for this research, then each variable from each objective.

### **3.1 Type of Investigation**

#### **3.1.1 Purpose (Applied)**

As people know, teacher's role is fundamental to help those students to participate and try to work well as a team in different situations, this research is applied because the researcher needs to solve the difficulties in students' grammar production, as Hernandez and Hugo mentioned (2019):

Firstly, it is essential that the teacher focuses not only on the different aspects of oral production (fluency and coherence; lexical resources; grammatical range and accuracy; and pronunciation), but also in all the needs and requirements that students have to communicate in different environments, situations and circumstances. (p.26)

Having said that, it is crucial that the teacher has an important role in social and affective aspects of the student in order to understand how his/her learning process is. Teachers can be focused in different areas where students have the opportunity to show how their grammar is in a circumstance. Moreover, the main purpose of this investigation is to enhance student's grammar through different techniques applied by teachers in the class, for that reason this research is an applied investigation in a group of students Saint Michael School, to solve different problems students have. If teachers can focus on improving students' grammar through the usage of Cooperative Learning Approach, the research can achieve students' goals to enhance English grammar. The investigator applies the instrument

to assess the methodological process implemented by English teachers where those results can help if students can improve their grammar performance during English classes.

### **3.1.2 Temporal Dimension (Transversal)**

Nowadays, students should have a correct usage of grammar, especially if they have been studying the language since they were in first grade; however, some students do not have the correct grammar production and they make different mistakes at the moment they are using Simple Present tense, Shpak (2013) argues that:

The current state of social pedagogy, as well as social work is characterized by a transverse process, that is, searching the identity of knowledge and practice areas. Researchers involved in the process, define the boundaries of subject-object relation existence in the area of their scientific disciplines and beyond, setting a goal on the base of synthesis to reach scientific understanding of these cognitive paradigms' development processes (p. 534 and 535).

This research is transversal because it defines a study in a specific time where students can have different practices in areas such as conjugations, parts of speech, and grammatical structures that are fundamental in their grammar area. The main reason of this project is to know if the students' grammar usage can be enhanced by the methodology process implemented by teachers when teaching grammar and interaction, and it is developed during the third trimester, 2022quali.

### **3.1.3 Framework (Micro)**

This investigation is micro because the researcher takes one group of students from all learners in fifth grade at Saint Michael School to apply this study. The researcher can recognize the students' grammar production through different grammatical aspects that are

strongly necessary in their language, at its simplest, Micro-research (also known as Inquiry-based Learning) involves getting students to undertake a relatively small research project and report back to their peers. The purpose of the approach is to encourage students to develop a deeper understanding of the material they have been researching while also developing skills that will be useful for other parts of the study and their eventual careers, such as critical thinking and evaluation, communication and presentation skills and information literacy skills (Glover, 2014, "Micro-research: An Approach to Teaching and Learning" section). The researcher takes one group of students to analyze the methodological process developed by English teachers applying an instrument in the project to develop deeper research where students can show the improvement of different abilities in grammar during their lessons.

#### **3.1.4 Nature (qualitative, quantitative)**

The qualitative research route seeks to investigate a phenomenon by considering the different factors that surround it. It is an approach of observation, collection, and analysis, which offers the investigator an opportunity to comprehend an event from a natural setting and different points of view. Merriam et al. (2019) indicate that "It is thus the goal of a qualitative research study to uncover and understand the experience of the phenomenon from the participants' perspective" (p.9). In other words, the results of the qualitative route derive from the experiences and interpretations of the process' participants according to the realities they face. Adding to Merriam's explanation, Hernández et al (2018) explain that the investigation under the qualitative approach focuses on comprehending the phenomena, exploring them from the participant's perspective in their natural environment and in relation with context (p.390). To put it differently, this route is naturalist, flexible, and interpretative, as the results depend on the variants that represent each of the participant's realities.

Before defining an investigation route, it is first necessary to establish clear objectives. Similarly, it is necessary to have a defined population in an attempt to assemble the required

information for the processes of data collection and analysis. Depending on the objectives and population, there is a variety of research designs available. For the current investigation, the qualitative approach will be applied with the main objective of analyzing the effects of the cooperative learning approach in English grammar for fifth grade students at Saint Michael School during the second quarter of 2022. By applying this route, the student population will be observed in order to identify their needs when learning English grammar, to implement activities using the cooperative approach, and finally, to evaluate the outcomes of cooperative work in grammar learning.

### **3.1.5 Character (Analytical-interpretative and Retrospective)**

The character of this research is descriptive because it analyses the characteristics of students while they are participating during their class and the main problem that is happening in students' grammar performance from Saint Michael School. The investigator of this project analyses the methodological process that teachers develop to enhance students' grammar during their English class. "Descriptive research is an appropriate choice when the research aim is to identify characteristics, frequencies, trends, and categories" (McCombes, 2019, "Descriptive research" section). In this research, the author recognizes the process, characteristics, behaviors where those students are doing in their grammar performance while the teacher is developing the class.

## **3.2 Subjects and Sources of Information**

### **3.2.1 Units of analysis (objects or subjects of study)**

Information sources are necessary for an efficient implementation and analysis of the instruments used throughout the research, and as such, they have to be chosen prudently. These sources represent a base for the development of every investigation and are divided into three categories: primary, secondary, and tertiary sources. In an effort to obtain valuable and



trustworthy results, the information sources are chosen and categorized followingly.

### 3.2.2 Firsthand sources

**Table 1**

*Firsthand sources used in the research process*

<i>Author or authors</i>	<i>University or Organization</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Year</i>
Barrios D	Universidad Del Norte	Colombia	2017
Cortes A	University of the Philippines CEBU	Philippines	2016
Dharmaraj, W	Bharathidasan University	India	2015
Genc, G	Bilkent University	Turkey	2014
Hernandez, J and Hugo, V	Universidad Libre Facultad de Ciencias en la educación	Colombia	2019
Hunter, A	Mary's University	England	2017
Itan, A	Yogyakarta State University	Indonesia	2015

*Source:* Developed by Arlette Lescouflair Madrigal (2022)

### 3.2.3 Secondhand sources

**Table 2**

*Secondhand sources used in the research process*

<i>Author</i>	<i>Book Title</i>	<i>Year</i>
Bhandari, P	Population vs Sample/ Definitions, Differences & Examples	2019
Fan, S	Independent Variable	2010
Kirby, J	Reading Comprehension: Its Nature and Development	2017
Ministerio de Educacion Publica	Orientaciones de mediacion pedagogica para la educacion combinada	2021
Peterson, P & Wilson, S	Theories of Learning and Teaching What Do They Mean for Educators?	2006
Salkind, N	Dependent variable	2010
Sequeira, A	Introduction to concepts of teaching and learning	2012

*Source:* Developed by Arlette Lescouflair Madrigal (2022)

### 3.2.4 Third hand sources

**Table 3**

*Third hand sources used in the research process*

<i>Author</i>	<i>Article</i>	<i>Year</i>
Alba, J, Sarah, I and PARRALES, C	Interactive methodological strategy in the English language for the development of oral expression and comprehension	2019
Aspers, P and Corte U	What is qualitative in qualitative Research	2019
Bonnie K. Nastasi & Douglas H. Clements	Research on Cooperative Learning: Implications for Practice, School Psychology Review.	1991

Chandra, V	English Spelling and Pronunciation	2018
Cordero D, Pizarro G	Communicative Grammar: An Effective Tool to Teach a Second Language in Today's Classes	2013
Galasso, J	Analyzing English Grammar: An Introduction to Feature Theory	2002
Garcia, A	Implementation of formative assessment as a strategy to measure the students' performance during English class working on grammar content with seventh year students at Instituto of Alajuela	2017
Glover, I	Micro- research: An approach to teaching and learning	2014
Lackman, K	Teaching Grammar Sub-skills	2010
Lata, H and Ranjan, P	Enhancing students' interest in English language via multimedia presentation	2016
McCombes, S	Descriptive Research design/ Definition, Methods and Examples	2019
McCombes, S	Sampling Methods/ Types and technique explained	2019
Mushtaq, I and Nawaz, K	Factors Affecting Students' Academic Performance	2012
Rodriguez, A, Acevedo, H and Campos, M	Plan de desarrollo institucional Quinquenal	2012
Shpak, V	Transversal approach in the system of specific Social- Educational Research Methodology	2013
Szostek, C	Assessing the Effects of Cooperative Learning in an Honors Foreign Language Classroom.	1994
Vaishnav, H.	Tools and Techniques for Effective Communication Skills	2016
Yusimah, Dk	A study of teachers' strategies so develops students' interest towards learning English as a second language	2013

*Source:* Developed by Arlette Lescouflair Madrigal (2022)

### **3.3 Sample Selection**

#### **3.3.1 The population**

According to Arias et al 2016 “The study population is defined as a set of cases, determined, limited, and accessible, that will constitute the subjects for the selection of the sample, and must fulfill several characteristics and distinct criteria”. For this investigation the population is made up by a group of 21 students from fifth grade at Saint Michael School

#### **3.3.2 Sample**

As stated by Lopez, 2004 sample “Is a subset or part of the universe or population in which the investigation will be carried out”.

Regarding the sample, a group of fifth grade was selected to accomplish the research. The type of sampling method used in this specific case was the convenience sampling since the teacher facilitated the group.

#### **3.3.3 Non-Probabilistic**

According to Lopez (2004) who cites Pineda (1994, p.114), probabilistic sampling is the most recommended because it gives each participant in the population the same probability of being selected. This study is non-probabilistic since, despite the fact that there were more students who could be surveyed or interviewed, due to disposition issues, they could not be surveyed.

### **3.4 Techniques and Instruments to Collect Data**

The process of collecting data will consist on applying instruments to gather relevant information for the study’s variables. To achieve an effective data collection process, the

researcher must establish an organized plan with clear steps to achieve the investigation's objectives. This plan must include the methodologies and sources that lead to the development of the investigation. Hernandez et al. (2018) affirm that the researcher must know the sources for the data collection and methods used, as well as analyze the data thoroughly. For this investigation, the data collection was developed within three main stages.

During the first stage, the researcher conducted a theoretical investigation. In this phase, the study is guided by previous researches, books, articles, approaches, and theories related to the subject under study. These sources provided the antecedents that allow the researcher to start a factual investigation by providing theoretical and conceptual background of the analyzed phenomenon. Besides theory and concepts, this first stage provided an outline of possible form and methodology for the investigation.

The second stage will involve the creation of instruments. During this phase, the researcher will examine the possible instruments that could be developed in qualitative research. Following, the researcher will consider the objectives of the investigation and choose the instruments accordingly. For achieving the purposes of the research, the four chosen instruments will be observations, surveys, and lesson planning. By applying these tools for collecting data, the research aims to see the results for each one of the objectives. The instruments will be applied during the third stage of the collection data process. During this stage, the researcher will observe the students, subjects under study, in their classroom context. After an initial observation for the students and teacher and applying a survey to the students, the researcher will apply the lesson planning and imparted a total of five lessons. Through this period, another survey will be applied to the students to get feedback on how they felt during the process. Finally, the researcher will apply a final survey and observation to get the results of the investigation. Through this stage, the students will provide significant, first-hand information for this research.

### **3.4.1 Observation**

For the present investigation, the observation was the main instrument that led this investigation. With this tool, the researcher familiarized herself with the students and was able to draw conclusions from the observations throughout the process, as the observation process can examine a wide range of behaviors, events, reactions, and results. For this reason, it is important for the research to limit the points to be observed this is why the checklists were used together with observations. As an observation can become broad and sometimes enclose much more inquires than desired, this research applied two different checklists that limited the observations throughout the study.

These checklists were applied at the beginning and at the end of the research. This in an attempt to visualize the results of the applied investigation. (See annex 1)

### **3.4.2 Surveys**

For this investigation, the researcher created a survey consisting of six simple questions directed to the students. The survey was presented to them through printed sheets. Each question gave them three options to rate their feelings on grammar and cooperative work. Finally, the survey was applied three times throughout the process: before applying the lesson plans, during the application and on the last day. By applying this survey, the researcher can examine the subjects' answers and draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the research. (See annex 2)

### **3.4.3 Class Planning**

In this investigation, lesson plans were chosen as a data collection instrument. Through this tool, the researcher offered a clear idea of the way in which the investigation's approach was implemented. Most importantly, these lesson plans focus on studying the development of the investigation's objectives in a classroom context.

### 3.5 Operationalization of Variables

The variables must be considered so the project develops its path properly. Korb (2012) has described a variable as “the characteristic or attribute of an individual, group, educational system, or the environment that is of interest in a research study” (para. 1). The paragraphs below describe variables of interest to be considered (taken into account) for the development of this project.

In the following pages is presented the chart for the operationalization of variables to determine the process in which the researcher analyzes the different research variables, and the instruments applied to the studied population to prove the validity of the variable in the study of the research problem.

In this chart you will identify the general objective of the research, its respective variable for each specific objective, the conceptual definition, which is the variable explanation for a better understanding. Finally, an instrumental definition which presents the instruments and techniques to gather information according to the studied variables and expected results, and an operational definition which describes the validity of the variable.

#### **Table 4**

*TITLE: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COOPERATIVE LEARNING APPROACH ON SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE FOR FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SAINT MICHAEL SCHOOL DURING THE LAST QUARTER OF 2023*

#### **VARIABLES CHART**

- 1. General Objective:** To determine the effectiveness of using Cooperative Learning Approach to enhance Simple Present Tense in fifth grade students at Saint Michael School during the last quarter of 2023.

<b>Specific Objectives</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Conceptual Definition</b>	<b>Instrumental Definition</b>	<b>Operational Definition</b>
To identify the performance of fifth graders when using simple present tense in grammar activities.	Performance of fifth grade students when learning English grammar	Performance of fifth grade students. English grammar	Instrument: Checklist, Technique: Observation The aim of these observations is to allow the researcher to observe specific criteria relevant for the investigation both the students and the teacher will be observed before the implementation of the Cooperative Learning Approach.	In the observation, the variable is valid depending on the checklist answers
To use the key components of the Cooperative Learning Approach in the development of grammar activities based on simple present tense established in the study program of fifth grade.	Consequences of implementing activities using the Cooperative Learning Approach in grammar teaching.	Cooperative Learning Approach Grammar teaching.	Instrument: Checklist, Technique: Observation The aim of these observations is to allow the researcher to observe specific criteria relevant for the investigation both the students and the teacher will be observed after the implementation of the Cooperative Learning Approach.	In the observation, the variable is valid depending on the checklist answers
To determine the Cooperative Learning Approach effectiveness through the evaluation of	Determine the effectiveness of using Cooperative Learning Approach during	Resources Lesson plans	Instrument: Class Planning. the researcher offered a clear idea of the way in which the investigation's approach was implemented. Most importantly, these lesson plans focus on studying the development of the investigation's objectives in a classroom context.	In the questionnaire the variable is valid if at least a 70% of the students answer as great each question.



some grammar activities performed in classes	grammar classes.			
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## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS**

## **4.1 Diagnostic of current situation**

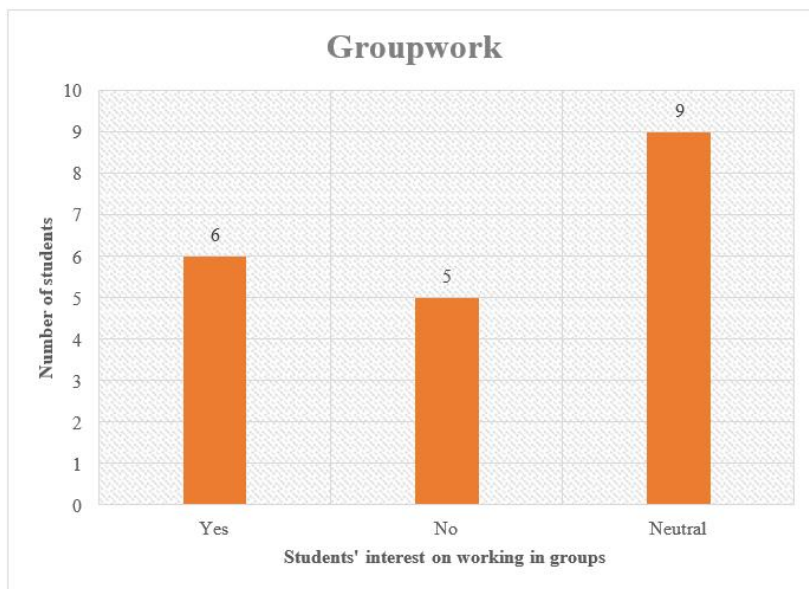
In the following section, the researcher offers a detailed description of the results obtained from the application of the previously defined instruments. Said instruments were applied to the students in 5B at Saint Michael School during the second quarter of 2023. In such class there is a total of 21 students, 13 male and 8 females. The instruments were originally designed with the purpose of analyzing the effects of the cooperative learning approach in English grammar for fifth grade students at Saint Michael School. The researcher utilized four instruments in an attempt to identify the needs of the students when learning English Grammar, implement activities using the cooperative approach when teaching grammar, and evaluate the outcomes of cooperative work in grammar teaching.

### **4.1.1 Observation 1**

The first instrument applied was the initial observation. This observation was done with the aid of a checklist, which allowed the researcher to observe specific criteria relevant for the investigation. During this first stage, both the students and the teacher were observed. The researcher observed the students during regular English lessons. The classroom setup, students' and teacher's attitude towards the lesson, participation, and activities were observed. The researcher observed that a great part of the lesson consisted on completing a handout and then working on the book. There was no interaction among the students, as their desks were setup individually. Some students participated during the lesson, but it was always the same 5 or 6. The rest of the students were whether silent or distracted playing around. When working individually, most students did not seem confident regarding their knowledge and constantly approached the teacher to verify if their answers were correct. Three particular students had difficulties to start working on their own and the teacher approached them constantly for guidance. One out of those three did not finish the activity on his own. Nearing the end of the

lesson, the teacher checked the exercises on the board together with the students. Moreover, at the end of the lesson, the books were checked and stamped.

**Figure 1**



**Source:** Observation done to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

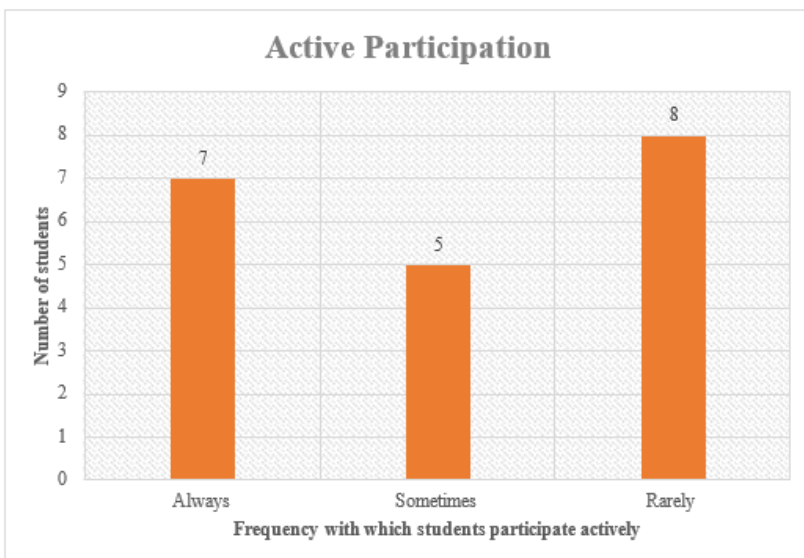
**Results:** Figure number one shows if students like working in groups.

- 30% of the students liked to work cooperatively
- 25% did not like it
- 45% did not really care.

**Interpretation:** Figure number one established that 6 out of 20 students liked to work in groups.

However, 5 of them did not like it and 9 students were neutral about working individually or in groups. That means that through the initial observation, the researcher noted that a 30% of the students liked to work cooperatively, 25% did not like it, and 45% did not really care.

groups. That means that through the initial observation, the researcher noted that a 30% of the students liked to work cooperatively, 25% did not like it, and 45% did not really care.

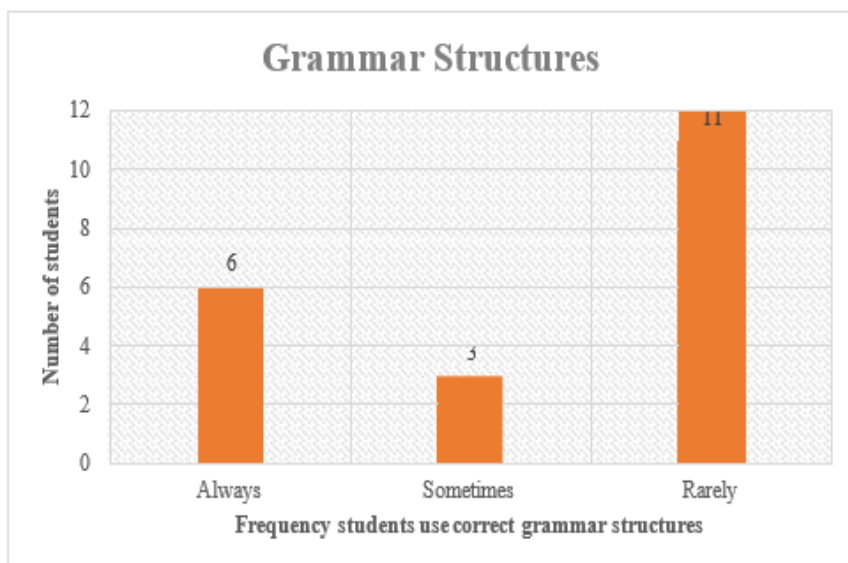
**Figure 2**

**Source:** Observation done to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Results:** Figure number two shows frequency of students' active participation during grammar lessons

- 35% of the students always participated actively
- 25% sometimes participated
- 40% rarely participated actively.

**Interpretation:** Figure number two established that 7 students, meaning 35% of the class, always participated actively; 25% of the students sometimes participated; and 8 students, representing a majority, that is 40%, rarely participated actively.

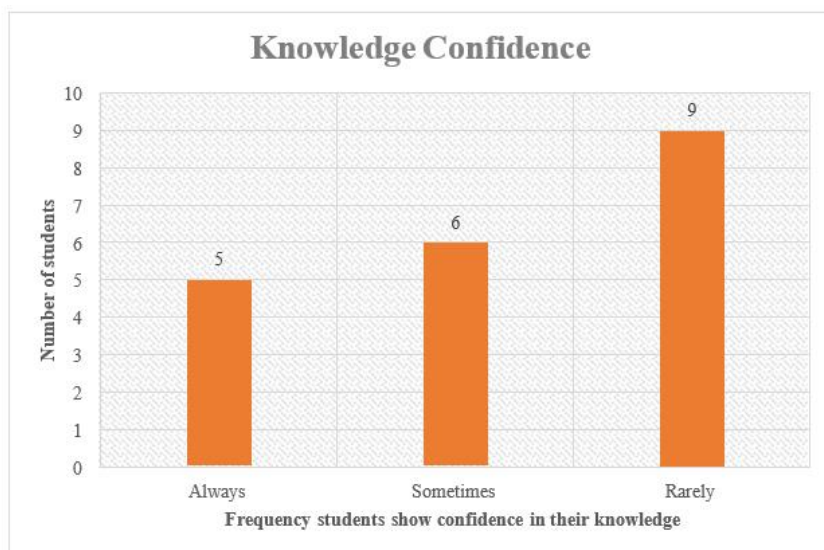
**Figure 3**

**Source:** Observation done to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Results:** Figure number three shows the frequency with which students use appropriate grammar structures in the target language when speaking and writing.

- 30% of the students always used appropriate structures
- 15% of the students sometimes used appropriate structures
- 55% of the students rarely used appropriate structures

**Interpretation:** From this figure, it can be noted that 6 students always used appropriate structures for their level, 3 students sometimes did, and 11 students never did. That means that a majority of 55% out of the 20 students rarely used appropriate structures.

**Figure 4**

**Source:** Observation done to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Results:** Figure number four shows the frequency with which students show confidence in their knowledge grammar structures in the target language when speaking and writing.

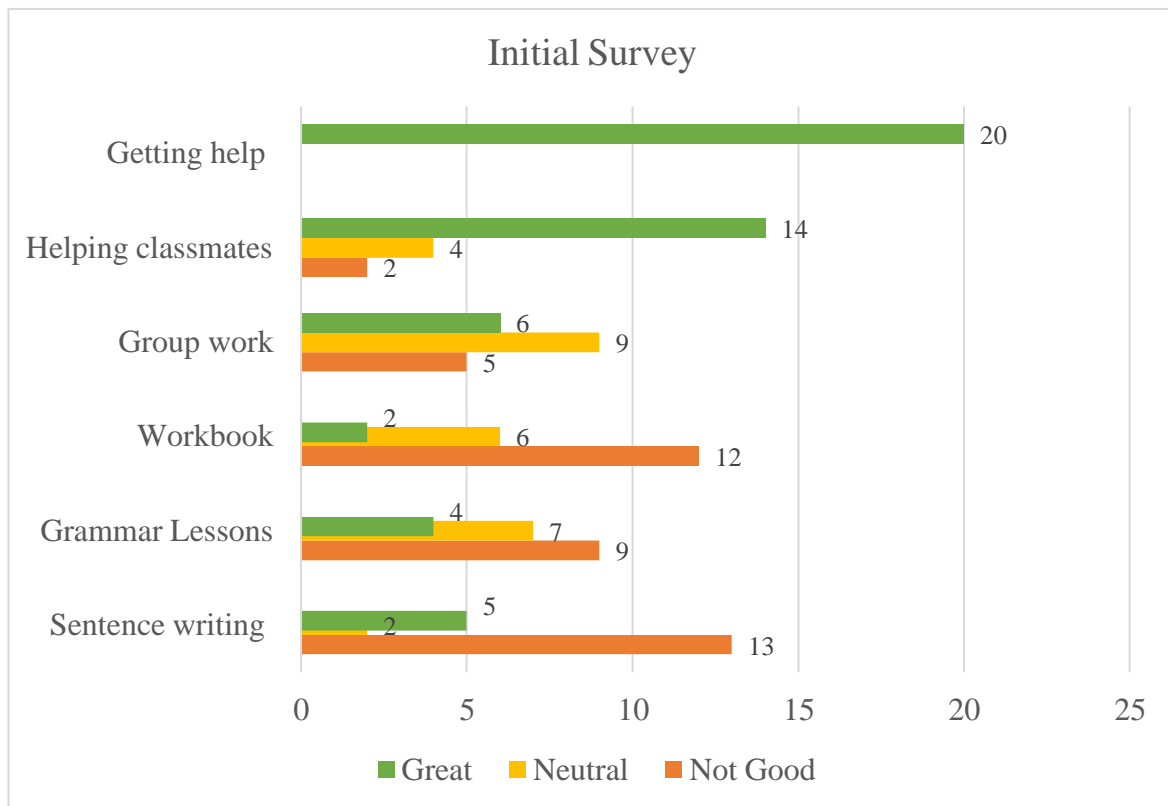
- 25% of the students always showed confidence
- 30% of the students sometimes showed confidence
- 45% of the students rarely showed confidence

**Interpretation:** From figure number four, it can be noted that from a total of 20 students, 5 of them always showed confidence, 6 of them sometimes did, and a majority of 9 rarely did.

That means that 45% of the group was almost never confident on their knowledge.

### 4.1.2 Survey 1

**Figure 5**



**Source:** Survey applied to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Interpretation:** Figure number five shows students' initial response to sentence writing, grammar lessons, workbook, groupwork, helping classmates, and getting help into great, neutral, or not great.

Said survey contained a total of six simple questions, and its purpose was to understand the students' feelings about specific criteria regarding their English lessons. In order to do this, the survey offered three possible answers: great, neutral, and not good. In the first question, students were asked how they felt about writing their own sentences. Thirteen students out of twenty answered they did not feel good about it, only five students chose the option "good," and the other two answered they had neutral feelings. From this question the researcher could infer that one of the lacking areas in grammar was sentence writing.



In the second question, students were asked how they felt about grammar lessons. It is important to point that before answering this question, the meaning of grammar was explained with examples, and the researcher clarified students that grammar referred to the rules of English, for example when writing sentences. For this question, only four students chose the option “great,” seven chose “neutral,” and nine students chose the option not good. This shows that a majority of students, 45%, did not feel good about the grammar lessons. This could be because they expressed, they found it “more difficult than science or spelling.” In addition, some of them mentioned they found it “boring to memorize rules.” This question’s results, together with the students’ opinions, suggest that a different method might help them find grammar more motivational.

The third question of the survey attempted to know how students felt about working on the book. This question was asked because completing book exercises is often not very interactive; hence, it is frequently associated with something boring. As expected, the majority, that is 12 students, answered they did not feel good about working on the book, following 6 students who answered they were neutral, and two students said they felt good about it.

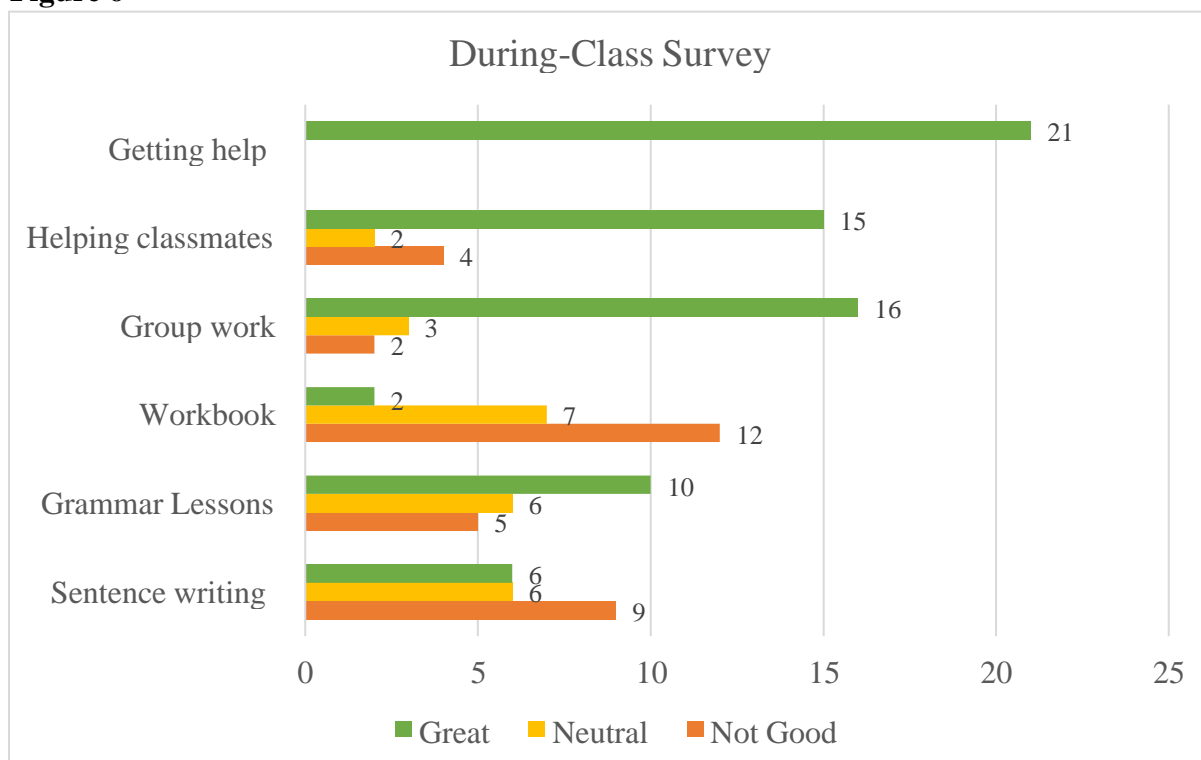
The fourth question is one of the most relevant for the investigation. In this question, students were asked how they felt about working in groups. Five students answered they did not like it, six chose the “great” option, and the majority, nine students, felt neutral about it. These results were unexpected, as the researcher thought the majority of students would have answered they felt great about it. However, during the observations the researcher perceived that the students who chose “not good” were shy and often times interacted very little with their peers during the lessons.

In the last two questions students were asked how they felt about getting help from their peers, and helping them. Only two students answered they did not like helping their classmates,

4 chose the “neutral” option, and the majority, 14 students, said they liked to help their peers. For the question, the totality of the students answered they liked being helped by others.

#### 4.1.3 Survey 2

**Figure 6**



**Source:** Survey applied to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Interpretation:** Figure number six shows students’ responses to the survey applied during the implementation of the cooperative learning approach during the grammar lessons.

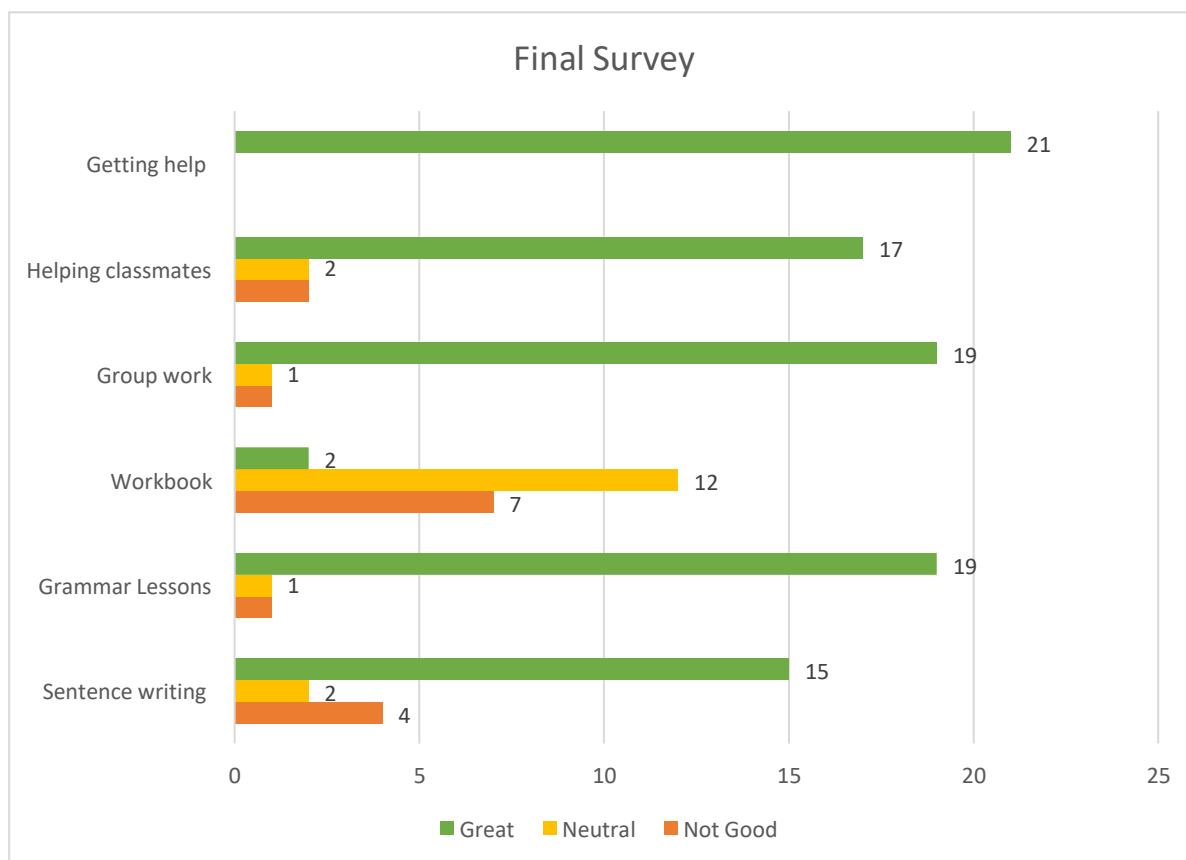
Said survey contained a total of six simple questions, and its purpose was to understand the students’ feelings about specific criteria of their English lessons. In order to do this, the survey offered three possible answers: great, neutral, and not good. In the first question, students were asked how they felt about writing their own sentences. Nine students out of twenty answered they did not feel good about it, six students chose the option “great,” and other six answered they had neutral feelings. There was a small improvement in sentence writing according to students’ responses in this and the previous survey.

In the second question, students were asked how they felt about the grammar lessons. For this question, ten students, that is the majority, chose the option “great,” six chose “neutral,” and five students chose the option not good. This shows that a majority of students, now felt great about the grammar lessons. This could be because of the new approach, as they could work cooperatively and, at the same time, work on their autonomy. Likewise, some mentioned loving working in groups, as they could help each other. This question’s results suggest that the CLA in grammar could gradually give good outcomes.

The third question of the survey attempted to know how students felt about working in the book. Just like in the previous survey, the majority, that is 12 students, answered that they did not feel good about working in the book. Moreover, 6 students answered they were neutral and only two students said they felt good about it. In the fourth question, students were asked about how they felt about working in groups. A majority of 16 students answered they felt great about groupwork, 3 students chose the option “neutral,” and only two said they did not feel good about it. Finally, in the last two questions students were asked how they felt about getting help from their peers and helping them. Four students answered they did not like helping their classmates, 2 chose the “neutral” option, and a majority of 15 said they liked to help their peers. The totality of the students answered they liked being helped by others.

### 4.1.4 Survey 3

**Figure 7**



**Source:** Survey applied to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Interpretation:** Figure number seven shows students' responses to the survey applied after the implementation of the cooperative learning approach during the grammar lessons.

Said survey contained a total of six simple questions and its purpose was to understand the students' feelings about specific criteria regarding their English lessons. In order to do this, the survey offered three possible answers: great, neutral, and not good. In the first question, students were asked how they felt about writing their own sentences. Fifteen students out of twenty answered they felt great about it, two answered with the option "neutral," and four said they did not feel good about it.

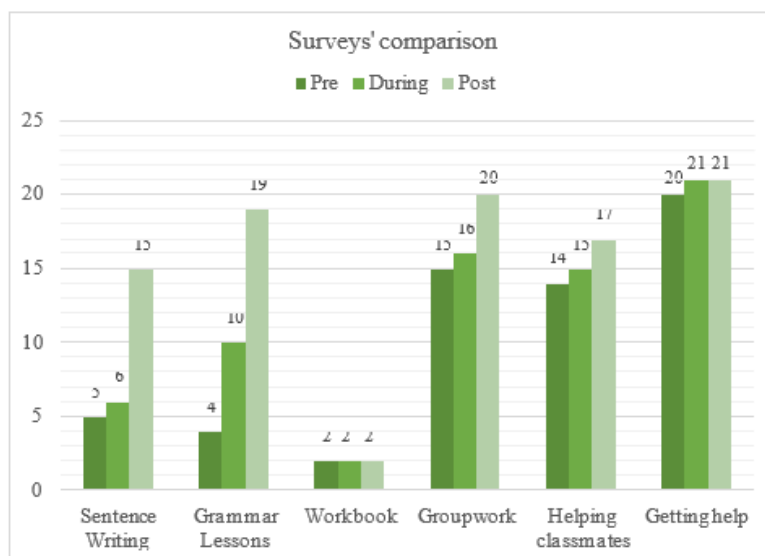
There was another small improvement in sentence writing according to the students' responses in this and the previous survey, since the "great" result increased by 6 students.

In the second question, students were asked how they felt about the grammar lessons. For this question, a majority of 19 students chose the option “great.” Only one student chose “neutral” and another one chose “not great.” It can be said that the CLA worked as a motivation for these students during their grammar lessons, as the surveys showed that the majority of the class now feels great about them. The third question of the survey attempted to know how students felt about working in the book.

The results remained as the ones in the 2 previous surveys with a majority of 12 students answering they did not feel good about working in the book. In the fourth question, students were asked about how they felt about working in groups. Nineteen students answered they felt great about groupwork. Only one student picked the “neutral” option and another one picked the “not great” one. Finally, students were asked how they felt about getting help from their peers and helping them. Two students answered they did not like helping their classmates, 2 chose the “neutral” option, and a majority of 17 said they liked to help their peers. The totality of the students answered they liked being helped by others.

#### 4.1.5 Surveys' Comparison

**Figure 8**



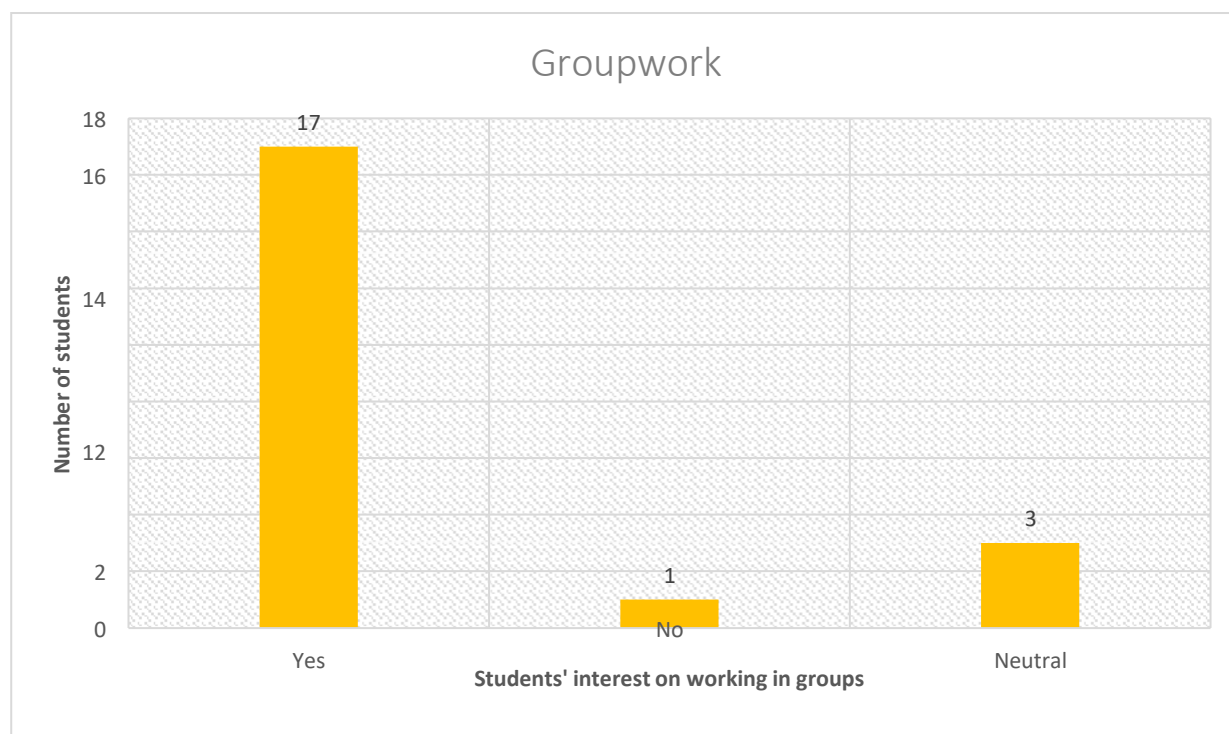
**Source:** Surveys applied to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Interpretation:** This figure shows a comparison between the surveys' results throughout the data collection and analysis processes by relating “great” answers through the three surveys.

Concerning sentence writing, there was an increase of 50% of the students' positive response towards this area of grammar pre and post the application of the cooperative learning approach. Similarly, the opinions of the students regarding grammar lessons increased positively by 6 between the pre and during CLA, and a 15 between the pre and post CLA implementation. The opinions regarding the workbook remained negative throughout the process. Following, the positive reviews for groupwork increased from 15 to 20 between the pre and post application. The criteria "helping classmates" increased positively by three during the process. Finally, the rates for "getting help" remained positive for all students through the process.

#### 4.1.6 Observation 2

**Figure 9**



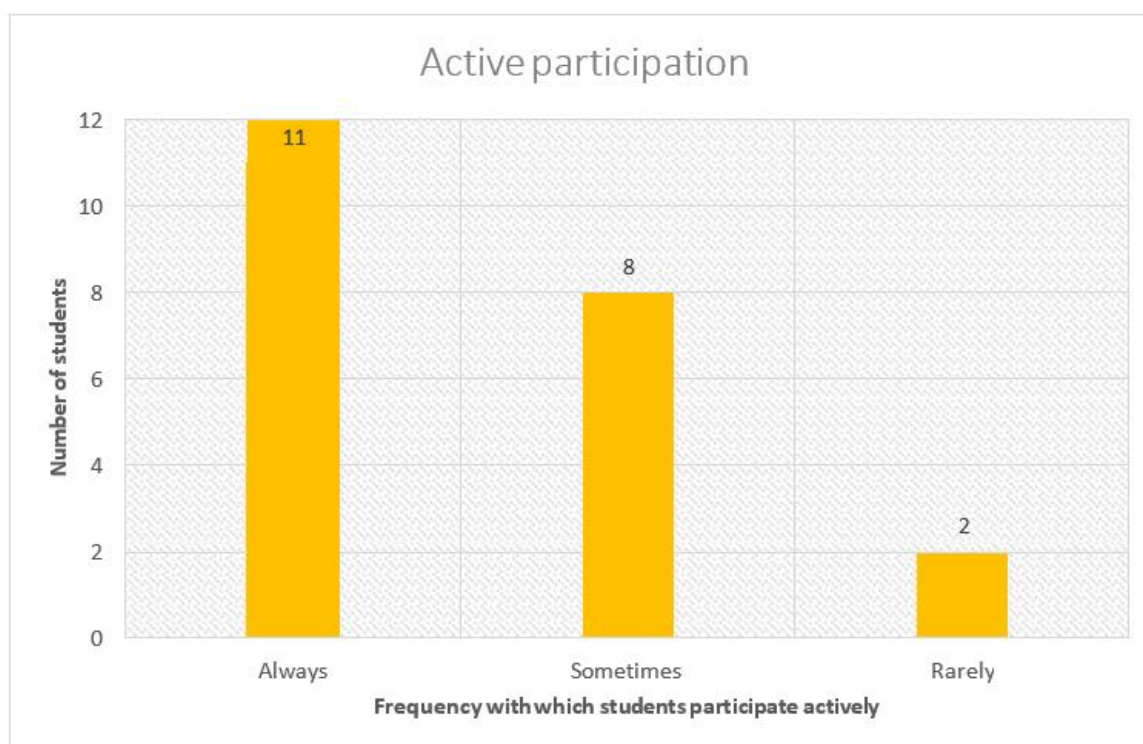
**Source:** Observation done to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Interpretation:** After the implementation of the CLA, the researcher observed the students' reactions to the same criteria established in the first part of the data collection and analysis

process. This shows the students' final reaction to groupwork. It was observed that after implementing the cooperative approach, 17 out of 21 students enjoyed working in groups, and did so efficiently. The researcher observed that there was a big difference in regard to the student's cooperative and autonomy skills. During the first observation, although students were arranged in groups, they chatted a lot among themselves, did not help one another with the tasks, and asked the teacher for affirmation. On the other hand, during this last observation, the researcher noted that students helped each other more, chatted only when necessary, and needed less affirmation from the teacher. Only one student did not succeed on working cooperatively, because he did not work unless the teacher was next to him telling him to keep going. At the end, he was placed into a group where his 4 other classmates encouraged him to work; in fact, he only finished the activities sometimes.

During the last observed lessons, the students worked cooperatively on the activities presented in the class planning. They enjoyed working together with their classmates, as well as participating in different activities each lesson. The researcher noticed that there was a great interaction among the members of the groups regarding the class activities completion. Only students 15,13, and 11 showed a neutral behavior towards working in group or individually. These three students were already autonomous, and in some occasions, they expressed that they preferred working alone, as it was faster that way. Still, these students did not have a problem when working with other peers if they were not in the same group as classmates who had very intense personalities or disorganized habits.

The purpose of this observation was to represent the students' reaction towards cooperative work in comparison to the first observation. Through the figure, it was concluded that there was a positive increase regarding the students' behavior towards groupwork. Moreover, the cooperative work helped them develop social skills such as teamwork and autonomy.

**Figure 10**

**Source:** Observation done to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

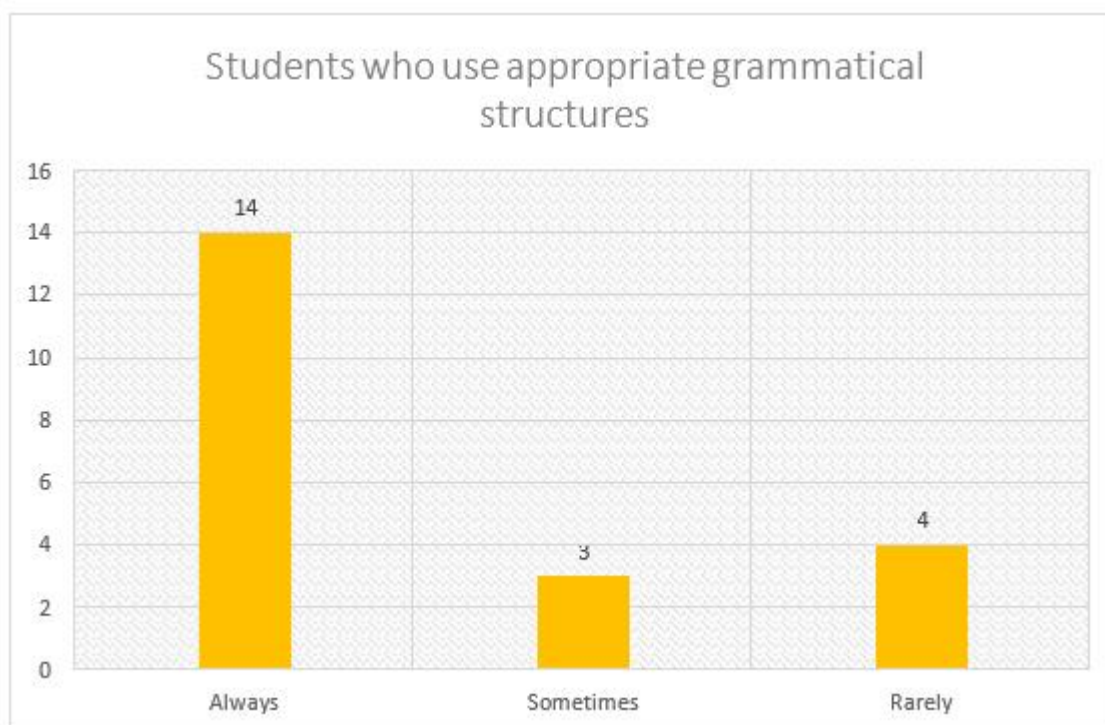
**Interpretation:** In order to compare the participation of the students during the grammar lessons before and after the implementation of the cooperative learning approach, this figure shows the frequency with which students participated after having implemented the CLA. Moreover, the figure shows that the number of students who always participated actively were now 11. This means that there was an increase of 4 students in comparison to the first observation. Additionally, the number of students who sometimes participated also increased, this time by 3. Finally, the number of students who rarely participated decreased by six.

The researcher observed that students who initially sometimes or rarely participated, such as student 11 and 12, started to engage more into the lessons by rising their hand to read or say the answer to an exercise. Equally, students 7 and 8 started to participate more despite the fact that English was a bit challenging for them. The student 6, who enrolled mid lessons,



was very participative. Students 10 and 16 remained among the ones who rarely participated; however, they still answered if the teacher asked them directly. Since participation is an important element of CLA, this intended to show the frequency of active participation in students after having applied the cooperative learning approach. Consequently, the figure showed a positive result regarding participation, as the number of students who always and sometimes participated increased, while the students who never participated, decreased.

**Figure 11**

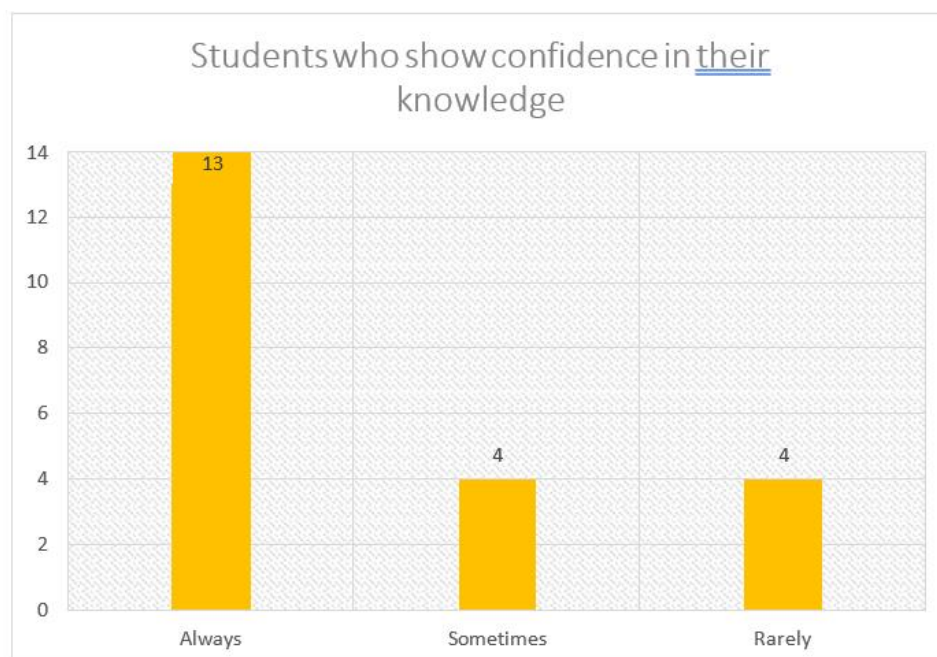


**Source:** Observation done to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Interpretation:** This figure shows the frequency with which students implemented the appropriate grammatical structures after applying the CLA. It can be noted that 14 students always used appropriate structures for their level, 3 students sometimes did, and 4 students rarely did. This shows an important difference between the results pre and post the CLA implementation. In the first observation, only 6 students participated all the time. This number increased by 8 students. On the contrary, the number of students who rarely participated

decreased by 7 students. The researcher found out that students who were initially good at grammar helped other classmates during cooperative work, so this resulted advantageous for every student. Some students such as 4, 18, and 19 showed greater results than those in the initial observations. Still, as the study was only implemented during a three-week period, some students who required more time to learn, remained lacking in some grammar areas. The purpose was to identify the difference between the frequencies with which students implemented the correct grammar pre and post the application of the cooperative learning approach. This figure turned out helpful as it allowed the researcher to perceive better usage of grammatical structures both orally and written.

**Figure 12**



**Source:** Observation done to students of 5B group from Saint Michael School. Second period 2023.

**Interpretation:** From a total of 21 students, 13 of them always showed confidence in their knowledge, 4 of them sometimes did, and the other 4 rarely did. That means that the students' confidence in their knowledge increased by 8 in the criteria "always." At the same time, the number of students who rarely trusted their knowledge decreased from 9 to 4. The researcher

noticed that initially the students appeared very insecure, when working alone. Once they started working cooperatively, students did not stand so much to ask the teacher. Students 13 and 19, who initially required constant affirmation, worked more independently when in teams. Through this, the researcher observed a positive advance for the students' autonomy skills and confidence.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

## **5.1 Conclusions**

In this chapter, the researcher presents the conclusions obtained from the investigation. In the first place, the chapter develops the results gathered for each of the investigation's objectives. Following, the initially formulated research question, which powered the investigation, is restated, and answered by considering the information collected throughout the study. At the end of the chapter, the researcher provides recommendations for the readers and future researchers.

### **Specific objectives:**

a) To identify the performance of fifth graders when using simple present tense in grammar activities.

b) To use the key components of the Cooperative Learning Approach in the development of grammar activities based on simple present tense established in the study program of fifth grade.

c) To determine the Cooperative Learning Approach effectiveness through the evaluation of some grammar activities performed in classes.

### **Referent of the general objective:**

Regarding to the general objective, it can be concluded that based on the information collected, Cooperative Learning Approach can create a positive learning environment for students to enhance Simple Present Tense and support classmates on practicing the language.

**Referent of the first specific objective:**

The word “needs” refers to the necessities that a subject or group has towards a particular phenomenon. During the observations, the researcher perceived that the students in 5B presented some needs in regards to English grammar. They were not confident when writing their own sentences, and when they did so, they made grammar mistakes. Moreover, the common sentence length was that of simple sentences, such as “the dog is brown.” Additionally, students did not implement appropriate grammar structures when speaking.

Most times, they could form simple sentences in the present tense, but when they had to speak in the past tense, they did not know how to. The research noted that these deficiencies could be the result of the lack of interest towards grammar, especially because they associated these lessons with the teacher explaining and them working on the book or a practice, which according to the investigation’s results, they did not enjoy doing.

At the beginning, when students were working individually, some of them did not understand the activities, instructions, and exercises. For this reason, they were not able to accomplish the desired objectives. Although, the teacher provided time for students to work on the exercises, some of them never managed to do so because they did not understand. At the end, as it was necessary for all the students to have the correct answers, the teacher checked generally; even though, only some students were able to complete the activities. In relation to this, in the first observations, only a small number of students participated when the teacher asked orally. Just like with the written activities, students did not participate because some of them did not fully understand; hence, they were not confident regarding their answers.

Although, grammar is one of the skills the educational system focuses more on, the lack of interest, confidence, and grammar bases can lead students to present difficulties with

this English skill. Likewise, the educational system often relies only on explanation, textbooks, and workbooks to develop the grammar skills. This, however, is not so convenient, as students are often not learning effectively. By using other methods and approaches, such as the Cooperative Learning, students are de-suggested from the idea that grammar is boring and difficult. Instead, they are given the chance to learn together with their peers, help each other, build their confidence and autonomy. Grammar might be one of the most challenging areas when learning a language; however, most schools dedicate much more time to grammar than they do to areas such as speaking or reading. For this reason, this time must be taken advantage of to effectively teach grammar, and not just recite rules and ask students to apply them in a practice or test. Boring as it may be, there is a vast number of methodologies and approaches with which students can view grammar in a new light, so that they do not end up with gaps on their target language grammar knowledge.

### **Referent to the second specific objective**

In an attempt to cover the students' needs regarding English grammar, the researcher initially proposed implementing the cooperative approach during their daily class activities.

During the first observations, the researcher perceived that the students rarely worked in groups, but rather they did so individually. Moreover, it was perceived that the students were very dependent on the teacher and did not work autonomously. They were also very insecure when working on grammar activities.

Before implementing activities using the cooperative approach, the researcher talked to the students and shared with them during the observed lessons in an attempt to build rapport. This as the relation among the students and researcher must be great for the lessons to go as effectively as possible. The researcher prepared the classes to offer students a new, nice classroom environment. The lessons were prepared so that each of them had a warm up, class

activities, and assessments. The warmup activities consisted of short, 5 to 10 minutes activities. Their purpose was to encourage and motivate students for the lesson. These activities were applied at the beginning of the lesson. It was always attempted that these activities were fun and related to the topic that students were to study during the day.

Following the warm up, the researcher also designed classroom activities using the cooperative approach. The purpose of these activities was for students to learn about the grammar topic using non-traditional means, in this case, the cooperative approach. Among some of the implemented activities were showdown, round table, and jigsaw. These activities were applied together with the methodologies such as positive reinforcements and group roles. Through the implementation of these activities and the assessments, the researcher perceived students worked more autonomously, confidently, and showed a better understanding and application of many of the studied topics, one example being the creation of sentences. Students started trying to use English at all times when talking to the teacher and researcher, and not only used the simple present but also the simple past.

### **Referent to the third specific objective**

It is hard to fully evaluate the outcomes that the cooperative approach had in Grammar learning in such a short period; nevertheless, the researcher did perceive some changes in the students before and after applying the CLA. After two weeks of working with the students, the researcher noted that the students' confidence in English Grammar increased greatly when they worked in groups. Moreover, most students participated more after having their peers backing them up in the team. Some students who were shy and insecure about their knowledge, started showing more self-confidence and delivered great results in both, written and oral grammar exercises.



Among the results, it was curious to the researcher how at the beginning cooperative work was challenging as students constantly chatted among themselves and interrupted the lesson. However, after working in groups for a couple of days, students focused on the task despite the group setup. It also came to notice that students worked faster and better when they did so cooperatively. Some of the students who usually had difficulties with grammar (such as structures or sentence formation) were assisted by their group members. Equally, the students appeared motivated to work in groups and saw it as a reward. Additional to assigning roles to the team members, the researcher created a “feline competition,” in which each group was given a feline pet and they had to compete towards the same goal: delivering excellent teamwork each day. Students were motivated as they were also offered positive reinforcements, such as extra recess and certificates.

As stated at the beginning of this conclusion, it is hard to completely measure the outcomes of applying the CLA within a short period of two weeks. Despite considering all the previous outcome observations, it would be great to work with this group for a longer period to measure possible long-term outcomes. Nevertheless, by implementing the CLA for two weeks, the researcher observed an improvement with the basic Grammar topics reviewed, as well as the students’ participation, motivation, and teamwork. During this period, students learned that cooperative work does not consist of handing the workload to one person, but rather splitting the tasks and helping those in need.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

In the final analysis, the researcher provides a series of recommendations for future investigators. These recommendations are developed based on the experience gained from this investigation’s process, and they include general and specific suggestions regarding working on an investigation and implementing this specific approach. Following, the researcher develops each of the recommendations.

In the first place, it would be ideal to alternate between individual and cooperative work during the lessons. By allowing students to work in groups and by themselves, they can learn autonomy and individual accountability. Moreover, by alternating between these methods, the teacher can note each student's strengths and weaknesses. This way, the teacher will also notice, the areas in which each individual needs to work on and if they are more benefited by working in groups or alone.

Secondly, future researchers can try to implement the cooperative approach for a longer period of time. Although, this investigation offered some outcomes regarding cooperative work in English grammar, the period during which this approach was applied was too short. By implementing the approach for a longer period, the researcher could perceive important long-term effects.

A third recommendation is to make sure students understand their individual accountability and team accountability. Cooperative work may be something new for many students. For this reason, some of them may not fully associate groups with work, but rather with an opportunity to chat. It is suggested to the researcher to explain what cooperative work is and how each individual has a role within the group. This way, each student will be introduced to the term individual accountability, and understand that their actions can affect their team.

In the fourth place, it is suggested to build rapport with students since the beginning. It is always important to remember that the researcher often goes to the institution in the middle of the school term, which means that most students are now accustomed to only being with their teachers and peers in the classroom. At the beginning, the researcher will be a stranger. Consequently, if a good relation is not built among the researcher and students, the investigation's results can be negatively impacted.

Finally, the researcher provides a general recommendation concerning the investigation process. It is suggested to observe the group previous to choosing a title for the investigation. Only by observing the group, the researcher will be able to identify a necessity, and only by identifying a group's needs the researcher can develop an effective investigation. After having identified a need within the group, think of a way to solve it and base the investigation on this. All things considered, this research can be useful for future investigators, readers, and teachers who would like to improve students' development during English lessons. Besides giving a new light to Grammar learning, the Cooperative Learning Approach offers a series of benefits for both, the teachers and the students.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **Proposal**

## **6.1 Proposal**

This proposal validates what has been observed by providing the suggestions for the students and the teacher of Saint Michael School on the effectiveness of Cooperative Learning Approach in Simple Present Tense. Furthermore, to find a solution to the problem. This proposal is a model for the teachers to follow to implement Cooperative Learning Approach in a correct way as well as, include grammar activities that are feasible for the class.

## **6.2 Name of the proposal**

Determine the effectiveness of using the Cooperative Learning Approach in enhancing the Simple Present Tense.

## **6.3 Place to be developed**

This proposal will be carried out at Saint Michael School to assist fifth graders to enhance their grammar skills. The population involved is the same as the one included in the research.

## **6.4 General and specific objectives**

### **6.4.1 General objective of the proposal**

- a) To determine the effectiveness of using the Cooperative Learning Approach in enhancing the Simple Present Tense in Fifth Grade students at Saint Michael School located in San Jose, Desamparados during the second Quarter of 2023.

### **6.4.2 Specific objectives of the proposal**

- a) To identify the performance of fifth graders when using simple present tense in grammar activities.

- b) To use the key components of the Cooperative Learning Approach in the development of grammar activities based on simple present tense established in the study program of fifth grade.
- c) To determine the Cooperative Learning Approach effectiveness through the evaluation of some grammar activities performed in classes.

### **6.5 Necessary budget of the proposal**

Regarding the budget for the implementation of the proposal, it results affordable because most of the activities require the interaction between the pupil and the teacher as well as, the material can be shared in digital format also, nobody must buy the material because everything is on the web as a result the implementation is reasonable and feasible for a long term.

### **6.6 Suggested Activities**

Some of the possible activities to implement in order to accomplish the objectives will be explained below.

The first activity is a showdown or roles. The coordinator of each group will be given a set of question cards. He/she will mix the cards and place them face down in the middle of the team workspace. The speaker will pick a card and read it aloud for the group. Individually, each member will work on solving the question in a piece of paper. When 1 minute is up, the time keeper will say “Showdown” and each member has to stop what they are doing and place their answers in the middle of the table. The speaker will read all the answers and check if they are all the same, if one answer is different, the team has to discuss which one they think is the correct one. The secretary will then write the correct answer in a paper which will be later handed to the teacher. Repeat the process until all the cards have been answered

Second activity is to divide the students into groups each assign roles to each of the four

team members using the role cards. During the activity they will each develop the corresponding roles according to the rules:

- Coordinator: makes sure every member understands and helps those in need
- Time keeper: Ss have one 10 minutes total to develop each activity
- Environment supervisor: Team must avoid loud noises and standing from their seats
- Speaker: Only the speaker can voice the questions of the team as well as present the sentences to the rest of the class

Third, another activity is the round table technique in which each student will be given a piece of paper where they will write a subject (dog, alien, teacher...). Once every member of the group has written their subject, they will pass their paper to the team-member to their left. The member who is given the paper has to create a simple sentence using the subject in the paper. The process will be repeated until each member has written a sentence for every subject.

Another activity is the Jigsaw, you have to divide the class in groups. Give each team a big jigsaw piece with the summary Prepositions of time. Assign a fragment of the summary to each team member. The fragments are: on, at, in. Give students time to individually read and familiarize with it. After students already read their part, they will go into expert groups with the students from the other teams who also have their fragment (e.g., "On" Expert Group) and discuss what they understood. Each student will go back to their group and present their part of the topic to their team mates.

A fifth activity is named carousel, in which students are divided into groups of 5 people each. The teacher will place 4 big papers around the classroom and give each group 3 different color markers. Each group will stand before a piece of paper and then rotate to the others. In paper number 1, they will write 5 verbs, on paper number 2 they will write 5 subjects, on paper

3 they will write 3 predicates, and lastly on paper 4 they will write 2 full sentences, circle the subject and underline the predicate.

The students and teacher sit in a circle and review the topic complete subjects and predicates by using the posters/papers made by ss in the previous activity



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## **ANNEXES**

**Annex 1: Student Observation Checklist**

	All	Most	Some	Almost None	None
<b>Student Initial Observation Checklist</b>					
Students have a good relation among the group					
Students participate actively in the lesson					
Students help each other when a classmate needs assistance					
Students use the target language to communicate during the lesson					
Students show understanding of what the teacher explains in the target language					
Students follow instructions					
Students show confidence in their knowledge					
Students enjoy working in pairs/groups					
Students complete exercises by themselves with no need of guidance					
Students listen to each other's contributions					
Students use appropriate grammatical structures when writing					
Students use appropriate grammatical structures when speaking					
Students complete the task efficiently when working cooperatively					



**Annex 2: Teacher Observation Checklist**

	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
The teacher has a good relation with the students				
The teacher encourages students to participate actively in the lesson				
The teacher allows students to help each other and work cooperatively				
The teacher encourages students to use the target language				
The teacher explains using only the target language				
The teacher creates teams based on students' needs				
The teacher encourages autonomous work				
The teacher encourages students to listen to each other's ideas				
The teacher involves students in cooperative activities				
The teacher dedicates 3 weekly lessons to grammar				
The teacher uses cooperative approaches to teach grammar				

## Annex 3: Survey

## How I feel about English

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Color the picture that shows how you feel about each question.



Great



Neutral



Not good

How do you feel about writing your own sentences?



How do you feel about Grammar lessons?



How do you feel about working on the book ?



How do you feel about working in groups?



How do you feel about helping your classmates?



How do you feel about getting helped by your classmates?

