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## **To make grammar interesting with action methods**



# **Research questions**

- 1. How do seven graders experience different areas of the subject mother tongue and literature (= Finnish language)? How do they experience grammar?**
- 2. Are there differences between experiment and comparison groups in the knowing of parts of speech and in the attitudes against them?**
- 3. How do pupils attend the action tasks of grammar? How useful they think they are?**

## **Research classes**

**Table 1. Pupils in different classes**

### **Comparison groups**

**School 1, class 1, girls 5, boys 11, together 16**

**School 2, class 2, girls 4, boys 12, together 16**

**School 3, class 3, girls 9, boys 12, together 21**

### **Experiment groups**

**School 3, class 4, girls 7, boys 11, together 18**

**School 3, class 5, girls 20, boys 1, together 21**

**The classes 1 and 2 had traditional grammar. They learnt it from the textbook and used an exercise booklet. They had no action exercises.**

**Class 3 had no grammar during the autumn, they concentrated to correct Finnish.**

**In experiment classes 4 and 5 there was the same teacher. She used the same tasks in both classes. The class 5 was a special expression class.**

**Table 2. The desirability of mother tongue in its different subareas in pretest and in intermediate test**

Class	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Desirability of reading</b>					
Pretest	3,81	4,56	2,86	3,63	4,25
Intermediate test	3,81	4,64	2,89	4,00	4,45
<b>Desirability of writing</b>					
Pretest	3,19	2,94	2,90	3,56	3,85
Intermediate test	3,19	2,93	2,58	3,44	3,75
<b>Desirability of grammar</b>					
Pretest	2,88	3,00	2,48	<b>2,73</b>	3,10
Intermediate test	2,75	2,71	2,37	<b>3,22</b>	3,15
<b>Desirability of correct Finnish</b>					
Pretest	3,19	2,75	2,70	2,67	3,32
Intermediate test	3,00	2,64	2,53	3,22	3,30
<b>Desirability of literature</b>					
Pretest	3,31	4,00	2,20	3,19	3,50
Intermediate test	3,06	3,64	2,42	3,17	3,65
<b>Desirability of expression</b>					
Pretest	4,19	3,56	3,24	4,00	4,95
Intermediate test	2,75	3,71	3,14	4,39	4,90
<b>Desirability of acting</b>					
Pretest	4,25	3,81	3,00	4,00	4,90
Intermediate test	3,88	3,64	3,06	4,17	4,95
<b>Desirability of media</b>					
Pretest	4,25	4,06	3,33	4,07	4,00
Intermediate test	3,94	4,08	3,53	4,17	4,10

You see that the grammar and correct Finnish are least pleasant in all classes. In the experiment class 4 there is an almost statistically significant **difference in the desirability of grammar between pretest and intermediate test: t value 2,10 (df 14) p .054.**

**Table 3. Knowing of parts of speech in pretest and in intermediate test**

	<b>Classes</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Pretest</b>						
<b>Parts of speech</b>		<b>12,81</b>	<b>14,63</b>	<b>12,10</b>	<b>13,13</b>	<b>11,95</b>
<b>Intermediate test</b>						
<b>Production of sentences</b>		<b>9,38</b>	<b>11,71</b>	<b>6,00</b>	<b>10,61</b>	<b>9,70</b>

**Table 4. Desirability attitudes of experiment classes in the posttest**

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Desirability of reading</b>	<b>4,15</b>	<b>0,78</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Desirability of writing</b>	<b>3,69</b>	<b>1,03</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Desirability of grammar</b>	<b>3,05</b>	<b>0,94</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Desirability of literature</b>	<b>3,38</b>	<b>0,75</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Doing grammar exercises from textbook (desirability 1—5)</b>	<b>2,68</b>	<b>0,93</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Desirability of action exercises</b>	<b>4,50</b>	<b>0,69</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>How useful are the action exercises for learning</b>	<b>4,43</b>	<b>0,69</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>How useful are grammar exercises in computer classrooms</b>	<b>3,83</b>	<b>0,77</b>	<b>36</b>

# Conclusions

**In the control groups the grammar was experienced boring and dull.**

**In the experimental groups, where the drama methods were used, the grammar became nice. The pupils asked already in the beginning of the lesson, have we expression. They asked some exercises again — they were so desired.**

**In the examination of parts of speech the experimental group got a mean 9,20, when an usual mean is 7,00. The knowledge was better in the experimental group.**

**In the experimental groups the learning was pleasant and social. The learning experiences by pupils were many-sided. They learnt the parts of speech but also to improvise and to be in the group.**

## Literature

Maunu, Nina. 2010. Sijamuodot. (Caseforms.) Draamallisin ja toiminnallisin menetelmin. (With drama and action methods.) Aikakauskirja Äidinkielen opetustiede 39, 25—52. (Journal of Mother Tongue Education 39, 25—52.)

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