

**FROM THE CLASSICAL METHOD OF TEACHING GRAMMAR TO A
PEDAGOGICAL GRAMMAR: An experience to find a path to promote oral
production.**

JOHANNA PATRICIA CARO VARGAS

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2011**

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**ENGLISH PROJECT AS A PARTIAL REQUIREMENT FOR DEGREE
“LICENCIADO EN EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA CON ÉNFASIS EN HUMANIDADES E
IDIOMAS”**

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BOGOTÁ
2011**

NOTA DE ACEPTACIÓN

Jurado

Jurado evaluador

Bogotá, 15 de diciembre de 2011

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to the four most important people that have made it possible for me to arrive at the end of my degree. First, to God, because he is my Lord, my support; he has had to tolerate my sadness, my happiness, my disappointments and my hope. Second, to my husband Juan de la Cruz, whose support has made my degree possible; his love, his patience and his understanding helped me at all. Third, to my son Andres Felipe because he has been my inspiration; his enthusiasm, his leadership and his hugs made me stronger when I lost my heart. Fourth, the last but not least, my dear teacher, my advisor, Clara Eunice Rodriguez, when I was 15 years old, I met her, she was my high school English teacher, she has been the most important teacher in my life; during many years I have not seen her, but one day, I met her, Where? At “Universidad Libre” that day my heart was brimming with happiness because I saw her again. Now she is my director, my tutor. I know she really wants the best wishes for my life.

To you,

Thank you very much!

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When I decided to work with grammar as the main theme of my research project, many people told me that that subject was too difficult and not many people wanted to pursue it. However, I remembered that I had an excellent teacher that made grammar teaching a fun form to learn a foreign language, now he is not here, but his memory lives in my heart, thanks for your help and your teaching, Diego Sarmiento.

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Special thanks to my family members, my husband, my son, my mom, my dad, my brothers and my sister. Without their help, surely, I would not have finished my degree.

STRUCTURED ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

TITLE: FROM THE CLASSICAL METHOD OF TEACHING GRAMMAR TO A PEDAGOGICAL GRAMMAR: AN EXPERIENCE TO FIND A PATH TO PROMOTE ORAL PRODUCTION.

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DATE: November 1st, 2011

ACADEMIC PROGRAMM: Licenciatura en Humanidades e Idiomas. Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación.

KEY WORDS: Grammar, discourse, projects, action research, Communicative Language Teaching.

DESCRIPTION: The pedagogical background permitted the researcher to observe and find that grammar learning has turned into a difficulty for some students at RFK School; the majority of them show lack of interest related to grammar topics that they had studied in former years. Students do not identify grammar structures, and they have not acquired enough vocabulary to express themselves orally.

INTRODUCTION: As a result of plenty of meetings with my tutor, we arrived to the conclusion that we had to create a specific context where students would have the opportunity to express their ideas and communicate in English. We proposed several topics that we realize that students like them for instance parties, music, fantasy, travels and celebrations, they preferred music.

RATIONALE: Today, teachers that teach grammar are worried to present a new methodology, they want to offer a new way to learn a foreign language, because some high school students are not pleased to the fact that they must repeat sentences without understanding their usefulness.

PROBLEMATIC SITUATION: In the RFK school, grammar explanations seem to be useless, most of the exercises are designed in the same way, students have to fill in the blanks, create a great number of isolated sentences or completing informal tests; these activities do not lead to communicate; students do not produce what they are learning because they do not have enough situations or opportunities in which they feel the necessity to communicate. Students need a context where they have possibilities to speak in English.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE: To design and implement a contextualized classroom project (based on Communicative Language Teaching) to promote grammar learning through the development of oral production in students of English at a public school in Bogotá.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- To review literature about grammar teaching and the steps to develop oral discourse.
- To design a project with specific tasks to stimulate learning grammar in function of the communicative skills, and to plan activities to increase students' confidence and security that improve grammar knowledge.
- To apply sequence of activities.
- To open spaces where students can give their points of view for improving their speech as a methodological tool in grammar teaching.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: A grammar concept, types of grammar, competences, discourse.

METHODOLOGY: The method followed for this project is action research. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) define this method: "Action research is a form of collective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out."

RESULTS: The selection of the topics was made according to students' interests, and eight lesson plans were organized with the same number of activities to apply during each class, these actions were evaluated, redesigned according to the reflections done after each class; they permit to the researcher to modify the lesson plans and the applications.

CONCLUSIONS: Students had the opportunity to participate and show their own productions in front of their partners, those activities were not easy for them because there were shy students that they felt embarrassed to speak and they were worried about their English pronunciation. Furthermore student were confident at the end all of them showed their final music band presentation.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATION: "*Teachers and learners have to be situated in the time and in the context*" This proposal permitted teachers and students to integrate their real lives according to the students' age, bearing in mind their interests, and the activities were related to educational standards based on Communicative Language Teaching; in addition, teacher and students recreated a context where students could improve their oral production.

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- **FIELD OF INVESTIGATION:** Pedagogy, Didactics, Methodology

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INTRODUCTION

For a long time I was thinking about what would be the topic that I could work as theme of my research project. The first activity that my professor told me that I needed to make was a participant observation, she proposed me some specific categories, I had to complete it and did the group description; when I completed it, I found that students showed a problematic situation because they did not like grammar explanations and they looked for several excuses to listen to the teacher; we believed that it could be an interesting topic to investigate because this problem is not just particular for a group of learners but also, it is a frequent circumstance of the majority of students.

Since that moment, I started to look for information related to teaching grammar because I tried to find a way to teach it, to catch students' attention and I wanted to change the traditional approach which I had learned. I thought that the grammar translation method was boring and was a very mechanical form to learn structures and complete sentences. However, I continued planning English classes in the same way; I proposed different games with isolated sentences, complete exercises, and translation; this process was difficult for me because my advisor desired to modify and break down this structural path of teaching, the fact that the main goal in our research work was to design and implement a contextualized project to permit the development of oral production in students.

As a result of plenty of meetings with my tutor, we arrived to the conclusion that we had to recreate a specific context where students would have the opportunity to express their ideas and communicate in English. We proposed several topics that we realize that students like them for instance parties, music, fantasy, travels and celebrations, they preferred music. Next, we designed a plan explaining the

advantages of working with projects considering that they are planned through a series of activities which are linked with the purpose to present an end work, and students gain a real sense of accomplishment; then I sketched eight lesson plans with specific tasks for each class, and they were subject to change as a result of the action research method.

This paper consists of six chapters. The first one is the description of the project; it shows the problematic situation, the previous work on the topic, the rationale, the research question and the objectives.

The second chapter presents the theoretical foundation, bearing in mind the most important theories that support this work of research; grammar concepts; types of grammar, from Normative Grammar proposed by Gramsci. The Chomskian theory of Universal Grammar, Descriptive Grammar, Functional Grammar by Dik and Halliday, to arrive to pedagogical grammar based on Nunan's methodology. Next, the subject about competences, and lastly, the Communicative Language Teaching and explore its assumptions.

The third chapter contains the research design, the method of action research, the school context, and the population description; in addition, instruments of data collection such as participant observations, tests, surveys, the proposal, teaching logs, interviews, and students artifacts, made possible to build the methodology to find pedagogical implications and with all of these tools a further analysis could be done.

In the fourth chapter, data collection process is shown with the triangulation of the information found, according to the instruments with teacher and students thoughts. Moreover, the procedures are presented to allow for students process and their improvements.

Fifth chapter, the proposal and eight lesson plans are displayed with the personal reflection and the activities to change according to the purpose of the action research method.

Lastly, the conclusions and pedagogical implications are going presented.

1. ABOUT THE PROJECT

An important perspective referring to English teaching concerns grammar explanations; some teachers work with the grammar translation method, traditional or classical method, others with explanations and drills, but a few with grammar in context. As a consequence, students do not show interest to learn a foreign language; probably they would like to express their ideas in English if they had a context to use the target language.

In this chapter some important statements will be presented: a particular situation found during pedagogical practice carried out in a public school in Bogotá. First, the problematic situation faced by students at Robert F. Kennedy school (RFK hereafter), for the methodology followed by their English teachers when they teach grammar; second, previous works on the topic; third the personal experience of the author of this paper, two research works and a thesis related to the main topic; and finally, the justification for this research, as well as, the objectives pursued.

1.1 THE PROBLEMATIC SITUATION

The pedagogical background permitted to observe and find that grammar learning has turned into a difficulty for some students at RFK School; the majority of them show lack of interest related to grammar topics that they had studied in former years. Students do not identify grammar structures, and they have not acquired enough vocabulary to express themselves orally. Moreover, they feel insecurity when they are asked, because they said that they do not have enough words to communicate their ideas, feelings, thoughts or needs

According to Scott Thornbury (1999), “*teaching grammar has been traditionally considering a part of the study of possible structures in a language exclusively related to analysis at the level of the sentence*”¹. Thus, grammar is seen as the explanation of rules that supervise how sentences are formed.

At the RFK school, grammar explanations seem to be useless, most of the exercises are designed in the same way, students have to fill in the blanks, create a great number of isolated sentences or completing informal tests; these activities do not lead to communicate; students do not produce what they are learning because they do not have enough situations or opportunities in which they feel the necessity to communicate. Students need a context where they have possibilities to speak in English.

As evidences of the problematic situation, two activities were performed: a non-participant observation carried out in august, 2010, and a diagnostic grammar test. The result of the observation permitted to characterize the population and to find the topic of this research. (Appendix A) The diagnostic grammar test was administered to students of 8th grade, (Appendix B) the results showed to renovate teaching grammar methodology is necessary.

The difficulty of teaching grammar starts when the teacher explains on the board, and she uses the grammar translation method.

“What has been called the classical method: focus on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary and of various declensions and conjugations, translations of texts, doing written exercises? Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979:3) listed the major characteristics of this approach: 1. Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language. 2. Vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words. 3. Long elaborate explanations. 4. Exceptions the

¹ THORNBURY Scott, How to teach Grammar pp.1

*rules. 5. Little attention is paid to the context. 6. Little or no attention is given to pronunciation*²

This approach has worked for many years and some teachers still teach in the same way. This is the situation observed at RFK: students do not pay attention because they do not have the necessity of learning a rule or vocabulary that they surely are not going to use and as a consequence of this situation students lose interest in the English classes.

On the other hand, students need different kind of input; they need the teacher to contextualize the foreign language, taking into account their interests and needs. Vigotsky sets out in his constructivism theory, which children go through different stages during the learning process among, are: to perceive (sense), to pay attention (to organize, to select and to classify information), to observe (mental representation, code, significance and signifier), memory and evocation, all of these activities permit to build a concept in the brain. The process explained could be right if the student is learning about the language but it is not enough when the students need to learn the language to establish communication.

Nowadays, the language teaching process is changing, there are plenty of research papers, books, studies and the Common European Framework, that are related to language teaching in which authors have stated the importance of communication and have proposed the ideal situation, saying according to Richards (2006) "*grammar teaching should be seen as a vehicle not as a goal*"³. Grammar should permit to understand different phenomena that students live in their real lives; also, its objective should address the development of the communicative acts taking into account the student as an active being of society, specifically, at the students who look for clear answers related to their own context,

² BROWN, H Douglas. Teaching by principles. Pp.18-19

³ <http://www.professorjackrichards.com/pdfs/communicative-language-teaching-today-v2.pdf>

the students that have the necessity to express their feelings, the students that need the knowledge for living in the world, every day.

As result of previous situation the following question is posed.

How to design and implement a contextualized grammar project about students' interest which permits to develop oral production in students of 8th grade?

1.2 PREVIOUS WORK ON THE TOPIC

The search for information about research papers on teaching grammar has been a hard task due to the fact that there are not many undergraduate research projects in public and private universities which offer “Licenciatura” programs even at “Universidad Libre”.

On the other hand, the majority of grammar books provide grammar instructions, grammar rules to complete sentences, drills and several exercises to write and repeat the rules; they do not establish a context where students can use the oral language when they are learning.

After reviewing grammar books two trends were evident: First, the usual examples of formats where the focus is the knowledge of different topics about grammar and practice through controlled activities such as memorization of dialogs, rules, and drills. And a project related to grammar was written by Gina Vargas and Jonathan Diaz at “Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas in 2010”, with the title: “Describing the Construction of Grammatical Competence in Fifth Grade through Adapted Material Implementation”

This research was based on the implementation of adapted grammar material in students of early grades to demonstrate its utility.

The main idea was to design practical information about the pedagogical setting and characteristics to adapt material to improve grammar competence.

The authors showed ten lesson plans that they applied according to adapted material. Those materials were important for the construction of linguistic competency because learners were involved in a significant process.

Second, those works that emphasis on grammar, communication and use, has found on the internet.

The first work was written on September 2007 called "Gramática y enseñanza del inglés" by: *Orlando Rodríguez Díaz, Instituto Superior Pedagógico "José Martí" de Camaguey. Cuba*. The author establishes that grammar teaching takes a new sense, the most significant aspect for grammar has been related to structures but now, grammar can be understood in two ways: first, the usage, because it is important to know the sentences' meaning; and second, the use associated with functional values.

He concludes that the teacher should be a communicator with an excellent knowledge of target language; also, the teacher should be a guide, he must determine the students' path, he must guide students to develop the metalinguistic competence that helps to build the necessary knowledge for using the foreign language trough the didactic classes and new methodologies.

The second one, called "¿Hay que enseñar gramática a los estudiantes de lengua extranjera?" was written in 2005 by *Maximiliano Cortés Moreno, Universidad Chang Jung (Taiwan)*. In this paper the author tells that teaching grammar is a topic that presents two forms, on the one hand, as a native teacher, in this case, he

takes learning as a natural stage, people speak and then people think in structures if it is necessary.(37) This concept is based on Krashen (1981) he sets up that “*Error correction and explicit teaching of rules are not relevant to language acquisition*”⁴, this statement permits teachers to understand that students can acquire a language through a natural process during which they are not conscious of grammatical rules, they just have the opportunities to internalize the rules of a second language similarly to the way they acquired their first language.

On other hand, some foreign language teachers and students think on structure before producing a piece of oral discourse because they are worried about speaking without mistakes and errors; this is the way to learn a language in a conscious form, according to Krashen (1981) “*Conscious Learning is thought to be helped a great deal by error correction and the presentation of explicit rules.*”⁵ The author points up that when students learning a foreign language they are conscious about the knowledge of the new language, and the errors are part of the learning due to they are the result of instructions.

In addition, the author writes about two types of grammar concepts; the first is a list of rules that the teacher uses when he/her wants to teach a language, this definition is called declarative knowledge, this is considered as a means, as a metalinguistic support, that makes acquisition of instrumental knowledge easier. The second one is an internalized system that consents to codify and decode oral and written discourse in a language; it is called instrumental knowledge that is used when students need to use the language to communicate ideas.

Furthermore, Spada (1997) explains that the teaching of English as a Second Language there are some dichotomies: explicit versus implicit instructions or analytic versus experimental teaching, these aspects permit us to conclude that in

⁴ KRASHEN, Sthepen. *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*: University of Southern California. Pergamon Press Inc. (1981). Pp 1

⁵ Ibid. pp 2

the RFK school, the English teacher focuses on explicit and analytic teaching, it means the focus is placed on form more than focus on forms.

On the other hand Derrick Millar (2000) based on Spada, says that form-focused instruction is one of the trends adult learners prefer, this fact could have oriented some foreign language teachers to adopt that principle when teaching to young learners in a country where English is a foreign language as in Colombia due to the fact that people do not have a context where they can speak in English as target language.

The author wants to explain that the learning process is not linear but is cyclical. Finally, he proposes that the teacher must “teach the language not about the language”

1.3 RATIONALE

In the teaching of a foreign language, it is necessary to take into account different aspects to obtain good results; one of the most difficult aspects to teach and find outcomes has been grammar.

Today, teachers that teach grammar are worried to present a new methodology, they want to offer a new way to learn a foreign language, because some high school students are not pleased due to the fact that they must repeat sentences without understanding their usefulness.

From this perspective, it is important to look for methodological alternatives that could increase students' attention and engagement to learn English without thinking on rules and their correct form but to give more importance to the communicative act. A different alternative for teaching grammar would make

sense of this work, and the central idea is to avoid a system based mainly on rote learning.

The main purpose in this document is to implement a project for teaching grammar, taking pedagogical grammar as a starting point that can be taught through the practice, using deductive method where students receive grammar rules explanations and then they have the opportunity to practice with them; and inductive teaching approach in which students obtain examples of circumstances that contain grammar learning through different activities to permit them to appropriate of the situation, which students will be competent and they can build their own knowledge. Furthermore, the teacher must teach the rules bearing in mind the real use of the language; he/she should clarify the concepts and provide students with plenty of opportunities to practice. Thus, the students should demonstrate and evaluate their own learning process.

The usefulness of this work research is determinant for changing of the traditional scheme. Also, it is important to promote cooperative work, the fact that work in group offers different opportunities the students improvement, these goals are represented in the develop of discursive skills through speaking acts that take place in the classroom and include different activities that help to strengthen oral production.

As a consequence of the previous information, a general objective has been stated thinking on students' necessities.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 General Objective

To design and implement a contextualized classroom project (based on Communicative Language Teaching) to promote grammar learning through the development of oral production in students of English at a public school in Bogotá.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

- To review literature about grammar teaching and the steps to develop oral discourse.
- To design a project with specific tasks to stimulate learning grammar in function of the communicative skill, and to plan activities to increase students' confidence and security through project work.
- To apply sequence of activities.
- To open spaces where students can give their points of view for improving their speech as a methodological tool in grammar teaching.

In this chapter, main statements on the problematic situation and the research project have been presented. The author of this work wanted to describe the context of the problematic situation, and she has proposed a project to motivate students through the tasks related to the creations, the develop and the history of their own music band and recreate a context where students can feel the necessity to communicate in English to improve oral skills and learning grammar.

The theoretical support of this research permits to understand different aspects of teaching grammar as well as competences which will be discussed in the following chapter; then, the topics related to the concepts of competences; and finally, oral production.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The theoretical foundations that support this research proposal cover: the concept of grammar and different types of grammar, communicative competence, grammatical competence, discourse competence, and Communicative Language Teaching.

2.1. A CONCEPT OF GRAMMAR

Through the history of language studies the term grammar has been considered from many different perspectives, most of them associated with the explanation of the system of rules of a given language. Larsen-Freeman (1991) claims that: *“Grammar as forms where characterized by its morphology and syntax alone.”*⁶ That means grammar refers to order or sentence structures. Several authors have studied the forms and rules that explain grammatical categories such as pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and so on. This information was gathered together, and as a consequence teachers have assumed that explanation and practice of those rules are the most important of their goals.

A different grammar conceptualization is provided by Brown (2000). The author states concept of grammar as follows: *“The system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of words in a sentence. Technically,*

⁶ ECKMAN, Fred. Second Language acquisition: Theory and Pedagogy. Laurence Erlbaum. On the teaching and learning of grammar: Challenging the myths. Pp 131

*Grammar refers to sentence-level rules only, and not to rules governing the relationship among sentences, which refer to discourse rules*⁷ This conceptualization includes the main constituents of sentences, morphemes, phonemes, syntactic structures, semantics and the discourse rules. Traditionally, the methodology used in a classroom is through instruction related to complete isolated sentences and their pronunciation, but there are not many opportunities to practice in context.

It is clear that the mentioned author grammar refers to forms and rules. These conceptions permits teachers believe that teaching grammar is teaching the rules and teaching rules generally through explanations and exercises that clearly do not promote communication.

On the other hand, Thornbury declares, *“Grammar is conventionally seen as the study of the syntax and morphology of sentences. Put another way, it is the study of linguistic chains and slots. That is, the study both of the way words are chained together in a particular order, and also of what kinds of words can slot into any one link in the chain.”*⁸ This grammar concept continues associating grammar teaching with structural forms but this idea includes syntax studies that continue with the vision in relation to principles and rules that determining a language related to the form of the words.

In addition, according to Brainy and Quote dictionary on the line, *“Grammar is the science which treats of the principles of language; the study of forms of speech, and their relations to one another; the art concerned with the right use application of the rules of a language, in speaking or writing.”*⁹ Then, it is possible to recognize that the majority of grammar definitions assume the same concept; a great number of grammarians have it defined as a collection of rules that fix the language uses in

⁷ BROWN, Op. cit p 9

⁸ THORNBURY. Op.cit 8

⁹ <http://www.brainyquote.com/words/gr/grammar170191.html>

a false context, because it is important to take into account that language left the laboratory when the rules were grouped and classified to facilitate the learning process but now it has enter to the analysis of the real use.

The grammar trends discussed up to this point are those provided from a linguistic point of view, and from those concepts above it is possible to conclude that there is a grammar definition from syntax views.

There are several examples to include grammar definition when it has been related to sentence order, but now, there is another different thought about it, this is seen from a pedagogical point of view as a means and not as an end; also, context consents to internalize the grammar, for instance Thornbury reinforces: *“Grammar is partly the study of what forms are possible in a language. Grammar has been concerned almost exclusively with analysis at the level of the sentence. Thus a grammar is a description of the rules that govern how language’s sentences are formed.”*¹⁰ When grammar teaching is used as a real way to communicate, it is conceived such as a tool for making meaning, so that it represents the real world with real people and their influence in the learning process.

As a result of these conceptualizations, grammar is assumed as a resource with its use, students can improve their knowledge not only with exercises and charts copied on the board, but also, with the use of natural language; also, passive grammar can be used through projects that permit students to internalize and link together the learning process with the real life.

Once the definition of grammar is stated for this study and has been clarified the discussion turns to the different types of grammar.

¹⁰ THORNBURY. Op.cit p 8

2.2 TYPES OF GRAMMAR

The review of literature carried out has shown the existence of several types of grammar, although for the researcher of this project it was a finding to conclude that the types of grammar could be classified into three categories derived from the science which defines it: Psychology (for example Universal grammar) Linguistics (e.g. Normative, Functional and Descriptive Grammar) or Pedagogy (e.g. Pedagogical Grammar), and that teachers at RFK have assumed the grammar teaching just as the Linguistic study.

2.2.1 Normative Grammar

Most people have suggested, for a long time, that grammar has been the form of codifying the varieties of language, and rules give sense to understand language assumptions because they clarify the function of grammar. Some of these studies have been related to well or not well use of the language, as evidence for this concept, Gramsci (1967) defines normative grammar:

“by reciprocal control, teaching, and 'censorship' which combine to establish a grammatical conformism, i.e. 'norms' and judgments of correctness and incorrectness, these 'spontaneous' expressions of grammatical conformism are necessarily incoherent, interrupted, and limited to social strata, local centers, and so on. Normative grammar always presupposes a historical 'choice', and thus, norms are always acts of cultural-national policy: they are not predictions, but declare intentions. In this way, every grammar is normative, because reflection on language is always born out of political needs).¹¹

¹¹ <http://www.nielsheisloot.nl/tekst/1989/50.htm>

He set up that rules are the way to learn a language, but the rules are seen as traditional principles, also, rules are related to prescription, their use is associated with isolated sentences, considering that they are arbitraries and liable to change, because they contribute of rote learning of language, the fact that people know the rule but some of them not apply the rules when they speak. Gramsci also relates normative grammar with the organization, codification and systematization of rules; he was not agreeing to join grammar concept like a logical or natural process to learn a language.

Gramsci's point of view is similar to Saussure and his Structural Grammar; those studies were the bases for language teaching. Sentence structure was the most important aspect, and they conceive that language is linear, but these theories provided opportunities to improve the research about grammar teaching, such as Chomskyan Universal Grammar.

2.2.2 Universal Grammar

Universal Grammar is related to the genetic components of the language. Chomsky established a relation between knowledge and the brain; he pointed out that knowledge of language does not vary from one person to another because the human being has a connection with an intricate computational system in the brain hemispheres to provide specific results. Furthermore this human capacity permits to learn another language because there are many similar characteristics. One of the main distinctive perceptions is *"The basic concept is that the language is knowledge stored in the mind. This knowledge consists of principles that do not vary from one person to another and parameter setting that vary according to the*

*particular language that the person knows.*¹² Chomsky states that the human mind cannot build language principles and parameters; these principles are fixed in all human brains, for instance a person who knows Spanish and other who knows English shares the same language principles because all languages have structures, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and many grammatical categories that permits learn it in the same way.

For many years Chomskyan theory has been criticized because he has connected the learning of the language with the central aspect of grammar and it has forgotten that grammar is learned through other mental process, there are many language structures that are different; this is the case when a Spanish learner studies English, he starts with the parameter of the first language (Spanish) instead of the original state (English) several times the results are not successful.

Cook (1990) summaries the implication about Universal Grammar for language teaching as: *“Universal grammar is a reminder of the cognitive nature of language: foreign language learning is the creation of language knowledge in the mind as well as the creation of the ability to interact with other people.”*¹³ A further consequence of Universal Grammar studies, many authors have explored the arguments against it and new approaches have born to understand grammar; hence as a reaction of this proposal descriptive grammar represented a new way to teach grammar.

Universal grammar also tends to idealize languages. However it fails to remember the relationship between language uses and how grammar is processed, and this theory has not mentioned anything about communicative competence, pragmatic competence and production skill.

¹² ODLIN, Tarence. 1994. Perspectives on pedagogical grammar. Cambridge University Press. Page 3

¹³ ODLIN Op cit, pp 45

2.2.3 Descriptive Grammar

Most people have suggested that grammar is associated with structures, organization, verbs and rules that codify different varieties of languages. That is sometimes correct because this is the concept of prescriptive grammar; however is important to include the development of the knowledge about language and their use in real contexts; consequently, linguists provide more details through the descriptive grammar of a language: *“Consists of accounts of not only syntax and morphology but also phonetics and phonology, as well as semantics and/or lexis (vocabulary). Descriptive grammarians consider many structures that prescriptive grammarians either ignore; descriptive grammarians often focus on nonstandard dialects.”*¹⁴

From this concept is possible to understand that grammar not only includes forms and structures related to well form, but it also incorporates real uses with a basis meaning focus. Descriptive grammar also provides details about current dialects and presents patterns of language; it is linked to sociolinguistic and taking into account contemporary uses in real life.

In fact, descriptive grammar is the base of the communicative approach because its goal is associated with the parameters uses, *“descriptive grammar looks at the way a language is actually used by its speakers and then attempts to analyze it and formulate rules about the structure. Descriptive grammar does not deal with what is good or bad language use; forms and structures that might not be used by speakers of Standard English would be regarded as valid and included. It is a grammar based on the way a language actually is and not how some think it should be.”*¹⁵ This concept points out that language description make allowance for linguistic phenomena, the fact that establishes the relation between speakers and

¹⁴ Ibid pp 5

¹⁵ <http://www.english-for-students.com/Descriptive-and-Prescriptive.html>

uses. Descriptive grammar could contribute to build rules with students, and it accepts multi-competence as part of the learning process.

In consequence, descriptive grammar gives information about an extensive range of structures and uses in a language but it does not say anything about acquisition, direct access, indirect access, input, output and the importance of vocabulary.

From the learners' perspective, several important aspects should be included about learning grammar; as result to link different strategies, is necessary to emerge the successful learning of grammar, seen as a real system of communication that combine linguistic competences with language performance.

2.2.4 Functional Grammar

From discussions about grammar teaching new point of view were born. First, Praguean Functionalism School (1974), that worked focuses on perspective and functional sentence associated to the pragmatic position and description of different interactions with the syntax, voice and intonation.

Second, Simon Dik (1997), developed the theory of Functional Grammar that means the organization of natural language, he also proposed two types of paradigms: formal paradigm linked to grammar as a set of formal rules that could be only applied separately the meanings and uses. Dik proposed that Functional paradigm is connected with language uses, *“A language is in the first place conceptualized as an instrument of social interaction among human beings, used with the intention of establishing communicative relationships. Within this paradigm one attempt to reveal the instrumentality of language with respect to what people*

do and achieve with it in social interaction."¹⁶ He wanted to explain the relevance of language use, taking into account the human being and his main capacity to communicate ideas to survive and the necessity to organize grammar as a part of the real life in terms of functionality, because functional paradigm is an integrate part of human reality. Dik also pointed out the importance to comprehend the language to arrive the rule.

Third, Halliday (2003) described in his theory of Systemic Grammar that humans have a system of meanings as a part of the use of language. "*A language is a system of meaning, a semiotic system, and Semiotic*" means "*having to do with meaning*". *Human beings use numerous semiotic systems, some simple and others very complex. A language is almost certainly the most complicated semiotic system we have; it is also a very fuzzy one, both in the sense that its own limits are unclear and in the sense that its internal organization is full of indeterminacy.*"¹⁷ He proposed that semiotic is an action form that permits to identify the context which the language should be understood, because it is a powerful tool to internalize the communicative process. In human beings, language permits to recognize different types of signs that can be organized as syntagmatic, realizational, stratificational and paradigmatic complexities in the brain to produce verbal interactions.

According to Campbell (1996), "*Functional grammar emphasizes the ways in which language functions to assist meaning, but also relies upon knowledge, understanding and the use of terms of traditional grammar.*"¹⁸ The author considers grammar as a vehicle to use language; the central idea is to employ grammatical knowledge in pragmatic the fact that speaker are immersed in grammar way to achieve interaction competence avoided the use of conventional grammar explanation.

¹⁶ BUTLER Christopher Structure and function. Cambridge university press. 2003 pp 451

¹⁷ HALLIDAY, Michael A.K. On languages and linguistics. British Library. 2003. Pp 2

¹⁸ CAMPBELL Rod and RYLES Graham. Grammar in its place. Pp 98

The study of grammar, bear in mind its functionality and this has been a big step to comprehend the real sense of learning a language; human beings have the necessity to interact and develop the ability to make decisions, to be autonomous and act according to real interests and necessities.

As a consequence, one of the main ideas supporting this project is working with functional grammar, because its parameters are analogous to communication and discourse.

So, functional grammar opens a new perspective teaching grammar in real situations because this proposal argues that language exists in context. Nevertheless, acquiring the grammatical system is important in communicative act because learners' must express their ideas taking into account their grammatical knowledge, the language use permits that rule will be internalized. So, clearly it is necessary to introduce a type of teaching grammar to the communicative age, such as Pedagogical Grammar.

2.2.5 Pedagogical Grammar

Some particular types of grammar have been seen in this framework; in addition, each one of them has contributed to improve the grammar knowledge. However, no one of them can operate satisfactorily alone.

The most recent studies about teaching grammar present a "Pedagogical Grammar" that does not follow a particular grammatical theory because it uses the main characteristics of all them to help teachers to improve the teaching process.

According to Nunan (1991) *"Pedagogical approach derived from functional model of linguistics also seeks to show learners how language differs according to the*

context in which it is produced, the purposes for which it is produced, and the audience to which it is addressed"¹⁹ The author purposed a new way to reflect in front of teaching grammar, taking into account the necessity to give students the opportunity to use English with a variety of situations in several contexts..

Teaching and learning grammar is a broad process, and school plays an important role because teachers need to innovate, design new materials adapted for students' necessities, create contexts that could promote communication and motivate students to learn English and its grammar.

So, to work with pedagogical grammar in the teaching process makes the difference between classical method, teaching tendencies the fact that perspective allows to develop creativity, and students can interact according to the situations that the teacher designs for improving the knowledge to communicate.

Now, a new topic about competences will be introduced: communicative and grammar competences to show and determinate the students' capacities.

Grammar is pivoted knowledge; any student of a foreign language needs to master in order to demonstrate his/her communicative competence. This concept is presented as a part of the theoretical framework for this research project.

2.3. ABOUT COMPETENCES

The education system in Colombia includes the competences as an important part for integrating learning process. In fact, a competence refers to a group of knowledge, skills, abilities, and procedures for identifying and assessing results of

¹⁹ NUNAN David, Language teaching methodology, pp 152

experience; also, a competence includes personal values, motivation and behavior to permit the individualization of the result of learning.

In case of English the objective is developing the communicative competence, and the main goal in this project is develop grammar competence.

2.3.1 Communicative Competence

Language is used to communicate; through language human beings give sense to their lives, because is an instrument that permits to describe the real life, and speak about feelings; also, in the learning process for a foreign language, is necessary that students be able to develop interaction to communicate their ideas, and they can assimilate the real use of the language.

Hymes (1972) defines “*Communicative competence not only as inherent grammatical competence but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations.*”²⁰ The author sets up his notion about competence based in Chomsky according to the performance concept.

According to the Common European framework, “*Communicative language competence can be considered as comprising several components: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. Linguistic competences include lexical, phonological, syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of the language system. Sociolinguistic competences refer to the sociocultural conditions of language use. Pragmatic competences are concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources.*”²¹ This conceptualization points out the most important elements to constitute the discourse such as linguistic competence that refers to the knowledge about formal uses of the language; sociolinguistic competence that concerns knowledge in relation to social and cultural situations, taking into account dialects

²⁰ <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:hNdVYJpJN0wJ:hrcak.srce.hr/file/42651+hymes+1972>

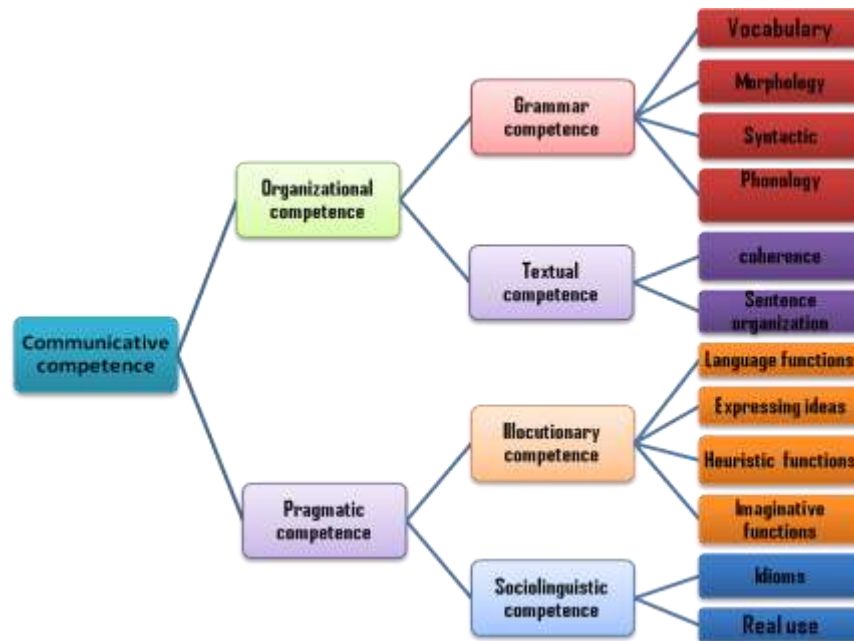
²¹ Common European Framework of reference for languages. Page 13

and real uses of the language in real contexts. In addition, the Pragmatic competence associated with the discourse and speech functions.

Consequently, language is action and its real use permits to analyze the diversity that exists in a world that demands communications as a form to exist.

In the attempt to complete the information related to communicative competence, Bachman and Palmer's model, (1990) introduced that, "*Organizational knowledge is composed of abilities engaged in control over formal language structures, of grammatical and textual knowledge. They enable recognition and production of texts, knowledge of cohesion ways of marking semantics relationships among two or more sentences in a written text or conversational organization.*"²² The author proposed that communication has different components that permit to understand the function of language; he pointed out that this is classified in organizational competence and pragmatic competence. Organizational competence includes grammar and textual ability; and pragmatic skill includes illocutionary and sociolinguistic ability. These parameters are illustrated below:

²² BACHMAN, Lyle. *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford University Press. P 9



Graphic 1: Communicative competence Taken from Bachman (1990)

Consequently, human beings act according to they are, communication is their priority; besides, language' function is real use in real contexts, seen as a group of behavior resources with a genuine meaning.

To develop the communicative competence in the foreign language permits to arrive the grammatical competence that is going presented below.

2.3.2. Grammatical Competence

Grammatical competence is the aptitude to recognize and produce grammatical structures of a language and to use them effectively in communication. According to Swain and Canale (1990), *“Grammatical competence includes knowledge of*

*phonology, orthography, vocabulary, word formation and sentence formation.*²³

The authors set out that of developing grammar competence is linked to the knowledge of the rules bear in mind that this must be concrete, non-technical, simple, close to the real use and relevant.

On the other hand, rules are not the only form to develop grammar competence; context plays an important role of acquiring real knowledge. David Nunan (1995) sets out: *“Pedagogical grammar are indented to provide the procedures through which learners attain mastery, whether and to what extent they should undertake exercises with a deliberate focus on form, or whether they should pick up the grammar in the process of meaning interaction.”*²⁴ This position suggests to work with pedagogical grammar permits to introduce a grammar topic connected with a functional perception to internalize the input and build meaning.

2.3.3 Discourse competence

Human beings pass on and interpret meanings. Language is the form to transmit them because is the way to communicate and express emotions and feelings. The speaker feels the necessity to express his ideas and give them significance; for instance, Swain and Canale (1990) proposed that students should develop a discourse competence that *“is related to the learner’s mastery of understanding and producing text in the models of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It deals with cohesion and coherence in different types of texts.”*²⁵ The authors point out that this competence is linked with the capacity of generating a type of text and must show soundness in the real use of the language and its function.

²³ PETERWAGNER Reinhold. What is the matter with communicative competence? Page 13

²⁴ NUNAN. Op.cit, p 152

²⁵ REINHOLD Peterwagner. What is the matter with communicative competence? Page 13

In the same way, the context in which each situation occurs is important to analyze. The fact that words do not have the same meaning under different circumstances, the main idea not only is to interpret or translate definitions but understand the sense of the communicative act, because the context influences interpretation.

Similarly, he points out that there is a difference between telling something and making sense because people ask questions, give orders, make promises, and the person can link together these activities according to the context. Searle (1969) makes a classification associated with the three speech acts: Firstly, "*Locutionary act: saying something with a certain meaning in traditional sense. This may not constitute a speech act.*"²⁶ This act is linked with the sort of propositional act permitting to refer something. Secondly, "*Illocutionary act: the performance of an act in saying something.*"²⁷ When a person states, asks, makes promises; this is the form how speaker tells anything, and it is necessary to keep a tally of intonation, syntax and predicates. Lastly, "*Perlocutionary acts: Speech acts that have an effect on the feelings, thoughts or actions of either the speaker or the listener. In other words, they seek to change minds!*"²⁸ This act is associated with the external feeling of the listener; this is the effect cause in others, the consequence of a speech act.

In brief, Searle suggests that speaking a language is performing speech acts, acts that influence not only the person who wants to communicate but the listeners also; when the listener listens to a language and he or she does not have enough vocabulary to understand what it means, there is a barrier that limits the use of the language, so it is relevant to create or design an appropriate context to develop communication.

²⁶ http://changingminds.org/explanations/theories/speech_act.htm

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid

Furthermore, according to Yule (1985), *“the word discourse is usually defined as language beyond the sentence.”*²⁹ The author wants to show the importance to analyze the language in depth, linking text and conversation because the real use of language is an intentional behavior, talking and performing acts according to the rules.

In consequence, when somebody speaks about discourse many people think that this subject is related to politics, but it goes beyond rules analyze; discourse is the use of language with a communicative purpose permitting it to evaluate extra-linguistics acts such as gestures, attitudes and different words, the fact that the most important is to know the context and the adequacy of grammatical sequences.

2.4 COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

A pedagogical grammar depends on the presuppositions about the relationship between use and knowledge of the language, these presuppositions change gradually according to time, and the demand for a relevant teaching methodology came up with the Communicative Language Teaching that Richards (2006) defines as *“Communicative Language Teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teacher and learners in the classroom.”*³⁰ The author proposes that teaching of language must include different purposes and functions according to the settings and the

²⁹ REINHOLD, Op. cit. p 15

³⁰ RICHARDS, Jack. Communicative Language Teaching Today. PDF. 2006. Pp 2

participants with a great variety of activities that permits them to include their needs and interests connecting with their real life.

In front of this concept, the role of the teacher must be a person who promotes the communication process, participants' task; needs analysis, counselor, negotiator, and process manager. Moreover, teacher should guide their group of learners because he/she is a model for correct speech and writing with the responsibility of making students produce to the fact that teacher must facilitate language learning.

According to Richards (2006) the principles of PPP lesson integrates "**Presentation:** the new grammar structure is presented. The teacher explains the structure and checks students' comprehension on it. **Practice:** Students practice using the new structure in a controlled context, through substitution exercises. **Production:** Students practice using the new structure in a context using their own content of information, in order to develop fluency with the new pattern"³¹ Richards sets up that grammar-based methodologies have given way to functional and skill-based teaching, this assumptions permits understand that students can relate their own needs with their performance in front of the learning process.

As a conclusion, today, Communicative Language Teaching is maybe one the most known and used approach because it provides different kinds of opportunities for students and permit them to relate to their lives and interests.

In this chapter, an account of the main topics was made and has permitted to analyze the way that the author wants to arrive at teaching grammar path. It has looked briefly at what grammar is, the type of grammar, competences and Communicative Language Teaching. This was a further study of some theories that

³¹ RICHARDS, Op.cit. pp. 8

have changed the concept of language uses, because languages are alive and subject to change.

In the next chapter we will address the path to follow for the implementation this work, research method, population; instruments of data collection, procedures, data analysis and proposal are presented.

2. RESEACH DESIGN

3.1 METHOD

The method followed for this project is action research. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) define this method: “*Action research is a form of collective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationally and justice of own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out.*”³², The authors set out the importance of establishing a good relationship between teaching and action research participants.

This project is a social practice that wants to improve the procedures in teaching grammar and looks for a change in teachers’ beliefs. This method follows a spiral improvement in the planning process and constant reflections; moreover and allows the researcher is a participant included in the research.

Another important reason for working with this method is that action research permits us to understand, improve and reform the practice activities, because it is a systematic study, and allows individuals changes, it requires innovation, taking into account the context, practitioners, participants and school.

³² COHEN, Louis. And MANION, Lawrence. Research methods in Education. Pp 297

3.2 SETTING: DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT (SCHOOL CONTEXT)

3.2.1 Universe:

The research project was carried out with students at the Robert F. Kennedy School.

Population:

From the 8th graders at Robert F. Kennedy School 801 grader was chosen.

3.2.2 Sample: 12 Students of 801 graders

There were three groups of 8th courses, from the 801 were selected at randomly twelve students as sample and they were the 33% of students of total of the course.

There were seven boys and six girls, they were between twelve (12) and fifteen (15) years old, they come from different neighborhoods close to the school; eleven of them were stratum three and one of them is stratum two.

Four students have studied at the Robert F. Kennedy school for eight years, one for seven years, one for five years, one four years, one for three years, three for two years, and one for one year. This means they have had very different experiences related to the English learning process.

Most of them had taken three hours per week of English classes.

They are represented according to the twelve first letters of the alphabet like that:

Student 1 has been represented by the letter A, the student 2 has been represented by letter B, and so on until student 12, represented by letter M.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

- **Participant observation**

One of the most important tools in the research process has been the observation, because it not only permits the researcher to perceive but also to measure students' proficiency according to their performance.

In this project a participant observation was done; the author (researcher) took a particular population (801) and she observed the most relevant aspects related to students' behavior.

- **Diagnostic test**

This instrument of data collection was used with the intention to know the English grammar level that students had at the beginning of the applications, through a traditional test.

- **Survey**

Three surveys were done; students answered questions related to the importance of grammar from their perspectives.

- **The proposal about the project, the lesson plans and the reflective procedures**

The proposal about the project work is an ideal system for teaching; the fact that this is an integrated form to include a series of activities that give sense to learning process in a natural way, how it promote students' independence and their necessity of speaking in English. Then, eight lesson plans had been designed,

that they were adapted according to the reflection made during the research process.

- **Diary: Teaching logs**

Teaching logs are a mode of recording data. Hancock and Settle (1990) designed a special format that describes some relevant points in research process. The model presented for this work had had different changes according to special categories that were necessities to classify information related to learning grammar.

It consists of taking field notes about each class and particular situation about grammar that students acquire in their learning process.

- **Students' and teachers' interviews**

Some interviews for students and teacher were done during the project because they are the participants in this work research.

- **Oral tests**

Different kinds of oral test were done; the students were evaluated when they presented their oral productions activities during the process.

- **Students' artifacts**

The students' artifacts are the evidence of students' performance; some of them were writing exercises, and others were video recorder or tape recorder.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Analysis

The problematic situation of this project was identified with a participant observation; this examination had specific categories to evaluate according to the group, number of students, quantity of boys and girls, distribution of students in the classroom, materials, verbal and non verbal communication, students' attitudes, attention, and group description.

In fact, with this observation a problem was found, students did not pay attention when the teacher was explaining the structures of sentences on the board, nobody was interested and they lost enthusiasm, they did not like the explanations about rules; they preferred to have fun with different kinds of games because they said that they did not understand the patterns.

Taking into account the previous information, a traditional diagnostic test was prepared and applied to the students. According to this evaluation, the results about grammar were: The population was 38 students. 21% passed the text with not very high note, and 79% failed it.

These results showed that student could not internalize grammar knowledge; it is possible that they knew the rule but they did not how it works. Furthermore, make a change in teaching grammar is necessary to give opportunities to the students practice several times, as well as the form of evaluate them; and to design contextualized activities could help to improve students' learning. (Appendix C)

Consequently, the results of grammar test promoted a survey that was done with the same students, in the first practice semester; with this proposal, three questions were asked and the item number four was related to skills and students preferences. So, the results are presented below,

1. What do you think grammar is useful for?

78% of students wrote: *“grammar is a very important topic for teaching English, the fact that it helps to speak correctly. Furthermore, it is useful when we need to organize sentences; moreover, grammar is an interesting topic because allows to understand different themes seen in class, also grammar is useful for communication and is an important part of language.”* Moreover, they wrote, *“I like grammar, because helps to communicate; in addition, grammar is useful for reading, writing, translating and helps improving speaking skills”*.

2. What kind of activities do you prefer when you learn a foreign language?

90% of students answered, *“Grammar is important when we learn a language; we prefer that teacher teach us grammar through a variety of strategies to increase our motivation, using different games, because teaching grammar should be amusing, with some exercises for writing, reading, speaking, role plays; also, we can see videos and movies, to permit understand English.”*

3. Is grammar important when you learn English?

98% of students wrote, *“grammar is important because is a form to learn English, also is essential because it increase the knowledge;, moreover, it is useful for communication and this is very significant because it allows to know the sentences structures and ideas.”*

4. Organize the topics according to importance when you learn

Skill/place	1	2	3	4	5	6
Vocabulary:	8	4	4	4	0	1
Grammar:	6	3	4	2	2	3
Speaking:	2	5	1	2	2	8
Reading	1	2	3	5	7	2
Listening	4	3	5	1	6	1
Writing	0	3	5	4	3	5

Ranking

1st : Vocabulary

2nd : Grammar

3rd : Listening

4th : Writing

5th : Reading

6th : Speaking

As result, students preferred vocabulary “*they said that vocabulary is so important when they know a foreign language*”. In second place, they chose grammar because they can understand the structures of the sentences. The students gave the third position to listening because they quoted “*We listen to music in English and we want to understand its meaning.*”

Thus, it was concluded, that students thought that grammar is a useful tool in the learning process; also, grammar is an important complement for improving the language' skills the fact that they can understand the language.

On account of this information, during several meetings with the advisor, the author reflected about grammar concepts and how to teach grammar; the tutor wanted to make the researcher reflect upon and promote a change the by breaking her internal system of translating every piece of oral or written discourse and to internalize the English language as she should do with her own students. The fact that that researcher continued planning the activities according to the traditional method and the same proposals, with isolated sentences without context, complete sentences and organizing information based on rules. It is really very difficult, when you are used to translate to feel sure you understand, the change to use the language. It is also difficult, when you have accepted that languages are vehicles for communication, think of and design activities for the English teaching and learning process because for you teaching grammar is just explaining how work and training students through drilling patterns rules. Actually, those reflective acts have allowed me taking a decision: to create and design a contextualized proposal where students may improve their level of language and they must speak in English with the purpose of learning English grammar.

Thus, a project was proposed bearing in mind students likes and personal interests; they chose as main topic "music" to develop during the classes. The researcher based on CLT planned a project with objectives, tasks, and she proposed eight lesson plans that were applied during 16 class sessions. In addition, after each application the teaching logs were filled with detailed information that permitted a reflection session with the tutor, sometimes with the school teacher or with the students and improve the following lesson plan. Moreover, during the process for each activity a personal reflection was done to

improve the students' learning process and to gain personal insights on the teaching process.

In accordance with the process, a survey was planned to ask the English teacher about students' improvement, and her personal reflection about the project implemented in her classroom; she told that *"the project is a good tool for working with students that are interested in learning English, but I prefer to work with the traditional method because I think that it is the way which all of students learn a foreign language."* In addition, she said that *"I have seen that some students are linked with the activities and they have improved their knowledge, but I have observed some students that do nothing."*

As a form to show the process of the data collection analysis it is going to present a specific chart with the categories that the researcher worked during the research process, according to each class observation, teaching logs, teacher and students' survey. The author of this paper classified the information in three special times, first, when the proposal was carried out and students accepted it; second, in the middle of the process and third, at final of the process bearing in mind sample of students.

The triangulation of data registered is presented in the following chart for data analysis of findings. Three moments are reported: the situation at the beginning of the experience, in the middle of it and at the end. The information was collected from the data gathered and reported in the appendixes.

At the beginning of the process

	Categories	Class observation Lesson 1	Teaching logs 1	Teacher's survey	Students' survey
MOTIVATION	Participation	All of students were in agreement with the proposal, some of them wanted to participate.	Eleven of students participated in the activities proposed they were fun with in the class.	The teacher told some (students A, D, F, G, J, L and M) were connected with the activities and they were the participants.	All of sample students were afraid because they told that they did not know how they can speak in English.
	Discipline	The students (B, C, E, G, K) spoke a lot with their partners in Spanish	Nine of students were attentive but four of them (B, G, I, K) stood up and they walked around the class during 15 minutes and the some of their partners were distracted.	Some of students did not want to do anything; four students (B, G, I, K) in all classes had the same attitude.	Student J told that she prefers to work with their partners but they are eight members, and this situation broken their relationship. i
	Performance	Four (A, C, D, M) of student preferred stay in silence	Ten of students preferred that the teacher speak in Spanish because they were bored when they do not understand.	This project is a difficult activity because she did not see how are going the results, and some of students were lost.(C, H, I, K)	Ten students wanted to show good presentation and they planned their activities because they enjoy with the music.
GRAMMAR	Vocabulary	Ten students liked to speak in Spanish, one of them mixed some Spanish word with English words	The majority of students did not have enough English vocabulary, they expressed their ideas in Spanish	Probably, this is a form that students could learn more vocabulary, because they did not spoke in English.	Students (A, C, E, H, I, J, K, M) told that they did not know a lot vocabulary to express their ideas.
	Syntax	Three students (F, G, L) spoke with complete sentences.	One student (B) preferred to write when he wanted to say something and he wrote sentences according to the structure.	Students (B, K) preferred to complete sentence because they won extra points for the final grad	Students (A, C, E, H, I, J, K, M) were worried for making mistakes and they preferred speak in Spanish

	Semantics	One (L) student wanted to clarify his ideas with her hands.	Eleven students wanted to speak in Spanish.	Teacher liked to explain the rule on the board and next students must practice with some exercises in their notebook.	Students did not speak in English because they thought that they spoke not well.
	Discourse	Students still did not produce a discourse.	Students read when they wanted to tell something.	Students have had the opportunity to speak during three minutes about their likes and some of them have done good presentations.	They did not want to speak in English.
CREATIVITY	Creativity	Students	The group of students (A, D, J, M) innovated when they presented their work.	This group of students is calm, but they have wanted to do good things.	The group of students (A, D, J, M) told that they want to design good presentation with colorful posters; they prepared different variety of presentations.

Before to design the project activities the researcher asked and negotiate with the students the main topic related to the proposal, after being presented a variety of topics, students choose music. Then, students and teacher were in agreement with the activities planned because the project purposed was related to stimulate learning grammar in function of the communicative skill.

At the beginning, students A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, were afraid to participate in the class because they did not want to speak in English; however, they accepted to participate in the project.

It is notorious that at this stage students used the mother tongue to answer, the ones who tried to use English made sentences following a structure to be sure of the correct organization.

The middle process

	Categories	Class observation Four lesson	Teaching logs four	Teacher's survey	Students' survey
MOTIVATION	Participation	Students (A, C, D, E, J, K, L, M) increased their participation, they participated without forcing them.	Eleven students participated in all of the activities, but they were fun when one student had to pay a penalty in the warm up.	Students (A, C, D, F, G, J, K, L, M) were motivates to participated.	Two (A, C) students told that they overcome the fear when they participated.
	Discipline	One (B) student stood up some times during the class, but the others were working with their activities.	All of students paid attention and they were sitting down.	Ten of students were paying attention	Eleven students were clam in the classes because they told that they like with the activities.
	Performance	The totally of sample students worked a lot and they showed interest in the class according their attitude in front of each activity.	Eleven students enjoyed with the class.	The students liked English classes because they asked questions about when researcher is going to arrive.	Students (A, D, F, G, J, K, L, M) told that they have learned to work in collaborative groups, but they spoke a lot.
GRAMMAR	Vocabulary	Three (A, J, M) students used some isolated English words when they spoke, related to body parts and hair style vocabulary	Five (A, B, D, F, G) students remember the vocabulary seen in previous classes; they related the accessories with the things that they use.	Some students (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M) known the vocabulary and they related it with their own objects.	Students (A, B, F, G, J, K, L, M) told that they improve their vocabulary.
	Syntax	Four students (B, F, G, K) tried to speak with correct order sentences explaining their personal hair style.	Four (B, F, G, K) students tried to answer questions in English; one student spoke according to the structure SVO.	Teacher told that grammar exercises are necessities because students can understand the language.	Eight (A, B, C, D, F, G, J, K) students told that they improved when they spoke because they learned the vocabulary and they prepared the presentation.

	Semantics	Four students (B, J, K, L) tried to communicate their ideas using their hand to explain the presentation.	The majority of students tried to translate the meanings but they were worried to organize their ideas.	There were two students (A, M) that they have improved their expressions.	Four students (E, H, I, K) preferred to write their presentation in a piece of paper and the read it,
	Discourse	Four students (E, H, I, K) wrote their presentation in a piece of paper and they read aloud.	One (G) student presented his own hairstyle without read and he tried to speak fluently.	Two (F, G) students can be improve the discourse with the time	Three (L, K, M) students were calm and they could show their presentation and they communicate their ideas.
CREATIVITY	Creativity	All of sample students design their personal style according to the music band; they use a variety of colors and different kinds of hair style.	All of students were creative people, some of them surprised the teacher because the draw very well, and they expressed their wishes related to the project.	Teacher told that some (A, B, D, J, K, M) students surprised her because she did not know students abilities.	Eleven students wanted to paste their final works in the classroom' wall.

The design of the activities permitted to increase students' confidence and security through different opportunities that improve their grammar knowledge. They participated several times because they overcome their fear. In addition, students were interested during the classes because they worked hard and they wanted to present their work in front of their group of partners.

The sequence of activities application has been useful because student connected and related to their likes and dislikes about music, they were motivated to the fact that they could chose the song; also, they planned the band activities such as fashion, hair style, accessories, band's activities and so on, those series permitted students to work for preparing an end presentation.

At this stage some students continued writing in Spanish what they wanted to express and then translated into English. The titular teacher insisted in the need on

drilling and providing classical exercises. But oral production show up in some students even if accuracy was not present.

The end work and final presentation

	Categories	Class observation final lesson	Teaching logs final	Teacher's survey Appendix F	Students' survey Appendix G
MOTIVATION	Participation	All of student participated in the activities.	Students preferred participated in warm up activities.	Some (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M) student get involved into the project	Ten (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M) students told that they lost their fear when they speak in English.
	Discipline	One (H) student did not want to do anything.	All of students were wise listening to their partners.	Some students (H, I) did not do anything.	Eleven of sample students told that The activities proposed were different and students told that they were interested in them.
	Performance	Eleven students enjoyed with the class, and they showed interest with the activities.	Ten students showed interest in the English class the fact that they participated in all the activities.	Some students like (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M) the English class and they were involved with the activities.	Students (A, D, F, J, L) told that they like the classes because they were dynamic.
GRAMMAR	Vocabulary	Nine students (A, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M) tried to speak with some isolated words; they still mixed Spanish with English words.	The majority of students use the vocabulary seen through the English classes when they spoke.	Some of students (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M) improve their vocabulary.	Student (A, J, M) We improved our vocabulary.
	Syntax	Nine students (A, D, E, F, G, J, K, L, M) tried to speak in English without worrying in structures.	The students planned their presentation and they showed that they were clam when they presented their end work.	Grammar explanations and exercises are good to involve students in the activities.	One (B) student prefers activities such as complete sentences. Eleven students told that the activities permit them express their ideas without

					thinking in structure sentences.
	Semantics	All of students communicate their ideas because they planned their presentation.	Students (A, D, F, G, J, K, L, M) wanted that their partners understand their presentations and they uses different kind of expressions to communicate their thoughts.	Students can improve their English level through exercises.	Students (D, E, G) told that the activities helped us to communicate with their partners and work in collaborative groups.
	Discourse	Eight students (A, B, D, F, G, J, L, and M) presented their band in front of his partners they spoke well.	Students purposes were to show their bands successful and they prepare the discourse that a manager of band had to present in front of their partner.	Eight students (A, B, D, F, G, J, L, M) improved their discourse.	Students (B, D, K) told that grammar is important because they can ask question and it is necessary when they want to communicate with their partners.
CREATIVITY	Creativity	All of the students showed their presentations, they planned the activities that they band did, some of them provided and made their own instruments and they played them.	Some groups of students (A, B, D, G, J) planned their presentations, they designed their band's instruments, and some others brought real guitars, some of them dressed up.	Teacher things that work with projects is so hard but they permit that some students can show their abilities.	Students (A, C, D, E, F, G, J, K, M) told that they made diverse activities during the English class and they were motivated to create different things that another subject does not include.

The variety of activities allowed opening spaces where students had the opportunity to express their points of view for improving their speech and oral production.

At the end of the process, students were pleased with their presentation, they enjoyed with the activities because they had the goal to present their bands, their costumes and their songs, and the main aim of the researcher was that they speak without worrying about structures using their internal grammar, this goal was achieved with the majority of students. Although, grammar accuracy and learning

were not possible to reach, probably because students need more opportunities to practice and more time to internalize grammar rules.

Furthermore, a survey was answered by the students, they told that grammar permits to communicate and express their ideas, improve the knowledge about English vocabulary and learn to speak in English. (Appendix G)

4.2 PROCEDURES

The development of the research proposal followed the action research method; it began with a participant observation done with the aim to identify students' social interactions, group conditions and particular characteristics of them. With this observation, a problem about some attitudes towards grammar teaching was identified. Students did not pay attention to the explanations of the teacher on the board and they looked for several excuses when teacher started to talk about grammar rules. (Appendix A)

“Some students drew on sheets, some of them look through the window, and others work with the activities proposed. They took snacks; some were chatting and sharing with their partners. Some others were listening to music to their cell phones.”³³

The results of the observation led to risk a conclusion; students got bored in the class due to the methodology of teaching grammar that the teacher has implemented during his/her explanations did not have an important context for them. To validate this inference, a grammar test was applied with the purpose to identify the level of proficiency of students on grammar topics. The design of this grammar evaluation was planned as traditional written test with exercises such as,

³³ Attitudes or activities that students did while the class was progressing and the teacher began to explain a grammar point

find the correct word according to the verb to be, organize sentences, answer and ask questions and fill the blanks according to the verb in brackets. (Appendix B).

The next step was to identify students' perceptions about grammar. A survey concerning grammar and its significance was made with the aim to understand students' thought; the survey had four questions, and students answered them and classify some topics according their own interests. The results show that students gave first place to vocabulary and second to the grammar, because they thought that grammar allow them to understand a language. (Appendix D)

With the results, several reflective meetings were programmed and the decision was to design and plan a project with the goal of recreating a context to promote oral interaction for improving students' grammar knowledge. Next, this project was discussed with the students of Robert F. Kennedy School. (Appendix E). At once the importance of students' projects

The project is related to the learning process, it permits students to create a series of activities for improving foreign language use in the classroom. It requires time because it needs preparatory tasks during the learning period; besides, it motivates students to develop skills and it avoids rote learning the fact that the topics are in agreement with the students' interests and promote team work. Another important situation is that with the project is possible to integrate different kinds of intelligences.³⁴

Then, the project was designed based on a series of tasks that permitted students to know different kinds of abilities that students have. Thereupon, the selection of the topics was made, and eight lesson plans were organized with the activities to apply during each class, these actions were evaluated, redesigned according to the reflections done after each class; they permit the researcher to modify the lesson plans and the applications.

³⁴ Project: a music band.

Later, a format about recording data was designed considering the model of the teaching logs with specific categories related to the project, student motivation, grammar development, creativity, and personal reflection after each class. A model is presented in (Appendix F). The concept about teaching logs is presented below:

Hancock and Settle (1990) designed an interesting format, they called it a "Single lesson time-line record sheet, it consists of some administrative details, followed by some notes made before the lesson on objectives, outcomes and notes/points for attention."³⁵

The following step was a survey to the main teacher; the idea of that questionnaire was to analyze students' improvement and evaluate positive and negative points of view related to their learning process. The survey is presented in (Appendix G).

Lastly, an interview was done with the sample (12) students; they answered four questions associated to the project and their own learning process, the majority of them thought that the activities were interesting tools to learn English, and they said that they enjoyed the English class, but there is a student that preferred other kinds of activities such as complete sentences because he needed to know the rule to learn English. In addition, they spoke about grammar activities and their preferences related to them. This information was registered in (Appendix H.)

³⁵ WALLACE, Michael. Action Research for Language Teachers. Cambridge. 1998 pp 59

Reflecting on the research question How to design and implement a contextualized grammar project about students' interest which permits to develop oral production in students of 8th grade? It was possible for the researcher to establish that project work is an effective mean for the teaching of English as a foreign language to high school adolescents in public schools if some considerations are kept.

The topic of the project should be discussed with the group of students, the objectives and products should respond to students interests and needs, the responsibilities should be assigned and accepted by students and teacher; furthermore a selection of graduated contents about language function and language forms should be selected and the design of the lesson plans with specific task was applied and students approved and developed the proposal planned with an end presentation. All those steps should be mediating by constant observation, reflection, negotiation and redesign as a part of the teacher role.

5. PROPOSAL AND FINDINGS

5.1 PROPOSAL

PROJECT: A MUSIC BAND

PRESENTATION

This is the proposal for working with students of eight first grades at Robert F. Kennedy School; according to a general objective, to design and to create a context in which students develop oral discourse and internalize grammar. A sequence of activities will be presented, that includes the creation of a music band.

First of all, it is necessary to define project according to Haines (1995) *“In the context of language learning, projects are multi-skill activities focusing on topics or themes rather than on specific language targets. Of crucial importance is the part which the students themselves play in the initial choice of subject matter and in the decisions related to appropriate working, methods, the project timetable and the eventual “end product”*”³⁶ as Haines points out, the project is related to the learning process and permits teachers to create a series of activities for improving foreign language used in the classroom. It requires time because needs a preparatory tasks during the learning period; Furthermore, to work with projects motivates students to develop the communicative skills and projects help to avoid rote learning the fact that the topics are planned thinking in students’ interests and promote team work. Another important situation is that the projects permit teacher to work and plan activities for developing different kinds of intelligences.

³⁶ HEARN, Izabella. *Didàctica del anglès*. Pearson. 2003, pp 185

Projects are communicative tasks where students can use their capacities and knowledge, using language as a means and not as an end.

Second, this project contains different kinds of elements that motivate students to participate because it refers to music, and the majority of them like listening to music. It is also related to the development of functional grammar with a deductive method, and it provides tools for the communication because the students need enough information that it improves their oral discourse.

In addition, eight activities are presented in lesson plans; each of them has a lesson topic, date, objective, grammar topic step, and the habitual procedures according to the English classes.

There are forty (40) students in the class, and each one has his personal activity in this project.

Objectives:

General:

To give students the opportunity to integrate English class with their real life and their interests through a series of activities to help students internalize grammar.

Specific objectives:

1. To present a sequence of activities to motivate students to participate in the project.
2. To organize students in groups for forming a music band.
3. To work orderly in the process in eight lessons.
4. To introduce grammar teaching as a resource in this process.
5. To motivate students develop oral discourse.

Input:

The information is linked with students' necessities; the activities were planned as a sequence, all of them have feedback and they permit students link them one by one. Each activity provides linguistic items, and their content was related to the Colombian' culture and students interests.

Students and teacher:

The main purpose of this project is motivating students to participate in the activities the fact that they are the focus in this work and the idea is to improve their learning grammar without thinking about rules when they want to communicate something. And the role of teacher should be the guide.

Outcome:

This project includes a series of tasks that permit students to arrive to the end work. The proposal pretends that student present their music band as if they were in a real concert, they have to present the band, sing a song, and play the instruments and prepare a tour.

Finally, the eight lesson plans are going to present above according to the proposal:

5.2 Lesson plans and findings

1 st session Music band			
Lesson topic: How create a music band		Date: August 10th, 2011	
Objective: <i>To create a music band to motivate students to speak about their own bands.</i>			
Grammar topic: likes and dislikes, asking questions.			
Warm up	15	The students must repeat the tongue twister.	Betty bought butter but the butter was bitter, so Betty bought better butter to make the bitter butter better.
Presentation	20	To activate previous knowledge with questions about likes and dislikes.	The students must work in pairs, they ask questions about their likes and dislikes about music.
Practice	40	To gather information about their musical preferences.	Present a rock band with the main characteristics: Name, Origin, genre, years active, members, and website. Next, the student must organize their own bands.
Production	15	To talk about their music band.	Students must present their bands in front of their partners.
Assessment: Review how students ask and answer questions			

 **First lesson plan:**

Personal reflections:

The students accepted the proposal about the music band project, they were motivated to participate, they organized the groups and the majority of them wanted to show a good presentation. (Appendix J)

Activities' redesign:

- To design a chart with categories related to motivation: participation, discipline, performance; grammar: vocabulary, syntax, semantics and discourse; and creativity, taking into account students' samples.

- To create activities thinking in the students.
- To increase students' motivation through grammar games.
- To get feedback in each class to activate knowledge related to the previous class.

Grammar implications: Simple present: the use of the vocabulary was poor because students did not want to speak in English; they preferred to speak in Spanish all time. Some students tried to speak with organized sentences, and they wanted to communicate with non verbal expressions.

2nd session To organize a music band			
Lesson topic: My own band		Date: August 17th, 2011	
Objective: To speak about band activities and practice.			
Grammar topic: subject pronouns and possessive adjectives, Simple present			
Warm up	10	Get feed back	Do you like...
Presentation	15	Look for information about the genre and choose a song.	The students must present their bands.
Practice	40	Prepare a short presentation in front of their partners	To organize music bands in groups to organize their agenda and the activities that they usually do in their practice, such chat with their fans, sign autographs and so on.
Production	25	Present bands' activities	Students must present their own agenda of activities.
Assessment: <i>How students communicate their ideas when they are speaking about band' routines</i>			

Second lesson plan

Personal reflection:

The students were shy because they did not have enough vocabulary for their presentations; however, the majority of them participated in the activity; also, they did not understand when the teacher spoke in English, they preferred that the teacher to speak in Spanish, and I also noticed that the time was enough.

The main teacher told researcher that this activity was difficult because she had not seen the results, and some of students were lost. She thought that maybe the results will be shown when she through the time; she believed that the grammar explanations are needed. According to her point of view, a personal question emerges in this class: How effective are grammar classes and grammatical explanation for adolescents to learn a foreign language?

Activities redesign:

- To design activities that improve oral discourse and include the functions of the language
- To speak with cognate words while students acquire more vocabulary to understand.

Grammar implications: Likes and dislikes. Some students tried to communicate their preferences related to music in English, they spoke with isolated words.

3rd session. Band description (clothes)			
Lesson topic: Urban tribes' styles		Date: August 24th, 2011	
Objective: To do a presentation related the style and genre			
Grammar topic: Simple present, clothes vocabulary			
Warm up	10	Relate personal accessories with their own bands.	Students must match drawings about accessories with their respective word
Presentation	15	Look for information refers to tendencies.	Students will read some information about urban tribes and clothing tendencies.
Practice	40	To contextualize band styles.	To design a poster with information about their clothes according to the music genre, and describe their personal style.
Production	25	To present their band' style	Students must present their bands in stands speaking about their style.
<i>Assessment: How students give information about themselves and their partners.</i>			

Third lesson plan

Advisor observation

The advisor told the researcher that is important to take into account some aspect to help students understand grammar.

She thinks that is important to talk about the objectives when a class starts because students can know the goals of the class and they find sense to the things that they do. Also, varying the warm up is crucial, because it requires short activities that involve students the fact that some of them did not want to participate. Furthermore, each student must have their own material when the teacher distributes it. When students speak the teacher must pay attention to the students' mistakes because they are a good tool of learning, errors are part of the teaching process to carry out to the student to correct themselves; in addition, to

design activities that permit students to interact and to communicate, so, when students work in group each one needs to have his/her own activity each student needs to have his/her own responsibility to contribute to group work. And finally, all of these activities must be oriented forward to students and to confront them with mother tongue.

Personal reflection:

It is necessary to prepare activities that motivate students to participate.

Activities redesign:

- To create more practice activities.
- To design more activities that permit students speak in class.

Grammar implications: Clothes vocabulary. The majority of students did not want to repeat clothes' vocabulary because they were difficult to learn and they did not link up with their personal appearance. However, there were some students that answered questions and understood when teacher spoke.

4th session. Band description			
Lesson topic: Our personal image		Date: August 31st, 2011	
Objective: To show personal image tendencies for expressing personal style.			
Grammar topic: body parts vocabulary and have got uses			
Warm up	15	Get feedback about vocabulary related to clothes and hair styles	The students will play a game in groups; each one of them will have opportunity to join words with the image around the classroom.
Presentation	10	Show some photographs about different kinds of hair style and make up.	The teacher will present some images about makeup and mask relating the parts of the body asking questions such as: Do you mask or make up for your own style? Do you know any music band that wears masks or make up?
Practice	35	Create a personal hair style, and make up.	The students will decorate a paper designing their own style.
Production	15	Show a press conference	The students must organize a press conference speaking about their 'band' projects
<i>Assessment: How students relate information according the main topic in their project.</i>			

Fourth lesson plan

Personal reflection:

The variety of activities increased students' motivation; they participated without forcing them, some of students tried to speak in English; moreover, there were some students used to speak isolated English words, but the majority of them tried to participate.

The students' attention depended on the variety of the activities and they participated when they were motivated.

Activities redesign:

- To plan short warm ups, because they should not spend more than 10 minutes.
- To prepare more activities those permit students to improve their learning through practice activities.

Grammar implications: Parts of the body and hair style. Students used the vocabulary related to the body parts, they drew their own face with their personal hair style, they made up with different color and some of them showed their designs and they built structured sentences, some others wrote their presentation on a piece of paper and they read aloud.

5th session. Personal image			
Lesson topic: Preferences		Date: September 7th, 2011	
Objective: To speak about routines and personal interests			
Grammar topic: To ask questions			
Warm up	10	Get feedback.	The students will play hang man with accessories, parts of the body and hairstyle vocabulary.
Presentation	20	Speak about personal image	The teacher will present the activity about questions related students' preferences.
Practice	30	Ask questions	Students must ask questions for their partners related to music band tendencies, such as: Which style do you prefer? Why do you like this style? And so on.

Production	30	Speak about another band	The student must join the information and they must speak about the band of their partners
<i>Assessment: How students ask questions and their pronunciation.</i>			

Fifth lesson plan

Personal reflection:

Students participated in the warm up activity, they have played this game in Spanish, and they liked the activity. In addition, they helped the teacher to form the questions about their own music band; next, each one asked different partner about his own band, and they showed organized information about the eight different bands.

The majority of students participated with enthusiasm, but five students did nothing; they told that nobody wanted to give them the information, and they only showed their own information.

Activities redesign:

- To design activities those integrate all students.
- To plan more practice permits students to improve grammar topics, although the lesson plan will be for two classes.
- To allow the students to develop their creativity through the drawings, pictures, and comic strips.

Grammar implication: Ask questions about bands. Students built five questions on the board, they had to ask these questions to different members of the other

bands, and they must give general information about the eight bands. The majority of students tried to read the questions when they asked to their partners, some of the answers were in Spanish, but they tried to communicate with their hands.

6th session. A real star!			
Lesson topic: To present a pop star' routines for organizing information		Date: September 21st, 2011	
Objective: To present a pop star' routines for organizing information			
Grammar topic: Adverbs of frequency Simple present			
Warm up	10	To get feedback	Students will participate in a competition related to vocabulary seen on the class.
Presentation	15	To ask questions	Teacher ask students about routines with a clock and their frequency: Always, sometimes, usually, often, never every day.
Practice	40	To organize pop star routines	Students must design a comic strip about their own routines. Meanwhile, a volunteer student pass in front of the class and mime different daily routines and the class must guess. Next, students should compare their routines with a partner by asking the question: What do you (usually) do at....o'clock? Then, They must organize their groups and choose a real pop star, they will design their own music band activities in a piece of paper each student must draw different activity.

Production	25	To present pop star routines	Students must glue the activities that each student have drawn and present it.
Assessment: Students' participation, how students use the vocabulary			

Sixth lesson plan

Personal reflection:

The majority of students enjoyed with the competition related to vocabulary, but seven students did not want to participate; they stayed in their chairs; one student fell asleep for few minutes, he told the researcher that a cat did not permit him to sleep last night. Students had to draw a comic strip about their routines, and when the material for drawing was distributed, all of them started to draw, some of them wrote a number of words linked with their activities designed. But the time was enough to complete all the activities.

Activities redesign

- To prepare more short practice activities those improve students' knowledge
- To explain the meaning of different words or rules about grammar, according to the use in context.
- To give students the opportunity to interact, because they need confidence to participate and speak in English.

Grammar implication: Adverbs of frequency and routines. Students designed a comic strip related their routines; they drew and wrote the activities that they usually do. Some of students showed their comic strip in front of their partners, but they were embarrassed because they only wrote isolated word related to the

activities. However three sample students tried to write structured sentences. All students tried to communicate the thing that they did with their draws.

7th session. Planning the CD recording			
Lesson topic: We are going to record an album		Date: September 21st, 2011	
Objective: To design a CD to display on the classroom walls.			
Grammar topic: Adverbs and adjectives.			
Warm up	10	Get a feed back	The students will play stop
Presentation	15	Analyze different CD covers for creating their own CD cover	Ask students what kind of music they have chosen. Next, the teacher will show different types of CD covers.
Practice	40	To design CD cover To make plans related to recorder an album	Students must organize their bands; each student must draw personal designs that represent his band. Next, the group will choose one design to represent their CD cover taking into account the name of the pop band, the name of the album. Then, the students must organize their plans about their CD such as the record company, manager, the video and so on.
Production	20	To present CD cover and plans	The students must show their own CD covers and their plans to recorder them.
Assessment: How students prepare plans about their future.			

Seventh lesson plan

Personal reflection:

Several students were attentive, and they worked hard the activity; some of them liked to draw and create new things; they really enjoyed the variety of activities; but the same five students did not like anything because they were very calm people but they preferred to stay in their chairs looking to the window or speaking in Spanish from their cell phones, and when the teacher spoke with them, they told her that they did not bring their pencils and they did not understand the activity; however, when the teacher said that the person who do the activity well would win an extra point to the final grate, for that reason, all of them participated and they showed excellent designs about their band.

Activities' redesign:

- To present activities to motive the students that do not like English.
- To speak with the students about the activities that they want to do during class, and negotiate with them how to work in class.
- To look for different places to work with students to increase their attention, and they can explore in the different kinds of context.

Grammar implications: Adjectives. Students had to design their cover CD and describe their band to present it. They created their own logo and they spoke about their main characteristics. Only one student spoke for each group, he tried to communicate with their drawings, yet some of them were embarrassed when they spoke and needed to read the sentences.

8th session The band history			
Lesson topic: How was the concert?		Date: October 5th, 2011	
Objective: To present award ceremony			
Grammar topic: Comparatives, superlatives.			
Warm up	10	Feedback	The students will play hang man with some words about vocabulary seen in class.
Presentation	15	To ask questions To present comparatives	Find out what the students know about awards and award ceremonies in Colombia. The teacher will present some pictures related to those prizes such as "India Catalina". Next the teacher will propose that students must participate in the awards "The best" to reward the best bands. And the teacher will present some questions related to comparatives such as: Which is the best pop band in the world? Who is the best singer? Is Nirvana better than Green Day?
Practice	45	To create English music awards	To propose the categories of award that student would like to have in their "the best": Best CD design, best song, best musical instrument made in class, best mask. Students must vote for one of them in each category; they cannot nominate the same person more than one category; they must write their answers and put them in a box.

Production	20	To present the award ceremony	Each group can announce the winner and present the award in the category for which they have designed the actual award.
<i>Assessment: Student attitudes and their discussions in front of the selections of the best.</i>			

Eighth lesson plan

Personal reflection:

The students voted, and they chose the best representative member of the band for each category; they were happy because other people evaluated their work done in class; the majority of them said that the class was interesting the fact that they were the jury and they assessed individual and team work.

Students were ready to present the final work, they had to show their own band in front of their partners; in addition, they had to sing karaoke or do a mimic with the song that they chose when they formed the band.

Grammar implications: Comparatives and superlatives. Students had to organize an award ceremony for the best participants; they chose the best pop band, the best CD, the best singer. Some of students even preferred speak in Spanish, but there were some of them that wanted to speak in English without giving importance to the structures, they lost the fear, and they tried to communicate.

9th session. Presentation of the music bands	
Lesson topic: The great day!	Date: October 19th, 2011
Objective: To present music bands	
Final presentation in front of their partners	

Ninth lesson plan

Final presentation:

Students were happy, some of them practiced several times and their presentation was successful. Five students did not participate because they forgot the activity according to them.

Students liked to work with the project, but it is necessary to modify some aspects to permit increase students motivation.

Grammar implications: Students presented their bands, three groups wrote and learned band information, and they spoke with organized sentences in past tense in front of their partners without fear, they were sure when they spoke. Two groups showed their presentation improvising; they spoke with some words in English and some others in Spanish.

This form to work had many advantages because the project permitted the researcher to include collaborative work and individual work, it not only involves problem-solving but it involves problem-posing; it helps to improve and understand students' progress, including changes such as values and beliefs, this project got feedback, was participatory, was formative, and can be evaluated. (Appendix J)

6. CONCLUSIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

This research project has been developed in three semesters, over this time many of my thoughts have changed, I believed that teaching grammar was only related to structures and, I supposed that the best form of teaching grammar was from games that permit students completing isolated sentences, but now, I am finishing with this paper, I am going to present the conclusions in which I present different implications that this project has brought to my life.

The majority of students participated in all the activities, the sequence of them were related to music project, some of the activities were rewarding for students because they were motivated to use their creativity and they used different ways to communicate their ideas according to each activity. However, two students did not like to work with the projects because they preferred the structural classes where the teacher explains the rule and students complete sentences.

Students had the opportunity to participate and show their own productions in front of their partners, those activities were not easy for them because there were shy students that they felt embarrassed to speak and they were worried about their English pronunciation. Furthermore, students were confident at the end all of them showed their final music band presentation.

Students were motivated with the variety of activities that were used in the class because they could improve their English knowledge, some of them spoke in front of their partners, they tried to communicate their ideas without worrying about grammatical structures, they tried to express their ideas using no verbal communication such as the hands' and body' movements, face expressions. They were more sure when they spoke and that situation permitted that they improve their internal grammar.

To design and implement a contextualized project to improve oral discourse was not easy, it was an arduous work because the main idea was to think in students' interests, they were adolescents and they were in a difficult age, they did not like anything, all of the activities were bored, and motivated them is a hard task; however, during the process they gave ideas to improve their own knowledge, and the majority of them enjoyed with the classes.

Explanations are needed to permit students to understand the foreign language, but they are not the most important because some people are worried about speaking well and grammar can be limiting to develop oral discourse.

A six-month experience is not enough to conclude students learn about grammar.

Limitations of the study

The school changed schedules four times and as a consequence, the applications of the project were delayed substantially.

Time constraints; some classes were lost because the school organized activities during the days when practice classes should be carry out that fact impeded the continuity of the process. Furthermore, classes started the class at 8:30 a.m., when students received their snacks that should be consumed immediately and as a result we had 30 to 40 minutes less for the implementation of the project.

- To include different kind of activities that can stimulate students to use all the brain hemispheres.

- To guide students to culminate the projects because is possible to find skill that students not know that they have.
- To listen to the students, they need to develop their capacities; a good teacher always wants the best for his students.
- To love teaching, the students require people to want to change the word.

Pedagogical implications:

The researcher, according to Pilar Aramayo Prudencio, (2011) can state that *“Teachers and learners have to be situated in the time and in the context”* This proposal permitted teachers and students to integrate their real lives according to the students’ age, bearing in mind their interests, and the activities were related to educational standards based on Communicative Language Teaching; in addition, teacher and students recreated a context where students could improve their oral production.

“Teachers and learners have to negotiate meaning to construct knowledge.” This project was a form to negotiate to the students likes with teaching requirements, they had the opportunity to work with music and the grammatical contents were exposed during each class, those actions permitted students to improve their oral production.

“Teachers and learners have to be empowering.” Now days, not only the teachers as the focus of the teaching, but also learners are the central part in education. One of the purposes of this paper was to permit students to take the decisions

about their preferences, they had the opportunity to choose the main topic and teacher was the guide in that process.

“Teachers and learners have to be liberating.” The advisor of this research told that *“education is an excuse for improving the relationships among people.”* If students found the sense of the education and they enjoy with it, the world could change. This proposal permitted students to change the form that they usually learn, their voices were heard, and they answered with their participation.

The language is symbolic in its nature related to meaning and communication. The language is used to communicate, students used the language to express their ideas, they needed the chance to understand that Learning English are immerse in their lives, they listen to English music, they see movies that are spoken in English.

Teaching process is not always on increase because has ups and downs. Professor Clara E. Rodriguez compares teaching learning with the flight of the butterfly because it is not always in up or down, several times it can be in middle, one day, the knowledge can improve but the follow day, it can down; surely teachers do not see students improvements during some time, but at the end the result should be better that expected.

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APPENDIX A

Participant observation

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PROYECTO INVESTIGATIVO Y PRÁCTICA DOCENTE 1-**

Participant observation

During the time that you stay in the classroom, pay attention the following aspects to know population.

Total of the students in the classroom

40 Students

Total of the women and men

Women 18/ men 22

Distribution in the classroom

The students are distributed in four rows, in the first one there are eight students, in the second one there are ten students, in the third one there are nine students and the last one there are eight students.

Materials that students use while the class is develop

Students have books, dictionaries, glue, pencils, papers, pen, and so on.

No verbal communication

The students wait for the teacher to give them the main commands for changing activities.

The students do not speak when they do not understand, and they look at teacher when they want that he/she repeat the instructions.

They use gesticulations when they want to explain something, such as sports, diseases, and so on.

They also smile when they do not know how to ask or answer some questions.

How the students speak to the teacher

The students speak to the teacher with respect, they show that they like English.

Body gestures during the class

Some girls cross their legs, some of them are sitting in their chairs, other ones are standing up in front of the door, and most of them are speaking when other person.

The students stay in their chairs or they are moving when the teacher speaks

Some students ask for teacher if they can bring the snacks; others ask for permission to go to the bathroom, and some of them ask for information about the explanations because they do not understand or they want to know other things about the theme.

Attitudes that students have or activities that students do during the class for instance: to draw, take notes, listen to music, speak and so on.

Some students draw on sheets, some of them look to the window, others work with the activities. When they eat snacks, some of them are sitting, and others share with their partners.

While they eat, some of them listen to music from their cell phones. When they finish eating, the majority of them leave the garbage in their chairs.

Students demand attention in passive or active way

Some students say jokes because they want to be the most important people in the classroom; some of them look at the teacher when they want something.

1. Group description

This is an excellent group, the students showed a pleasant attitude, and they want to learn. There are many students that love English and they show it, working a lot, making questions, participating in activities, and paying attention; also, they do the activities, they ask questions when they do not understand, they work with enthusiasm.

On the other hand, the teacher permits to the researcher to work; also, she makes some suggestions when there are some mistakes, she wants that students improve their knowledge. The main teacher said that the group has a low level of English, because the students do not have the competences for B2, according to the foreign language standards.

As a conclusion, I hope to continue with these group, the fact that the students are nice; they wants to learn English; also, they said that they like English, but there is a problem when the teacher is going to explain grammar, nobody pays attention and they lose their motivation; they do not understand grammar, they prefer to play different kinds of games because they think that grammar is so boring.

APPENDIX B
GRAMMAR TEST
GRADE: 8

Student name _____

1. The following sentences are not correct, read and correct them

1. He are from Germany. _____
2. Is I late? _____
3. They isn't here. _____
4. Where is you from? _____
5. She are 18 years old. _____

2. Organize these sentences

1. always/early/Sue/arrives _____
2. basketball/I/play/sometimes _____
3. dinner/we/have/always/at 7:30 _____
4. usually/like /chocolate/children _____
5. work/I/never/at/weekends/on/school _____

3. Read about Amy's first trip to the park with a friend. Answer the questions



I was eight years old and my friend was ten. We went to the park, but my mother didn't know. We had a great time! We rode horses and climbed trees. I remember it was a beautiful day. We spent an hour in the park. Then we got back, and my mother was really upset.

- Q: How old was Amy? _____
- Q: Where did Amy and her friend go? _____
- Q: How long did they spend in the park? _____
- Q: What did they do? _____

4. Complete the questions using the words below

How *Why *Who *Where *What

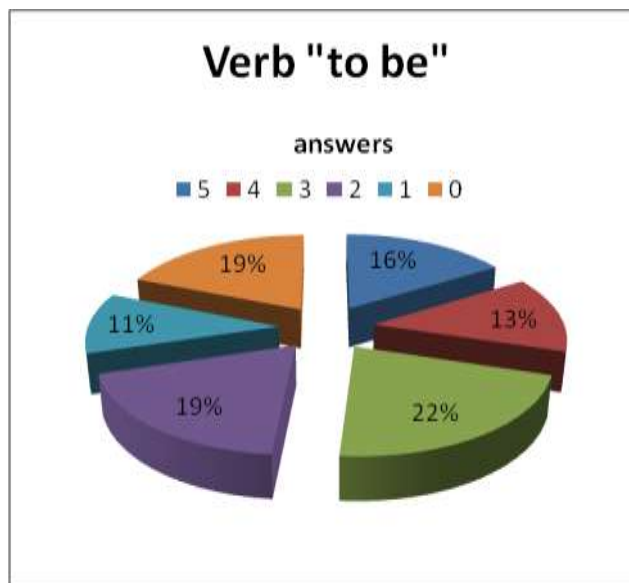
1. A: **How** old are you? _____
- A: _____ is your favorite singer? _____
- A: _____ do you like doing in your free time? _____
- A: _____ is your best friend? _____
- A: _____ do you live? _____

APPENDIX B

Grammar test results

The results of the analysis of the questions that grammar test evaluated.

Answers	No. Of students					
	5	4	3	2	1	0
Verb to be	6	5	8	7	4	7
Organize sentence	0	2	5	8	10	12
Answer questions	4	0	3	2	12	16
Complete with "wh" questions	3	12	10	4	3	5



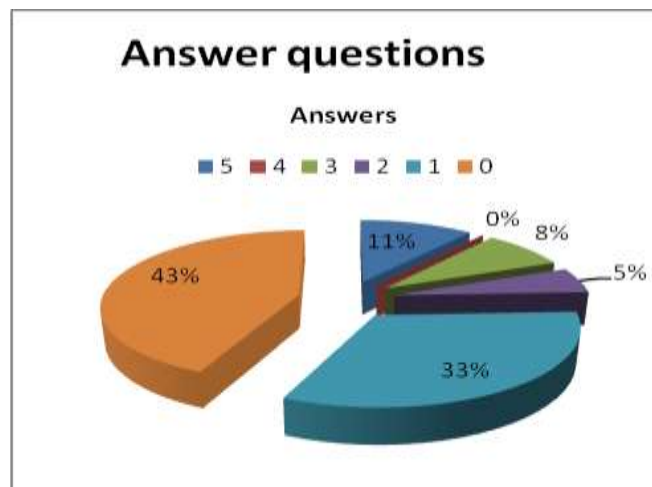
Graphic 2: Verb "to be" answers

In the first figure about verb to be, 51% of students had among three to five right answers, and 49% of them answered two or less right answers. Several students told that they have seen the verb to be during their entire learning process, but the results showed that some of students still have difficulties understanding it.



Graphic 3: Organizing sentences

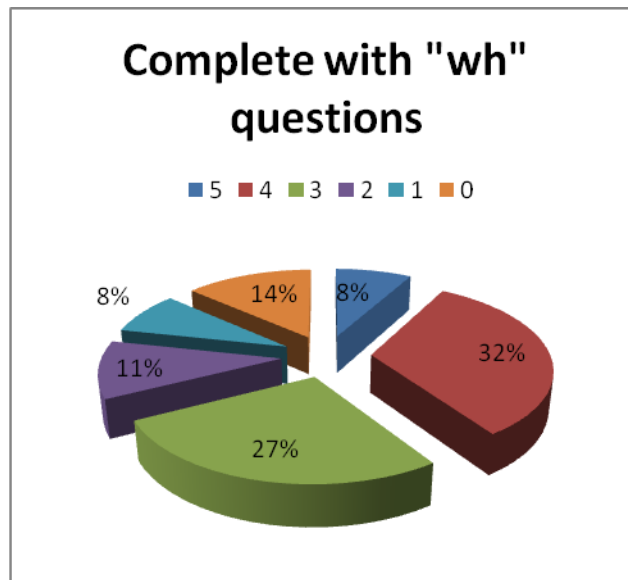
In the second figure about organizing sentences, 46% of students had between three and five right answers and 54% of them had two or less right answers. This activity was applied with the aim activating the left hemisphere of the brain, taking into account English sentence structures.



Graphic 4: Answer questions

In the third figure about answering questions, students had to read a short test and they should answer five questions, according to it, 19% of students had between three to five right answers, and 81% of them only answered two or less questions, 56% answered questions incorrectly and 25% did not answer the question at all. It

showed that students did not comprehend the text because they did not have enough vocabulary to write their ideas.



Graphic 5: Complete with “wh” questions

In the fourth figure about completing sentences with “wh” questions, 67% of students had between three to five right answers, and 33% of them answered two or least questions, 20% of students answered incorrectly and 13% did not answer anything. These questions were related with the students’ life; maybe when a teacher asks about personal information students remember it.

APPENDIX C

Survey No. 1 about grammar

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Colegio ROBERT F. KENNEDY
JOHANNA PATRICIA CARO

Grade: _____

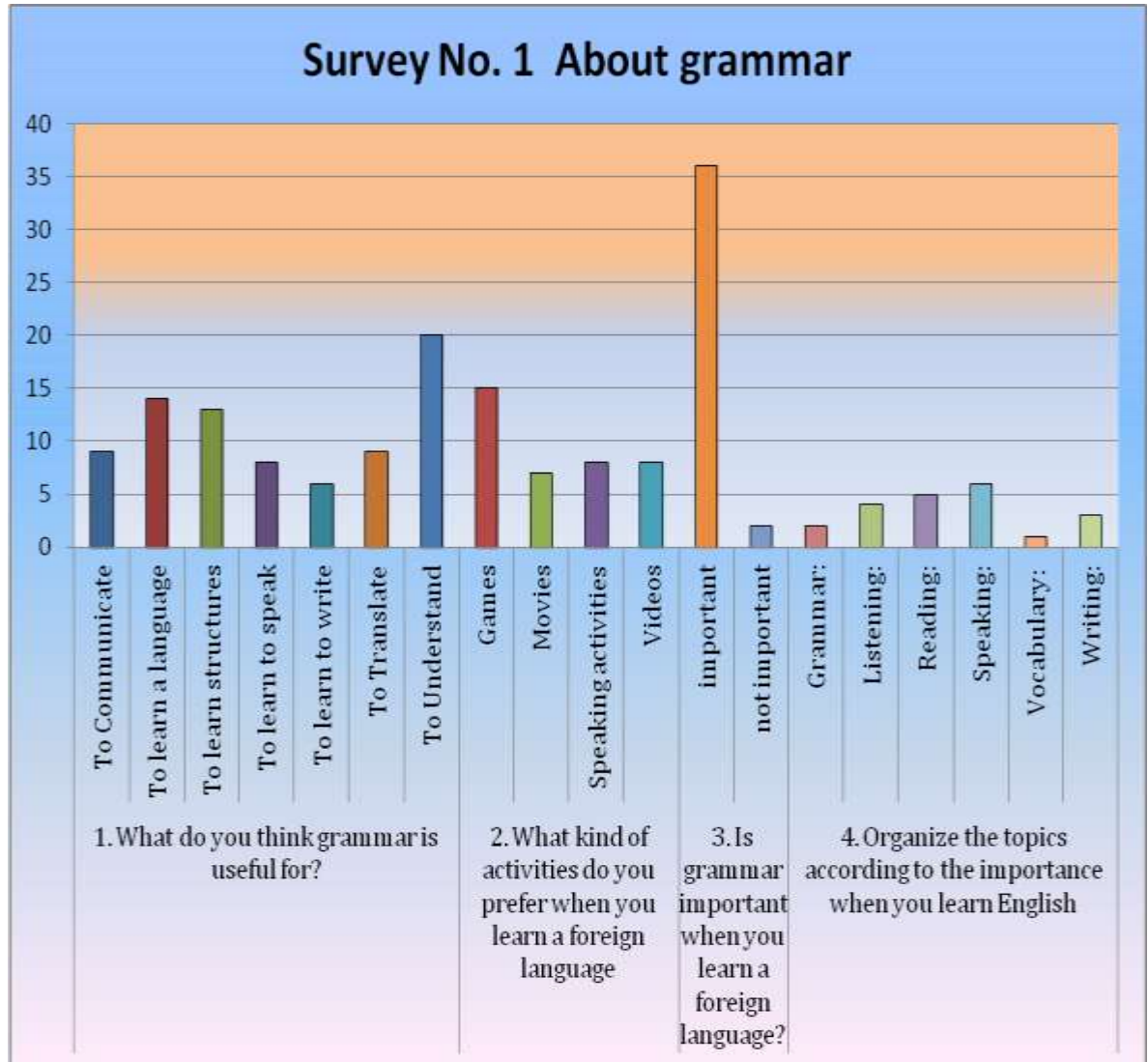
1. What do you think about grammar is useful for?

2. What kind of activities do you prefer when you learn a foreign language?

3. Is grammar important when you learn English? Why?

4. Organize the topics according to their importance when you learn English.

1. Vocabulary _____
2. Grammar _____
3. Speaking _____
4. Reading _____
5. Listening _____
6. Writing _____



Graphic 6: Survey No. 1. About grammar

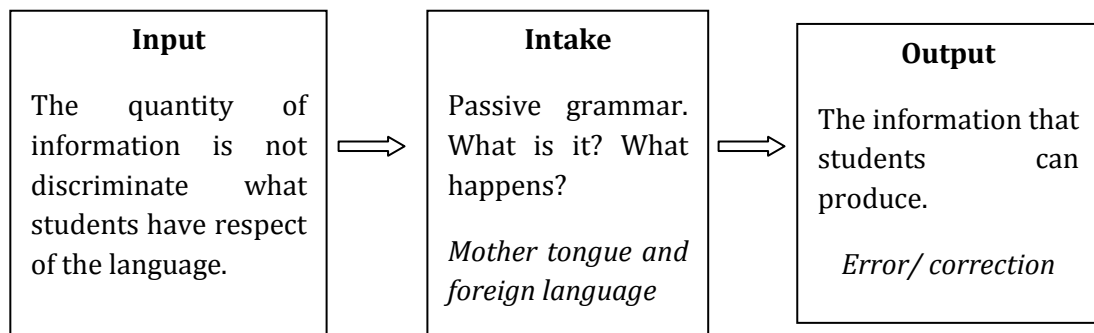
This figure show the results of the survey to the students about grammar and its importance, presents some categories that students thought were important when they learning grammar.

APPENDIX D

Selection of the topic

During plenty of meetings with the advisor, she wanted to change the researcher concept about grammar and the way that it must be taught

Grammar is the internal organization of language that a person has in his/her brain, students have passive grammar, and the idea is to develop through the design of a context:



Children receive input when they understand something in English, they always want to translate, but if we create a context, language can be used as functional acts; to motivate students to learn a foreign language is important because they need to communicate.

From these reflections a series of questions have emerged, for instance: what tools does grammar give to the teacher for improving their teaching process? And how effective are grammar classes and grammatical explanations for adolescents to learn English as a foreign language?

APPENDIX E

Teaching logs

SINGLE LESSON TIME RECORD SHEET No. 1	
Teaching group: 801	
Date: August 3 rd , 2011	
Timing: 80 minutes	
BEFORE THE LESSON	
Objectives: <i>To show personal image style for expressing personal hairstyle and make up related to students' music band.</i>	
Planned outcomes: <i>The students must create their own hairstyle taking into account the vocabulary and the worksheets seen in the previous class.</i>	
Particular notes: <i>The student participated in warm up without forcing them. We worked with vocabulary related to accessories and hairstyle, most of them had forgotten some of those words.</i>	
Creativity	<i>The students are creative people; some of them surprised the teacher and me because they drew very well and they expressed through them their wishes related to the project.</i>
Discourse	<i>The students did not produce discourse because they did not have enough vocabulary.</i>
Semantics	<i>Some of the students organized ideas when they spoke and they tried to translate their meanings, such as students K and L.</i>
Syntax	<i>Student D tried to answer questions in English, the student G wanted to speak according to English structure (Subject, verb and object)</i>
Vocabulary	<i>Some of the students used isolated words related to known vocabulary, like hairstyle and the band accessories.</i>
Performance	<i>They showed a good attitude in class, the majority of them participated in the activities, but they preferred to speak in Spanish.</i>
Discipline	<i>They paid attention and they were calm, but some of them spoke in Spanish a lot.</i>
Participation	<i>The majority of students participated in the activities but student Band others students did not enjoy the activities and they were bored with the class.</i>
Personal reflection	<i>The students' attention depends on the variety of activities; they participate when they were motivated. I realize that the warm up must be shorter, and it is better to give more time to practice activities.</i>
<i>The students started to design their personal hairstyles.</i>	

APPENDIX F

Teacher' survey

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Objective:

1. Have you ever worked with projects in your English class? What do you think about them?

Yes, I have worked with them. I think this is a good methodology when students get involved into it.

2. Have you seen any changes in students' attitudes in front of English or in the English classes? Which ones?

Yes, I have seen changes in some students because they like the classes of English. Also there are some students that don't like or better don't do anything.

3. Referring to the process of English grammar learning do you consider the project implemented helps to develop discourse competence? Why?

Yes, with the students that get involved in the activities it is excellent, but the students don't get involved don't develop the competence.

4. If we compare teaching method on the one has grammar explanation plus completes exercises and grammar focused on functions which one could be better for adolescents?

I'm sure the second one is very good and for me it is necessary the grammar explanation and the exercises are good to involve more students in the activities different from the oral ones.

APPENDIX G

Survey No. 2 About grammar process
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PROYECTO INVESTIGATIVO Y PRÁCTICA DOCENTE III

JOHANNA PATRICIA CARO

1. Usefulness of the music project for your English learning.

Student A: Yes, because we can learn with different activities.

Student B: I like them because I have lost the fear.

Student D: I have learnt to listen to my partners

Student F: I like the dynamic.

2. What have you learned with the music project in English class?

Student J: I improved my pronunciation.

Student L: I learnt to work in group.

Student C: I shared with my friends.

3. How the activities proposed with the music project helped the learning of grammar?

Student E: Yes, the activities permit as to communicate with our partners.

Student G: I like English and the activities have helped me to express my ideas.

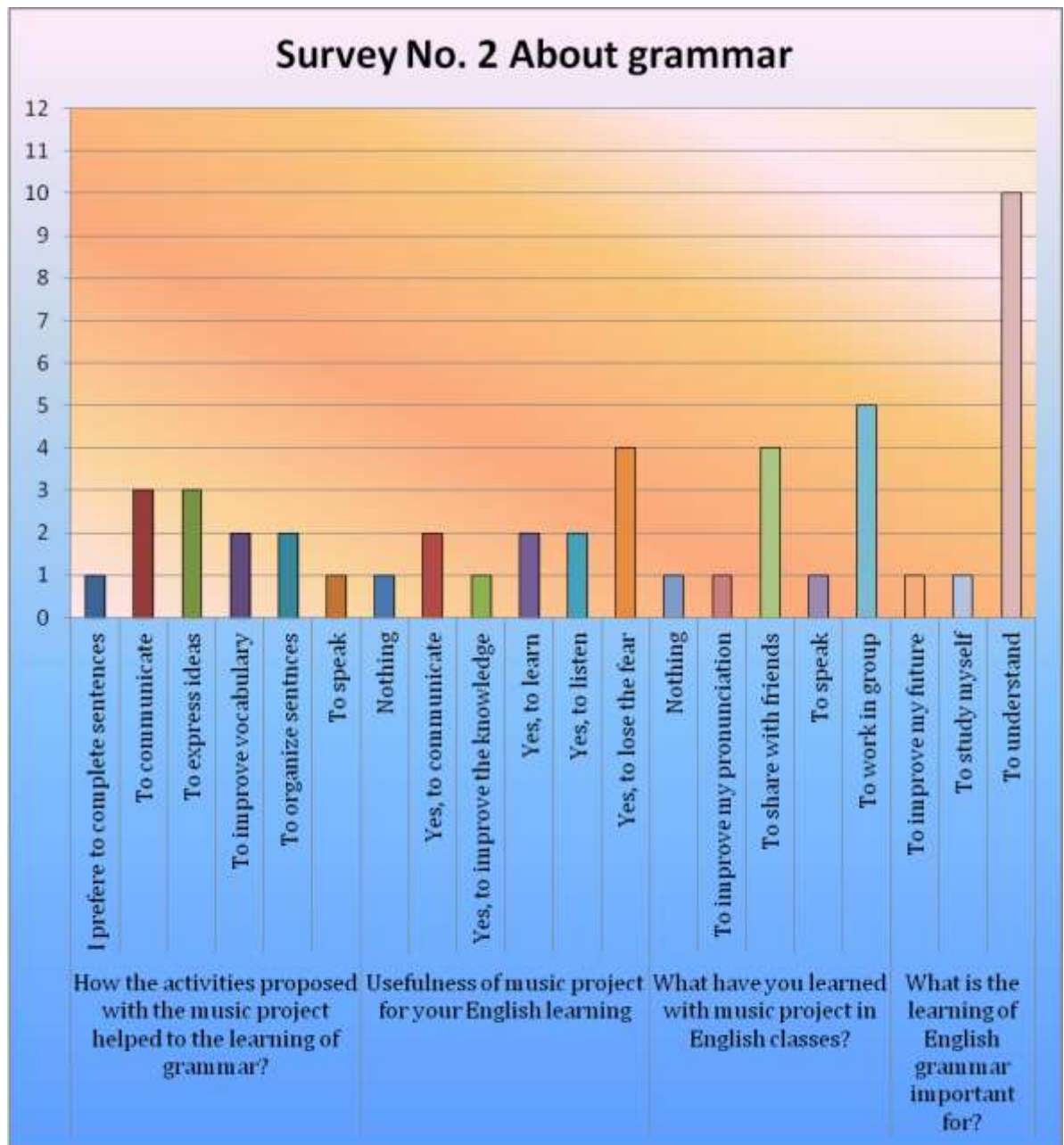
Student B: I prefer the activities to complete sentences, complete exercises.

4. What is the learning of English grammar important for?

Student K: Grammar is important because I can understand the language.

Student D: The grammar is useful for my future.

Student B: I study the grammar myself, I do different exercises and I ask questions to the teacher because I like so much English.

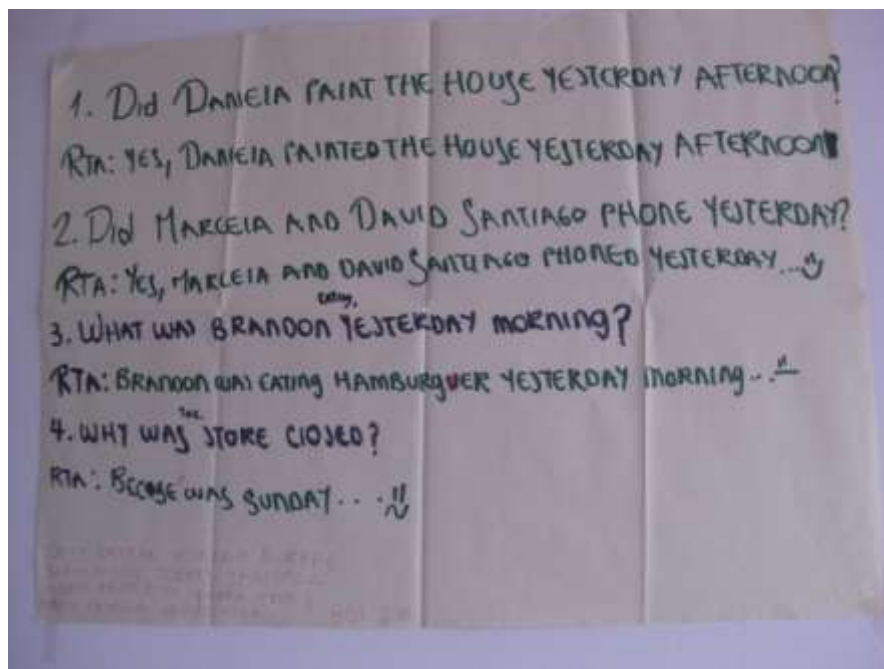
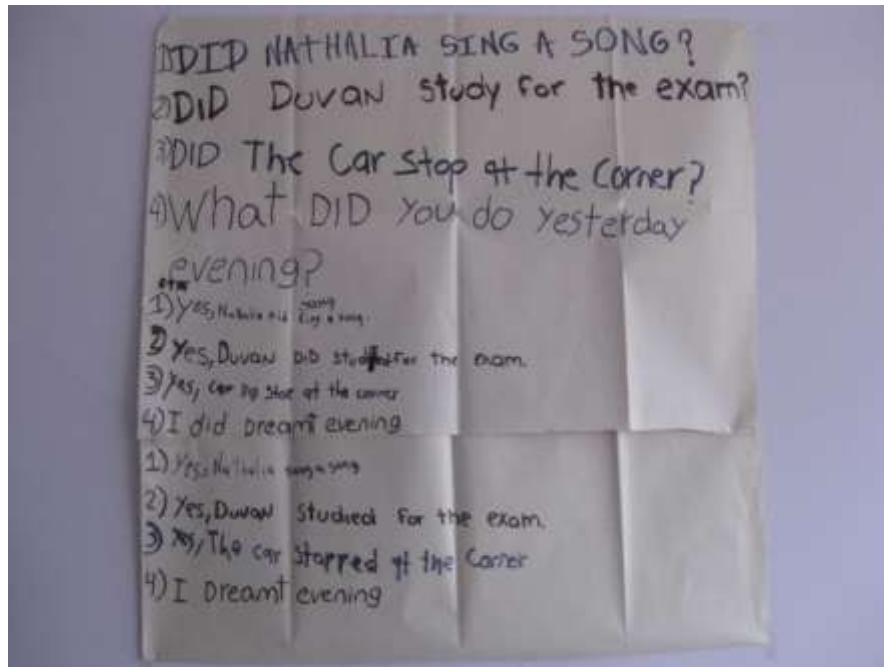


Graphic 7: Survey No. 2. About grammar process

This previous figure shows the results of the second survey to the sample students; they answered questions that permitted us to analyze the specific categories that were important to the students.

APPENDIX I

Students artifacts



Tape recorder transcription:

Bands' presentation:

Student A: *The name of the band is black moon*

Student B: *The gener is is rock pop*

Student C: *The origen in in Australia.*

Student A: *we are years, no, we are five years in active y and the members, we are four members.*

Student B: *she, no they are the guistarrist, she is the bass player and I the baterist.*

Student D: *The wed site is www.theblackmoonmusic.com*

About clothes.....

Student A: *What do you like about this job?*

Student B: *I would like go to my shop dess it. I love iiiii dedicate.*

Student A: *Interesting, ah, eh,ee En this design what ee was ee especial?*

Student B: *My priest is whats go to estar with especial person, un pri, un pri, un pretty, I look you Maria.*

Student A: *Ah, OK thank, now we go con with las modelos. What part do you the best this design?*

Student C: *The dess bewcause is bck y and my favorite color.*

Student A: *What part do you like about this design?*

Student D: *OK, mi bl, mi blouse because its estarting and original.*

Student A: *What part do you like about this design?*

Student E: *Mi jeans because are are blue it is fashion and has look like.*

Student A: *OK what dop you think to work on this?*

Student C: *the sequi, the sequirity and and teach me.*

Student A: *Than you for you collaboration.*

APPENDIX J

Final presentation

1. My band

We are the Metalics

I am student

Eh, the drummer student c

Student d is a guitar

And our sing is American Idiot of Green Day

2. Good morning

My name is student F

I am a representative of the band Sunrice

This is my band was, was creaty three years ago

The band is made of student M singer

Eh, student K guitarrist

Student B the second voice

And drummer student L

The gener is pop music

That this song

3. We are the moon black, no the black moon, pues

Student h is nuestra guitarrist

Ah, Student C and W singers

I the drummer

Ya,