

REINFORCING WRITING IN EFL THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PPP

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## ABSTRACT

The way in which a teacher develops their class is one of the factors that plays a fundamental role in any educational process, choosing which one is the most appropriate for a specific context implies an arduous research process and therefore, sufficient time to carry it out.

During the development of this research project, we decided to implement an action research with which we sought to identify how the language teaching model known as Presentation, Practice and Production (henceforth PPP) could reinforce a group of 7th graders' writing skill at a public school.

It is important to highlight that PPP is a model that gives students the opportunity to approach knowledge in a sequential way. That is why we found this model quite useful, since it allows students to consolidate knowledge through a guided practice phase, and then they can demonstrate the learning through the third P (production).

Furthermore, it is relevant to mention that the P of production can be evidenced through the speaking and writing ability, even though, in this study it was assessed through the written skill because this is the most appropriate for evidencing the learning of students during this research project.

Additionally, this model gives certain freedom to teachers so they can present the topic, allowing them to use an explicit or implicit approach to teach grammar or even a mixture of them.

The findings of this research process showed that the students had significant progress in the three phases of implementation of this model, allowing them to solve doubts before facing the last phase of the model. Regarding the way in which the topics were presented, it was also evident that the explicit form seems to be a good option when implementing PPP in the classroom.

**Key words:** English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English as a Second Language (ESL), writing skills, teaching grammar, Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) model.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will include data about three studies that we considered important since they have a close relationship with our study object. Those studies gave us knowledge, information, and facts about how to conduct a research study related to grammar and PPP implementation in different contexts.

In 2004, Mendoza carried out the initial part of a research called “Implicit and Explicit Teaching of Grammar: an empirical study”. This experimental and quantitative study was developed with students at university level. The purpose was to “investigate whether the methodologies of implicit and explicit EFL instruction account for the improvement of university students’ performance on a test over two grammar topics” (p.16). In total, there were sixty-six students aged 18 to 20 years old from three intermediate EFL classes.

Three groups were selected: “one of them received implicit instruction, another one had classes with explicit instruction and the last one worked under regular courses methodology”. The experiment had three grammar structures to get the results. In the first one, each group was taught 3 sessions of around two hours for the two target structures. The second structure was taught four weeks after the first one and the last one was a pre-test and a post-test for each target structure.

Findings indicate that students in the explicit instruction group achieved significantly higher scores than the other two groups. Additionally, it demonstrated that when teachers use explicit grammar teaching strategies in the classroom, the students’ performance is significantly better. This study had a close relationship with our project in terms of grammar. Besides, the procedures that the researchers used to apply their test and their methodologies to evaluate grammar, were helpful in our implementation.

The second study is related to an experience in “Teaching Grammar in an English Foreign Language (EFL) Context”, developed in Australia by Lissa Garrett (2015). This



teacher shares her experience inspired on her job carried out with students in primary school at Coconut Island State School with the purpose of “determining which grammatical approach is most effective in ensuring independent second language acquisition” (Garret, 2015, p.35). In the implementation of this action research, the PPP method to teach grammar to primary graders was used and information based on students’ assignments and teacher’s experiences was collected.

Throughout this process, Garret (2015) realized that “if students are not explicitly taught the differences between the two languages, code-switching and independent second language acquisition is very difficult or even impossible” (p.36). As it is noticed in this citation, it is relevant to explain learners about the linguistic differences between their mother tongue with the target language. This, with the purpose of providing tools to avoid the interference of the mother tongue at the moment of performing the English language, besides the acquisition of the foreign language.

The identification of linguistic differences of the students’ mother tongue and the target language provided strong basis for students to correct themselves and master their foreign language learning process. At the end, this method generated successful results after its implementation because it demonstrated its appropriateness due to the fact that, as Garret (2015) pointed out, “The method that proved most suitable for my educational and cultural situation at Poruma was the P-P-P approach” (p.37), as well as, “other similar outcomes have convinced me that only through explicit teaching of grammar through the P-P-P approach within context can successful grammar-conscious awareness arise” (Garret, 2015, p.37).

These results provide to this research project relevant information about the suitability of PPP method to teach grammar in a foreign language context, that as researchers we might consider to master our investigation.

The third study was implemented by Chávez and Hernández (2012), with the aim of analyzing the methodological approaches used by teachers in English classes. This research was developed in Cali, Colombia where a total of 220 English teachers participated in the study: 131 from the public schools and 89 from private schools.

The researchers carried out a systematization of experiences, in which through “surveys, interviews and institutional documents like curriculum/area planning, syllabi, and class materials” (p.69) they collected the necessary information. After that, the quantitative information was processed with an Excel tool, and the qualitative information was analyzed hermeneutically, using as a base literature about methods and curricula.

Finally, the research showed that teachers were afraid of being innovative in their English classes, because they do not feel sufficiently prepared to do attractive and different activities in a language they do not master. In the same way, teachers think that students have a low level of English so, this would be one of the reasons why they prefer to teach traditional classes. On the other hand, teachers are aware of the importance of teaching grammar, but they recognize that this ability is not taught in the right way, which is why they preferred to focus on vocabulary, repetition and memorization.

In conclusion, the previously mentioned studies show that there can be a tendency to use traditional methods in English classes. In fact, the use of this kind of method have demonstrated successful results. Additionally, it is an opportunity to rescue models such as PPP for teaching grammar, through which we can teach in a lineal way, obtaining good results as shown by studies carried out previously. Consequently, the important issue is to make an effective use of the methodological models and the tools we have in our hands.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In a globalized world, in which academic tools, quality information, scientific and technological advances are developed mostly in the English language, it is easy to demonstrate the relevance of teaching this language. As Wolk (2004, as cited by Tang, Yin & Sheu, 2013, p. 125) points out in “The Effects of English Language Dominance of the Internet and the Digital Divide”, that more than three fourths of websites content is presented in English, additionally, “sufficient funding, necessary digital literacy, and English language proficiency are identified as the most relevant solutions to bridging the divide” (Donovan, & Rumble, 2005 retaken by Tang and others, 2013, p.126).

In the same way, developing the communicative ability in English allows us to be more competent in the management of interpersonal relationships, in the workplace and, more importantly, this process helps us to change our perspective towards the world, by permitting us to open our minds to new cultures, by giving us the opportunity to understand other people, taking into account their customs, traditions and representations. Additionally, learning a foreign language permits us to develop our identity. As Ariza & González (2015) describe, awareness of cultural differences and positive and negative aspects from each culture, allow people to be conscious about their actions, behaviors and transitions. In other words, communicating in a different language is a way to develop interculturality and expand our opportunities in different fields, both personally and professionally.

That is why it is vital to promote the learning of a foreign language from early ages. Cenoz and Jessner (2000) point out that it is crucial that pupils relate to the English language in the first years of their lives, which helps them to understand this language as a relevant resource in the development of their processes. Considering their personal abilities, their cognitive and academic level.

As learners, we have experienced difficulties during our English learning process and now as pre-service teachers, we find quite particular to see bored children in English classrooms where they are supposed to be having fun. In 2015, the British Council revealed information related to the motivation of English learners in Colombia, which recognized that a considerable number of students from public schools, especially those who are “over-age, under-age or repeating grades” (p. 19), find numerous difficulties to learn English in their classrooms. Therefore, one may speculate that teachers are not being well trained to promote in their students the desire to learn another language and other cultures, maybe the problem lies in the educational policies of our country or simply, this phenomenon is the summary of a series of procedures that have been developed poorly and that it is no one’s business.

Accordingly, Wyse, Jones and Bradford (2008) state that “English is one of the most fascinating, controversial and challenging subjects of the school curriculum” (p.18). In the same line and to understand more deeply the reason of these speculations, it is relevant to take a look at the management of the learning of English as a foreign language in public schools in Colombia.

In this context and in order to prepare students to be ready for a globalized society and have access to scientific and technological developments, *El Ministerio de Educación Nacional* (MEN) created a national bilingualism program in 2004, which originated from an adaptation of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) as the language policy for all the public schools in the country. With this proposal, students from all public institutions are expected to reach their English language skills and be able to understand standard information on familiar and everyday issues; students will be able to solve simple situations using the language and they will be able to produce simple texts using familiar topics and personal interests. Finally, students are expected to be able to describe experiences

and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. (Council of Europe, 2001, p.5).

To achieve these goals, rules, decrees and guides have been created. One of the best known regulations to the teaching of English is the *Guia N° 22 Estándares Básicos de Competencia en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés*, whose objective is to determine the basic quality criteria to which students of our country are entitled. This implies creating the conditions and generating adequate spaces for students to develop skills that allow them to perform adequately in a foreign language and reaching the descriptor of the B1 level from the CEFR.

In the same line, the Ministry of Education proposed the basic learning rights in English and a suggested curriculum with the purpose of providing material in which English teachers easily find descriptors, methodological support and recommended activities to be implemented in their classrooms. Additionally, there are other strategies that have been implemented such as teachers training, the design of a pedagogical model and the use of materials, all this with the purpose of overcoming difficulties that Colombian learners face at the moment of learning English as a foreign language.

As it was mentioned before, although in education we find a lot of problems or gaps, there are positive things to highlight, such as the different strategies proposed by teachers that have been effective. These series of strategies that are being developed by teachers who care about the education of their students and show them different alternatives that encourage them to learn another language, should be taught according to the needs of the students and the context in particular, as well as the importance of learning a foreign language in a systematically ordered manner must be considered.

This is where we wanted to intervene the process of English language teaching, to have an opportunity to show students how fun and different these language classes could be.

It is not our intention to criticize the current teaching methodologies implemented in the English classes, but we firmly believe that there can be alternatives to enhance our students' language learning process. It is for this reason that we wanted to propose the implementation of a traditional approach that emphasizes the teaching of English grammar, but in ways that can motivate and activate language learning in our students. The use of PPP would allow students to demonstrate their learning through deliverables that were developed later to practices related to the topics explained.

Thus, providing our students with an organized and well-presented approach would show other teachers of English as a foreign language that teaching grammar through the PPP model could be part of the language learning of their students and that it is possible to include it in the English classroom.

Considering the previously mentioned aspects, this research focused on the impact on writing skill of students of 7th grade after the implementation of PPP model. In order to reach this purpose, the implementation was carried out in a public school located in the urban area of the municipality of Rionegro, Antioquia, since in this context, we had the opportunity to lay out the classes in the moments that we considered most appropriate for the development of the project. Additionally, the teacher in charge of the English area in that context was opened and willing for us to perform the interventions.

Regarding the participants, it is important to note that at the beginning of the implementation, there were around thirty students but, several of them had to be discarded from the intervention due to the non-attendance of more than one of the classes of the implementation. For these same reasons, the number of participants changed from one intervention to another one, as it will be shown later on in the findings section.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

How can the implementation of the Presentation, Practice and Production model for language teaching reinforce a group of 7th graders' writing skills?

## JUSTIFICATION

The following section will provide a brief overview of possible contributions that this research project might have accomplished for the teaching of foreign language field, the specific context and the researchers. Considering the researchers' pre-service teaching experience, investigators consider that there are different aspects which are affecting the students' learning process in English as a foreign language. Researchers found out that in most public schools of the East of Antioquia, there is not a clear organization of the topics that should be taught. Sometimes, the topics are not explained in depth or not enough time is taken to practice the topics learned, affecting the students' performance in evaluative activities. Additionally, the number of students is a constant factor that affects the teaching process, considering that the number of students in the aforementioned school exceeds 35 students per classroom. Although the number of students is a factor that we cannot change, we have the opportunity to demonstrate that the PPP model would be ideal to work in any context, even in those where there is a high number of students. Bearing those issues in mind, this research aims to contribute to further alternatives to enhance students' foreign language learning.

The PPP model is considered as a traditional manner to teach, because this follows a pattern of development in which each P represents a phase that must be carried out during the class. This implied executing this model in a linear way so that the implementation could be logical and contribute to the students' performance. In the same way, this model allowed the

student to reinforce the knowledge learned in the first phase of this implementation through a guided practice (second P). Likewise, the PPP model can use different teaching tools to attract students' attention. Therefore, more than a traditional model, we consider it as a flexible model that can be useful if used properly. We consider that it generated an opportunity for students to learn a foreign language throughout an organized and creative approach, which increases learners' production skills, allowing them to reinforce the topics through the second P of the model to be applied, in order to attain better results in their evaluative activities, which will be reflected in the students' grades.

Despite being considered an old method to teach by many, teachers might implement inside the classroom an innovative way to achieve expected Common European Framework goals. Furthermore, within public schools, educators can go beyond their teaching, fostering their methodology and activities based on PPP model. This will provide the students with a comprehensible and a new style to learn, to understand and to see a different perspective of English language through the implementation of diverse materials which will remain as a present for the institution.

In this order of ideas, the current research opened a door for future students of the degree in Foreign Languages to question the importance of rescuing teaching models that are considered traditional and, sometimes, as obsolete, since these types of strategies also work and are useful. This type of model can be perfectly adapted to the vanguard of the technological world in which we live today.

Finally, but equally important, this research project allowed us as researchers to obtain a better understanding of educational realities throughout the implementation of a traditional model. It also rescues an old strategy as a way to create innovative tools and styles of teaching which can be implemented into future teachers' practices as a manner to enrich the students learning of English as a foreign language.



## OBJECTIVES

### General objective

To reinforce 7th graders' writing skill in EFL through the implementation of the PPP model

### Specific objectives

1. To design lesson plans based on the PPP model characteristics to reinforce students' writing skills.
2. To conduct the tasks aligned to the topics through the implementation of the lesson plans by following the steps proposed in the PPP model.
3. To analyze the implications of implementing the PPP steps in the writing skills of the students' written production.

## CONCEPTUAL REFERENCES

With the purpose of using the same language and perspective of teaching grammar, new words and the key concepts are going to be defined. This is why in the following lines, we wanted to deepen in some concepts such as EFL, PPP, and Teaching Grammar, which are the corpus of our research with the purpose of helping the reader to understand the object to investigate presented in this project. Those previous concepts have been heard in mind to head the actual study with the intention of reinforcing the Teaching of Grammar in English classes, which will be defined in the following paragraphs.

### English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

It is vital to start our conceptual framework by referring to the concept of English as a foreign language (EFL henceforth). EFL refers to the acquisition of a language different from the mother tongue, in a country in which this language is not used as a means of communication (Mei, 2008). In other words, students rarely have the opportunity to practice

the language outside the classroom, since they do not have significant exposure to the language and the context does not require them to use the English language to carry out daily activities.

On the other hand, Mei (2008) argues that ESL refers to students learning English in a country in which this is the main language, and as a consequence, students are more involved in the use of the language due to the exposure and need to use it alongside with their native language. In the English language teaching field, there are theories that point out that there is a difference between English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL), this implies that teaching strategies must be thought in accordance with the context and students' needs. However, in spite of knowing these differences, there is an undifferentiated use of them.

In order to give a clear route to our research project, we decided to focus on EFL, taking into account the socio-cultural conditions of a country such as Colombia, in which people do not need the English language to communicate daily and in which the exposure to this language is minimal or exclusively reduced to academic practice.

### Teaching Grammar

According to Ellis (2006) "grammar teaching is viewed as the presentation and practice of discrete grammatical structures" (p. 84). Thus, grammar teaching has taken place in the English classes as a main way to achieve the abilities worked in English classes and the understanding of the language including rules, concepts, structures and elements established into the written and spoken language, that are interrelated at the moment of communicating with others.

In a similar way, taking into account our experiences as Foreign language learners and as pre-service teachers, we considered that teaching grammar is relevant when people

want to learn a foreign language so it is quite necessary to think of how teachers display this knowledge to students and what methodologies have been used in the classroom.

### Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) model

As Tomlinson (2011) states: “It is an approach to teach language items which follows a sequence of presentation of the item, practice of the item and then the production (use) of the item” (as cited by Criado, 2013). Although this model is somehow traditional, the role that it would have in English classes could be very significant, since it is a complete method to teach any grammar topic. Also, it can also be considered useful for language teachers who are starting their teaching process.

Furthermore, as Ur (2011, retaken from Anderson, 2016, p. 17) claims “children in a state school in a country where the target language is not spoken outside the classroom are likely to get best results in grammar learning through systematic explanation plus practice”. This quote clearly describes the exact reality of most of the classrooms of English in our country. For those reasons, it is crucial to define the role that each **P** plays in this model of teaching.

Criado (2013, p. 3) explains that the three phases are:

1. P(1) Presentation phase: Here, the teacher highly controls the teaching/learning process and offers the knowledge about structures or meaning of words. This phase contains the linguistic items and structures of the unit.

2. P(2) Practice phase: Then, the teacher can control and correct the students’ understanding of the items before presented. The activities developed here are thought to achieve accuracy of forms, and to practice the acquired knowledge with the purpose of consolidating understanding.

3. P(3) Production phase: This phase aims at increasing fluency in linguistic use, students are autonomous and they can participate in activities using the targeted structures, in which activities such as discussions, debates, role-plays, opinion, etc “involve meaningful interaction rather than display usage (Larsen-Freeman, 2003 retaken from Anderson, 2016, p. 19).

### Writing skill

As Brown (2004) points out, the writing skill has its own features and conventions such as logician, organization, clearness, among others; which are demanding to achieve a predetermined intention even in the native language, that is why educated population learns the principles of writing in its own language. Taking the above information into account, writing is a skill that requires the domain of diverse elements to fulfill specific objectives, thus, learners of a foreign language feel the necessity for learning those aspect in the target language to accomplish their specific aims.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that there is a difference between concepts such as EFL and ESL that although in many cases is not considered an important factor in English language teaching field, for our particular case it is vital to start with that distinction of terms. Likewise, knowing the implications and guidelines of teaching models such as PPP applied specifically to grammatical skill lead us to delve more clearly into our research.

### METHODOLOGY

The following section of the paper will describe the procedures implemented to carry out our research project. Thus, in the upcoming lines the reader can find the steps taken into account to achieve the main purpose which was to strengthen the writing skill of EFL students from 7th grade through the implementation of PPP model.

## Research approach

For the purpose of this study, the qualitative approach seemed to be an adequate form to look for deeper observation focusing on experiences, thoughts, and descriptions. All this, with the purpose of doing an intensive research where the students' experiences and perspectives about their learning process, as well as the teachers' experiences in the implementation of a model to teach grammar in English could be evidenced. Likewise, as Bell (2005) states, qualitative research has the objective of perceiving the people's positions about life, and it also looks for a complete and profound comprehension about a situation. Thus, it was imperative to propose a way in which we could see the effects of our interventions.

Action research seemed to be the most suitable way to carry out this project. "Action research is a term which is applied to projects in which practitioners seek to effect *transformations* in their own practices" (Brown and Dowling, 2001, p.152 retaken from Tripp, 2005, n.p.). Taking this purpose in mind, this project was carried out by following the steps suggested by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) retaken by Burns (2009, p. 8):

1. Planning: Here researchers identify a problematic situation, and base on that issue they try to solve the following questions to create a plan with the purpose of providing betterment to this specific reality. What type of investigation could be carried out in this context bearing in mind the characteristics and teaching limitations of this reality? And what potential betterments could be expected?

2. Action: At this point the previous plan is carried out in some interventions throughout the teaching conditions during a specific period of time. In the course of these implementations researchers are impartial with the suppositions they find, and standing on this, they have the possibility of creating new or alternative manners to do it if it is required.

3. Observation: In this step researchers regard and document the issues that are happening while the implementations are applied from an opened minded and impartial view. In this moment, researchers collect information about the actions' effects in this reality.

4. Reflection: In this stage, researchers go deeper in their findings, and standing on them they reflect, assess and characterize the impact of actions done. This with the purpose of having a better understanding of the situation studied from a previous and updated-impartial perspective. Once researchers have achieved this stage, they can decide if the cycle should continue or if the research obtained the expected outcomes and these can be shared with the community.

All these steps with the purpose of transforming the way of teaching grammar using a classic model which might help in the comprehension of concepts and structures applied in the use of a foreign language.

#### Criteria to select participants and ethical considerations

This study was carried out with a group of 7th graders in an urban public institution in Rionegro, whose ages are around 12 years old. Considering all aspects in this research, we omitted the participants' real names, instead we used pseudonyms to protect their identities. The information collected was only used for the research development and only accessed by the researchers. Additionally, researchers provided the parents of the participants with a consent form (see Appendix A), considering that participants were under the legal age to sign a document. Those consent forms included in detail all the information about the study and the names of the researchers. Thus, parents and students knew what the purpose of this research was and the academic purposes that the data collected from them would have.

## Data collection methods

The collection of data within a research is one of the fundamental steps that provide information related to the achievement of the objective of the research project. In this particular case, to recognize how the implementation of the PPP model reinforced writing abilities of EFL 7th graders. Based on the purpose of our study, we believe that the following data collection methods were the most suitable ones in this process.

### *Observation*

The value of observation is that it permits researchers to study people in their native environment in order to understand “things” from their perspective. It means that observation implies that the researcher “spend considerable time in the field with the possibility of adopting various roles in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the people being studied” (Baker, 2006, p. 1).

*Non-Participant Observation:* this data collection method is essential, since the information is obtained in situ and in the same way, it invites researchers to develop sensitivity and to connect with the phenomenon that is being investigated. According to Creswell (2012) “The non-participant observer is an “outsider” who sits on the periphery or some advantageous place (e.g., the back of the classroom) to watch and record the phenomenon under study” (p. 215). This is with the intention of getting a better understanding of the reality from an objective perspective, by using an observation format to describe every situation inside the classroom. In this order of ideas, it is relevant to highlight that the observations were carried out in some classes in which the methodology was implemented (see Appendix B). Additionally, the observation forms or field notes were filled out by two of the researchers.

### *Journal*

Journals allow us to document situations that occur spontaneously and, in this way, make a reflection based on these events. Mertler (2017) describes journal as an instrument that allows teachers to reflect about their professional practice and go deeper in their reflections in aspects such as feelings and interpretations based on the observations of their teaching performances. It is important to mention that the development of this journal was done by one of the researchers, through a reflection format which we called 'log' (see Appendix C). The researcher that implemented this journal was the teacher in charge of the class as an instrument to registered situations lived inside the class.

### *Tasks*

According to Nunan (as cited in Rodríguez & Rodríguez, 2010) a task is considered as "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language, while their attention is primarily focused on meaning rather than form" (p. 10).

Regarding our research project and taking into account that it was based on the implementation of the PPP model, we found absolutely important to use the tasks as a data collection method that were taken as the result of the third phase (production). From these tasks, we had a reliable tool that was used to determine if students could really reinforce their writing skill through that model. Additionally, we clarify that the tasks were developed individually and in written form, with the purpose of having clear evidence of the students' process.

In this order of ideas a total of three implementations were carried out with an interval of fifteen days between each of them. Each intervention had a durability of three hours, in this way the first two hours were used for the first two phases of the implementation (presentation and production) and the third hour was to develop the third P (production), it is



also important to highlight that the first two phases were developed in the same day and the third phase was developed the next day, considering the school schedule. The format for planning the sessions was the same for all the three implementations (see Appendix G).

In the first implementation the students learned about the present simple, focusing specifically on the interrogative part. It is very important for later findings, to consider that the first P of this implementation was developed implicitly, so that the students first read a short text and based on this they inferred the topic and they remembered previous knowledge.

After that, the students had the opportunity to perform a mini-practice in which they should unscramble some sentences by identifying the appropriate auxiliary (do-does) for each pronoun and the correct order of each sentence. Then, students developed a workshop (P2), which consisted of completing some sentences, writing the correct questions based on the answers and creating questions and answers about the healthy habits of a classmate, trying to integrate the answers in a text.

Finally, students did the third P, in which they have to read an email and write a reply where they answered some questions that were underlined. In addition, they should include 2 questions about their routine and healthy habits. In this part, the students were allowed to follow an email as a model.

In the second implementation, the use of can and can't was the topic. Unlike the first implementation, this time the topic was explained explicitly. The teacher explained the use of can and cannot and its structure, then the students completed a chart about a classmate's abilities, using complete sentences to describe him / her (P2). To develop the third P, each student must write short text in which he / she describes an invention (created by themselves), explaining 10 things that the object can do and 10 things it can't do.

The third implementation was based on frequency adverbs. In this implementation as in the second, the explicit form was chosen to explain the topic. In the first P, a pyramid with

percentages was used to explain the adverbs of frequency, in the same way the explanation was completed using examples. In order to develop the second P, students completed a chart in which they used adverbs of frequency to talk about how often they do some activities. Finally, students wrote about the things they did on their favorite day and how often they perform them.

### *Data analysis*

The analysis of the collected information is a procedure that requires rigorous actions that can lead the researchers to find objective information to share with the community. That is why this study had the following steps suggested by Creswell (2014):

Step 1. Organizing and preparing the data for analysis: The diverse instruments used to collect information might be organized to analyze its data.

Step 2. Reading all the collected data: All the information found in the instruments might be read, providing this a general overview of the findings.

Step 3: Coding the data: All the information found is grouped according to its similarities found.

Step 4. Creating categories or themes for descriptions: Based on coding process and similarities found, there are created some categories to have a detail description about the gathered information, as well as for its analysis.

Step 5. Presentation of the information: researchers look for the way of presenting the collected data where all the findings are shared with the community.

Step 6. Interpretation of findings: These interpretations can be flexible but they might make a comparison between the findings and theories and literature related the topic.

And finally, after all these stages are done researchers can report the results to the audience.

## FINDINGS

### P1- PRESENTATION

Bearing the main objective of this project, which was to fortify the writing skill of EFL 7th students of a public educational institution with the application of the PPP model, this section will include the most relevant findings in the three steps of the three implementations.

Regarding the first step of the implementation, PRESENTATION. We have realized that, at the beginning, students were talkative and tried to catch the attention of the researchers, but during the explanation of the topics, they were attentive and motivated with the different activities proposed by the teacher (journal 1.1, March 28, 2019).

The use of the language had an important role during these implementations. Students were motivated with the use of English, they seemed to comprehend the topics and with the help of the teacher, they used English to practice the language or to ask for help. Through the mini practices, we could evidence that they worked together and they solved their doubts among them.

In one of our journal entries (journal 1.1, March 28, 2019), we reported how students seemed to pay more attention to each part of the explanation and when the teacher involved one or more students to explain the topic, they looked concentrated and some others wanted to participate actively in the class, besides, they had a positive attitude in this case.

The grammar that was explained at the beginning was difficult for them. They had little problems in the first implementation but during the other two implementations, students were more aware of the topics and sometimes their good reaction facing the topics was obvious due to the previous knowledge with the topics seen in the classes that they had.

We could realize it, because in topics such as CAN or FREQUENCY ADVERBS their participation increased due to the background related to the vocabulary and the meaning.

It was possible to see that they were aware of it through the field notes 1.2, April 11, 2019) and field notes 1.3, May 2, 2019)

## P2-PRACTICE

In the same way, in the second stage of this process: Practice, students had the opportunity to use the previous knowledge explained in activities where they could take advantage of diverse sources such as notes, vocabulary, dictionaries, images, among others. In this step, according to the field notes and the journal of the implementation 1.2, March 28, 2019), it was noticed that most of the students participated actively sharing out loud their thoughts and doubts during the activity related to healthy habits. This high level of participation could be understood as a manifestation of students' engagement with the class, an aspect that improved the learners discipline inside the classroom.

In this process, the teacher repeated the instructions and provided them with feedback, and in the same manner, students answered questions among themselves. It was noticed that learners preferred to work by teams even though they were carrying out the exercise on their own copy. At the end of this activity, only 3 students did not finish it, and it was identified that:

Students has some problems forming questions, When they had the example, or the sentences were disorganized they formed them well, but if they had to form them without example, they had problems. Also, they had gaps in the affirmative form, they forgot –s in the verbs. (journal 1.1, March 28, 2019).

Throughout this process of implementation, participants seemed engaged and apparently enjoyed the activities presented, they also had an active participation in which they shared their knowledge with their classmates. (Field notes and journal 2.2, March 11, 2019, and Field notes and journal 3.2, May 2, 2019). Additionally, it was found that, in the first implementation, students required more teacher's support to understand the topic

explained, as well as to develop the activity related to healthy habits (Field notes 1.2, March 28, 2019) while in the last implementation, they carried out the activity of sharing information about the frequency of doing something with more facility (Field notes and journal 3.2, May 2, 2019), besides, the most of them got high results in their gradings (Rubric - production for implementation 3.3, May 3, 2019).

Furthermore, it is necessary to highlight the use of English language into the classroom, due to the fact that learners were sharing their own and others' information in the target language, as it is noticed in field notes 2.2, April 11, 2019 where students "(...) got together and asked questions in English, in this case, learners used more English than in the previous activity about completing the chart with the abilities that their classmates can or can't do". Similarly, in the Field note 3.2, May 2, 2019, in which "students listened to the recording twice and they paid attention while they were listening". Bearing in mind that the Colombian context does not require the use of English to communicate inside the country, the activities implemented were carried out in accordance with this English Foreign Language context, due to the fact that it promoted the usage of the target language in an environment where learners do not have exposure to the language studied.

### P3-PRODUCTION

In this order of ideas, the students had to demonstrate the impact that the two previous steps generated in their writing performance through the third P (production). It is also important to clarify that in the three implementations, the number of participants was fluctuating and, as a consequence, there was not a constant number of students during the three implementations.

After analyzing the writing tasks, with the help of the different rubrics that were created to make the grading process as objective as possible (see Appendices D, E and F), the

results showed that most of the students had a significant progress in the development of the tasks proposed for the three implementations.

<b>THIRD P - PRODUCTION IMPLEMENTATION 1</b>								
<i>TOTAL OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>19</i>								
Development of the text	9	47,37%	8	42,11%	0	0,00%	2	10,53%
Use of the structures	8	42,11%	10	52,63%	1	5,26%	0	0,00%
Vocabulary used	15	78,95%	4	21,05%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
Structuring of the text	4	21,05%	11	57,89%	4	21,05%	0	0,00%

*Table 1. Scoring of production in the first implementation*

<b>THIRD P - PRODUCTION IMPLEMENTATION 2</b>								
<i>TOTAL OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>18</i>								
Task achievement	14	77,78%	4	22,22%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
Use of the structures	16	88,89%	1	5,56%	0	0,00%	1	5,56%
Vocabulary used	17	94,44%	1	5,56%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
Structuring of the text	11	61,11%	5	27,78%	2	11,11%	0	0,00%

*Table 2. Scoring of production in the second implementation*

<b>THIRD P - PRODUCTION IMPLEMENTATION 3</b>								
<i>TOTAL OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>1</i>
<b>16</b>								
Development of the exercise	12	75,00%	1	6,25%	3	18,75%	0	0,00%
Use of the structures	10	62,50%	4	25,00%	2	12,50%	0	0,00%
Vocabulary used	14	87,50%	2	12,50%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
Structuring of the text	10	62,50%	5	31,25%	1	6,25%	0	0,00%

*Table 3. Scoring of production in the second implementation*

As it is possible to see from the three previous tables, the use of vocabulary was the category that stood out throughout this process, evidencing that students have the ability to easily understand this aspect of the English language, and as a result, 78.95% of the students were placed in the highest grade of this category in the first implementation, 94.44% in the second category and 87.50% in the last implementation.

Regarding the task achievement, which consisted of fulfilling the proposed activities as better as possible, the participants showed a significant advance, going from 47.37% with the highest grade in the first implementation to 75.00% in the last implementation.

On the other hand, the use of structures as a category had a different behavior to the other categories, since in the first implementation not even half of the participants obtained the best scores in this category, only 42.11% of them achieved the highest grade. During the second implementation the number of participants with the best score in this category increased considerably, 88.89% of them were located in the highest level of this descriptor. It means, that only two participants did not achieve the maximum score. However, in the third implementation this percentage decreased to 62.50%, but considering that in this implementation the number of participants was lower, it can be observed that the decrease is not considerable.

Regarding the structure of the text as a category, it is possible to establish that the percentages in the last two implementations were constant, going from 61.11% to 62.50% respectively. However, it is possible to observe a significant change compared to the first intervention, in which only 21% of the participants achieved the best score. Additionally, it is important to highlight that the second implementation was the one in which the greatest advance in the written production of the students could be evidenced, positioning 88.89% and 61.11% of the participants in the highest grades in the categories of use of structures and structuring of the text respectively.

## DISCUSSION

The implementation of PPP model as a strategy to improve in EFL 7th graders of a public educative institution and the direct relation with the writing skill was one of the most relevant experiences in our practice as English teachers. This experience could be related to one of the studies explored on the literature review of this project. The study was: "Teaching Grammar in an English Foreign Language (EFL) Context", developed in Australia by Garrett (2015). This study had a process with PPP to teach grammar, and we had a very close relationship with this because we implemented these steps in a context where students did not have a lot of knowledge about English. However, thanks to this method, they could improve their writing skill and we could evidence this through the last step of the method (production) and the journals written by the teacher, as well as the observations carried out by two of the researchers.

Additionally, both studies applied the same steps, although the project in mention had a variation during the presentation of the topic in which implicit instruction was applied in the first implementation and explicit instruction was carried out throughout the second and third implementation, this, with the purpose of allowing students to identify the linguistic differences between their mother tongue with the target language as it was suggested by



Garrett (2015), as well as to introduce learners with the topic to learn. On the other hand, according to the study carried out by Garret (2015), learners had higher scores due to explicit instruction, this is why, establishing a relationship with the population of 7th grader it was found that participants got better results in the performances in which they receive explicit instruction during the implementation.

In the same manner, a relation between the research project of "Implicit and Explicit Teaching of Grammar: an empirical study" developed by Mendoza (2004) and ours was found. This study was looking for information related to a favorable methodology to provide instructions that could help students during their process of learning English, this research demonstrated that students that received explicit instruction got better scores than students that received implicit or did not receive instruction throughout the process. It is imperative to highlight that in both kinds of research, students had a significant improvement in their performances, specifically, the performances in which participants were taught about the topic to work, as well as the manner to talk about it correctly.

Furthermore, according to a systematization of experiences developed by Chávez and Hernández (2012) that had the aim of analyzing methodological approaches that teachers were using in their English classes, it was found that teachers had fears about being innovative in their classes because they did not master the English information and knowledge, that is why teachers preferred to use a traditional methodology during their English classes, besides, they thought that students do not have a high level related to the target language. Thus, they just kept their teaching classes focusing on vocabulary, repetition, and memorization.

Bearing the above information in mind, this research project looked for the innovation during the usage of a traditional model, in which researchers mixed implicit and explicit manners of explanation, as well as going beyond repetition and memorization. In this case, at

the moment of the second P (Practice), learners were trying to interiorize the previous vocabulary and information given, and after that repetition and memorization, they had to apply the knowledge acquired in the third P (Production), in which they were using the previous knowledge to transmit their own ideas in a written way.

Likewise, researchers used the PPP model with the purpose of reinforcing students writing skills with innovative and creative strategies, and throughout this process, the research showed that learners were engaged during their learning process of English, and because of this, they had a high level of participation in which they expressed the thoughts and doubts that they had.

Equally important, and after analyzing the gathering data, the findings of this study share similarities with the “Implicit and Explicit Teaching of Grammar: an empirical study” a research project that was carried out by Mendoza (2004) in which students that received explicit instruction had a significant improvement in their scores as well as in their performances. It relates to this study due to the fact that students obtained better results as the implementations were progressing. The study demonstrated that the participants made significant progress in the second and third implementations, where explicit instructions were carried out, with respect to the first one that had implicit instruction. This could be, among other things, the result of the adaptation of the students to the two participants who fulfilled the role of observers within the research. The progress of the participants could be evidenced through the third P (production) of the model implemented.

In the same way, it is relevant to mention that the participants showed a better development in implementation number two, this could be due to external factors such as the topic worked, since the students seemed to be more familiar with the topic of this intervention (can / can't) than with the other two topics worked during the research project.

Furthermore, and bearing in mind the above information, it was also noticed that learners preferred to work by teams or in pairs instead of individually, as well as that at the beginning of the implementation students had more questions and doubts than at the end of this process, and learners could solve them with their classmates and their teacher's help. Furthermore, at the end of this procedure, students improved a lot their discipline, which was not in our objectives, but this unquestionably becomes an extra element that feeds the development of the present study, as well as, they showed more confidence with the usage of English language.

Another aspect that should be taken into account is that according to Tomlinson (2011), PPP model seems to be traditional but it can influence the students' knowledge in a good way. As we mentioned previously, the discipline was a factor that was successfully involved in our study. Additionally, students' participation was a good way to notice that they were engaged with different topics and activities. It was also important to notice that students enjoyed the implementations and the way in which this traditional model could provide them the opportunity to improve by the time their English skills or in this particular case their writing skill.

Furthermore, facing the context in which this research was carried out, it was made a distinction between English as a Foreign Language EFL with English as a Second Language ESL, establishing that the context had to do as Mei (2008) argues with EFL, where learners do not have the opportunity to use the target language in their local society, as well as this is not required to communicate each other. To illustrate this, Colombian learners of English use Spanish to communicate inside their country, that is why, participants of this project are not used to speak in English outside their classrooms. Because of this, researchers promoted the use of English language during the implementations as much as they could through diverse strategies. These strategies with the purpose of catching the students' attention and well as

encouraging students to use the target language to share their own and information about others in a real, meaningful and creative way.

Similarly, as this study focuses on production abilities, specifically on writing skills, there are aspects that need to be embraced to refer to the findings. Aspects such as rules, concepts, structures among others require to be taught as it is suggested by Ellis (2006). Based on this information, the teaching of these elements was developed in the first P of the model implemented: Presentation, in which the teacher shared with students' linguistic aspects as it was suggested by Criado (2013).

It was also noticed that, as Brown (2004) advocates, writing skill has its own features and conventions that are difficult to manage even in the native language, reason why, these features require to be taught during the learning of a foreign language. This with the purpose of providing tools to learners that allow them to have a well use of the target language, and throughout this the achievement of specific purposes in their academic, professional or personal life.

## CONCLUSIONS

After completing an arduous work of research, analysis and reflection, we can conclude that the use of PPP model is a good strategy that allows students to have a direct relationship with the language, in our case English. In the same way, we conclude that through the implementation of this model within English classes, students have the opportunity to reinforce knowledge and clarify doubts through the practice stage, which reflects students' greater confidence when they had to do written production. Additionally, we can affirm that the use of the PPP model encourages interaction among students, and contrary to what can be thought, this model also contributes to the control of discipline, since students are focused on what they have to do, they are encouraged to participate and that motivates them to be part of the class.

Furthermore, it is possible to say that PPP model helped us to become better teachers, since this model is a good ally for beginning teachers, giving us the confidence to carry out a sequential and orderly class from which students could get the best benefit. With each implementation, we could realize that our work can help the process of acquisition of a language, allowing us to see the progress of the students with the course of the implementations.

We can also say that most of the circumstances played in our favor, we did not have problems with the students, at all times we had positive responses from them. They were very motivated with the class given by the teacher and they also showed interest when the observers were present in the classes.

As researchers, at the beginning we thought that we could have challenges to face and we had them. It is not easy to arrive to a class that does not have direct contact or frequent contact with English and try to engage them with activities and with a teaching model to which they were not accustomed.

Regarding the school, we did not have problems with the schedule of the students. Each implementation was given in the planned date. The cooperating teacher in charge of the group gave us the approval and space to carry out the research, she was present as well during the classes supporting us with all this adventure. She was very interested in the way how the teacher gave the class because she thought that it was a complete way of teach English. She told us that students were more focused on the topics and its practices.

In many occasions, the biggest challenge was to do the planning and materials in a short time, without leaving aside the academic responsibilities of each researcher, coupling to different rhythms and work styles is cumbersome when time is not enough.

Taking into account that all this process was enriching, we wanted to have more time to analyze the strengths and weaknesses that students had before the implementation. It

would have been useful if we had had more opportunities to pre-analyze the students writing skills. Although the three implementations were enough for our objective in this research project, we consider that we could have discovered more issues, if this research had been applied for a longer period of time. Maybe with more implementations of PPP model, we could have shown more support of its effectiveness.

Considering all these conclusions and reflections about this beautiful process, we can say in relation to our question “How the implementation of PPP can reinforce 7th graders writing skills?” that this model can help students to improve during their English learning process. The results that the investigation gave us were positive and wonderful for us, who saw this project grow. Students improved their writing skills through all the implementations and we are sure if any teacher can and want to implement this during their classes, their students will have the best performance.

Finally, this research is an instrument for those future generations who worry as we do to rescue models that are being forgotten. However, with the mastery of the subject and experience, we can say that it is necessary to make an analysis of the skills of the students (in this case, writing), before starting the implementation process. Perhaps it can be enriching to inquire about the impact that this model generates in other skills such as listening, speaking and reading documenting said processes.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A - CONSENT FORM

#### CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

*¿Cómo puede reforzar la implementación de PPP la habilidad de escritura en inglés en los estudiantes de séptimo grado?*

La información solicitada en este ejercicio hace parte de un proyecto de investigación acción que tiene como propósito reforzar el proceso de escritura del idioma Inglés a través de la implementación del método pedagógico Presentar, Practicar y Producir (conocido como PPP) en estudiantes de séptimo grado de una institución educativa pública del municipio de Rionegro, Antioquia.

La participación de los estudiantes consiste en hacer parte de los diferentes procesos pedagógicos que serán llevados a cabo dentro de su aula de clase durante sesiones de inglés. A través de su participación, las investigadoras pretenden adquirir información que pueda guiarlas hacia el logro del objetivo previamente mencionado, razón por la que dicha información será analizada sólo en términos académicos, los cuales serán socializados con los participantes. En este sentido, es importante mencionar que la identidad e información personal de los participantes no será publicada, por lo que se usarán seudónimos para cada uno de ellos.

#### FORMULARIO DE ACUERDO DE LOS PARTICIPANTES

1. Confirmamos que hemos leído y entendido la información proporcionada al participante para el estudio anteriormente mencionado.
2. Aceptamos que no recibiremos salario por nuestra participación en este ejercicio.
3. Entendemos que nuestro anonimato será garantizado si se publican fragmentos en cualquier medio de comunicación (presentaciones públicas, socialización del proyecto o artículos de investigación que se desprendan de este ejercicio).
4. Entendemos que nuestra participación es completamente voluntaria y sin ningún tipo de consecuencias.

Otorgo mi consentimiento para la participación de \_\_\_\_\_  
menor de edad, en la investigación en mención.

firma del acudiente o padre de familia: \_\_\_\_\_

nombre del acudiente o padre de familia: \_\_\_\_\_

firma de investigadora que recibe el acuerdo: \_\_\_\_\_

nombre de investigadora que recibe el acuerdo: \_\_\_\_\_

Firmado el día \_\_\_\_\_ del mes de \_\_\_\_\_ del año \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B - OBSERVATION FORMAT (FIELD NOTES)

OBSERVER: \_\_\_\_\_

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

OBSERVATION N° \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENTS	REACTIONS FROM THE STUDENTS

APPENDIX C - JOURNAL FORMAT

LOG

How did I feel regarding this implementation?	
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APPENDIX D - RUBRIC FOR PRODUCT IN IMPLEMENTATION #1

RUBRIC - PRODUCTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION # 1

STUDENT NUMBER:

DATE:

GRADE:

DESCRIPTORS	4	3	2	1
Development of the exercise	The Ss answered the questions proposed in the exercise (4 questions)	The Ss answered 2 to 3 questions proposed in the exercise (4 questions)	The Ss answered only 1 question proposed in the exercise (4 questions)	The Ss did not answer the questions proposed in the exercise

Use of the structures	The Ss used the structures required appropriately (simple present - aff, neg, int)	Though the Ss answered the questions, there are minor mistakes in the use of the required structures (simple present - aff, neg, int)	Though the Ss answered one question, this one has several mistakes in the use of the required structures (simple present - aff, neg, int)	There was not a correct use of the target structures at any moment
Vocabulary used	The Ss used vocabulary related to the topic (Healthy habits) appropriately	The Ss used most of the words related to the topic (Healthy habits)	The Ss rarely used vocabulary related to the topic (healthy habits)	The Ss did not use any of the words proposed in the topic (Healthy Habits)
Structuring of the text	The Ss used complete sentences in a logical organization to describe the task	The Ss used complete sentences to describe the task, but these ones are not completely organized	The Ss used some sentences to describe the task, but these ones are neither complete nor organized.	The Ss could not use complete sentences to describe the required task

## APPENDIX E - RUBRIC FOR PRODUCT IN IMPLEMENTATION #2

### RUBRIC - PRODUCTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION # 2

STUDENT NUMBER:

DATE:

GRADE:

DESCRIPTORS	4	3	2	1
Task achievement	The Ss wrote the 10 sentences about their invention, complying fully with the task achievement.	The Ss wrote 5 to 9 sentences about their invention	The Ss wrote only 1 or 4 sentences about their invention	The Ss did not write sentences about their invention

Use of the structures	The Ss used the structures required appropriately (can / can't)	Though the Ss write about their invention, there are minor mistakes in the use of the required structures (can / can't)	The sentences have several mistakes in the use of the required structures (can / can't) that affects the understanding of the exercise.	There was not a correct use of the target structures at any moment
Vocabulary used	The Ss used vocabulary related to the topic (abilities-activities) appropriately	The Ss used most of the words related to the topic (abilities-activities)	The Ss rarely used vocabulary related to the topic (abilities-activities)	The Ss did not use any of the words proposed in the topic (abilities-activities)
Structuring of the text	The Ss used complete sentences in a logical organization to describe the task	The Ss used complete sentences to describe the task, but these ones are not completely organized	The Ss used some sentences to describe the task, but these ones are neither complete nor organized.	The Ss could not use complete sentences to describe the required task

#### APPENDIX F - RUBRIC FOR PRODUCT IN IMPLEMENTATION #3

##### RUBRIC - PRODUCTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION # 2

STUDENT NUMBER:

DATE:

GRADE:

DESCRIPTORS	4	3	2	1
Task achievement	The Ss wrote 10 sentences about how often he/she performs different kind of activities	The Ss wrote between 6 and 9 sentences about how often he/she performs different kind of activities	The Ss wrote 1 or 5 sentences about how often he/she performs different kind of activities	The Ss did not write sentences about how often he/she performs different kind of activities

Use of the structures	The Ss used the structures required appropriately (frequency adverbs)	Though the Ss write about how often he/she perform different kind of activities, there are minor mistakes in the use of the required structures (frequency adverbs)	The sentences have several mistakes in the use of the required structures (frequency adverbs) that affects the understanding of the exercise.	There was not a correct use of the target structures at any moment
Vocabulary used	The Ss used vocabulary related to the topic (different activities performed) appropriately	The Ss used most of the words related to the topic (different activities performed)	The Ss rarely used vocabulary related to the topic (different activities performed)	The Ss did not use any of the words proposed in the topic (different activities performed)
Structuring of the text	The Ss used complete sentences in a logical organization to describe the task	The Ss used complete sentences to describe the task, but these ones are not completely organized	The Ss used some sentences to describe the task, but these ones are either complete or organized.	The Ss could not use complete sentences to describe the required task

#### APPENDIX G - PLANNING FORMAT

**CLASS #**

<b>Student-teacher:</b>		<b>Institution:</b>		<b>Grade:</b>
<b>Date:</b>		<b>Time:</b>		<b>N° of students:</b>
<b>Topic:</b>		<b>Language focus:</b>		<b>Skills:</b>
<b>Objectives:</b>				
<b>Anticipated problems &amp; extra activities:</b>				
<b>Homework/further work:</b>				
<b>Time</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Procedures</b>	<b>Resources</b>