

Booklet Design Based on a Communicative Methodology to Improve Students' Grammatical Correctness

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Abstract

To design a booklet based on a communicative methodology to improve students' grammatical correctness in the English language teaching-learning process, a quantitative-qualitative research was carried out at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador Sede Esmeraldas in the year 2020. The methods used were Analysis, Synthesis, Hermeneutics and Descriptive Statistics, with the techniques of test and survey used to make a diagnosis of the students' most common grammatical mistakes and the teachers' opinions in relation to the main causes they think contribute to this situation. The results revealed that all students agree that grammar should be taught through communicative activities with teachers in the classroom, since grammar is most often taught in a structural way, not considering social interaction, and meaning negotiation, causing frustration and demotivation in the students, they also think that grammar is the most important linguistic component in the development of adequate communicative competence. With the diagnosis made, a booklet based on a communicative methodology to teach grammar was designed, which consisted of some methodological orientations to teachers on how to proceed in each of the stages: presentation, focused practice, and communicative practice, with some activities to improve the students' grammatical accuracy.

Keywords: Booklet Design, Grammatical Accuracy, Communicative Methodology, English Language

Introduction

English has become the most important language around the world, a global language (Ngang, 2020) spoken in many countries around the globe for different reasons. The challenge people have is big because not everybody finds English as something easy and bearable. For that reason, English teachers nowadays have also a significant demand from learners to get them involved and motivated to learn this language adequately.

However, the English language pattern or aspect which becomes the pain in the neck for learners is grammar. Grammar is considered most of the time as an irritating point that provokes in some students the feeling of deserting and stopped learning the English language just for the reaction it causes in people.

That is why, it is relevant to identify and know the causes for which students refuse and find grammar as something that frustrates them, for the continuity of the English language learning. It is known because of some investigations from important authors that some English teachers apply traditional methodologies and activities to teach grammar.

English teachers must know that young generations have changed, and this have made the way of teaching English, specifically grammar also has changed. The perspective and vision of teachers and students must be connected in class in order to have successful results.

In addition, the concept of grammar must be established considering the impact grammar has in students. It can be defined that Grammar is one of the most important linguistic components to include in the English language teaching learning process because certainly, grammar is the spinal cord and the most important base to speak good English and be able to communicate correctly.

Every time when a student is learning grammar, it is presented and taught structurally, which is not bad because students must know the form to implement the meaning later. For that, this is the crucial moment students must produce and apply the language and grammar communicatively, and English teachers have an important role in this part. If grammar is not learnt properly, mistakes are not only fossilized in writing but in speaking as well, which means the production of language in students.

Therefore, people are being judged because to have a good grammar shows simply good education and makes people more educated, so it is important for everyone to spend a little time perfecting it.

There have been some observations in the students of PUCE- Esmeraldas about the essential grammatical mistakes they make in the use of English at the moment to write and speak, otherwise both skills are totally linked, something that also influences in the production of the language. This may occur because some students do not have enough time to practice the language and this derives in lack of interest from learners.

Likewise, English teachers would benefit with information about common mistakes the students make, their causes, to find out how they can be reduced by systematic teaching.

Therefore, the scientific problem of this investigation is: What didactic material would be useful to improve university students' grammatical correctness?

In this research, the following general objective was considered: to design a booklet based on a communicative methodology to improve students' grammatical correctness. To achieve this general objective, three important specific ones were stated: to diagnose the most frequent grammatical mistakes the students make; to define the cause for which students make grammatical mistakes, and to determine the type of activities that are more suitable for teaching grammar communicatively.

The Teaching of English as a Foreign Language

English is a foreign and international language for many purposes, that is why it is taught in most schools around the world. In addition, it doesn't play an essential role in social life. In many countries around the world such as: Japan and Brazil their citizens do not need English or any other foreign language to live their daily life or professional progress. But there is a huge motivation in people on account of English is an international language spoken in almost all the world to reach business and increase the relationship between humans by means of communication.

According to Broughton, G, Brumfit, C, Flavell, R, Hill, P and Pincas, A (1980) in foreign language situations of this kind, therefore, the hundreds of thousands of learners of English tend to have an instrumental motivation for learning the foreign language. The teaching of modern languages in schools has an educational function, and the older learner who deliberately sets out to learn English has a clear instrumental intention: he wants to visit England, to be able to communicate with English-speaking tourists or friends, to be able to read English in books and newspapers.

It is meaningful to admit that language learning has been changing very drastically, language learners have noticed that all the ways of language teaching which were applied in the past are totally different comparing to the present because languages have evolved a lot in the last years.

Mahmoud M, and Abdallah, S (2011) stated that language educators have become quite convinced that the way learners are learning the language at present is totally different from the way that they themselves were learning it in the past. The history of language learning has witnessed significant shifts and transitions from the behavioristic models that perceive language learning from a computerized input-output perspective.

Nowadays, it is clear to see that teaching a language has become a little bit easier for teachers and learners because of the technology improvement around the world, people have more access to the web in which a lot of useful information can be found and enabling for public use and avenues for language learning and practice. In other words, the web has helped interested people to get advantage through social networking, publishing and collaborative construction of knowledge. This is clearly evident and significant in the case of learning English as a foreign language within a context where learners do not find opportunities to practice in real situations outside the classroom.

What is Grammar?

According to Harmer, J (1999) cited in Lopez (2017), grammar is partly the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language. Grammar is one of the most important part of language learning because it studies the syntax and morphology of sentences. Grammar analyzes if the words are chained together in a particular and correct order to make sentences in the ideas that want to be expressed. If there is not a correct grammar, it is difficult for people to develop the other skills very well.

Kruřicová, M(2015) stated that “languages make no sense without using grammar rules”(p 11). This definition means that grammar places an important role in the language building because it provides a range of aspects to construct sentences with logic and more reliability. If it is not like that, it would become ambiguous and full of contradictions, having at the same a lot of variations, making some people lose the understanding of what it is said.

Levine (2014) cited in Takala (2016) stated that “grammar is connected to learner identity just like it is connected to any other aspects of language”. This supports Larsen-Freeman’s vision of 10 individual identities and the humanness of grammar.

Thornbury (2004, p 13)as cited in Anni, T, (2016, p 9) described grammar as “a description of the rules for forming sentences, including an account of the meanings that these forms convey”. In other words, grammar allows learners to build sentences by means of respecting rules and norms which are important to be organized and show sometimes a high educational level.

Grammar is the combination of different patterns to create or form sentences with a good logic which must be understandable by people. Moreover, Hartwell (2009, p. 109) said that "grammar" is "the set of formal patterns in which the words of a language are arranged to convey larger meaning”.

The investigation reflects that most people do not apply grammar correctly and use it to communicate emergently, without taking into consideration the different important aspects and rules to follow and respect. If that is applied, it is feasible to express that people control and manage the patterns involved in the grammar of a determined language. Hartwell, P (2009).

Common Grammatical Errors in Students

There are some different types of mistakes in written English. According to Fitikides (2002) as cited in Lopez (2017), there are mistakes in:

- The construction of sentences, for the fact that most students do not use the verbs correctly and commit some violations of this rule in the conversation and also in writing, for example they say: you “was”, for “you were” and he “don’t” for “he doesn’t”. The following examples are incorrect usage:
 - “The steamer, with the crew and passenger, were [was] lost”.
 - “What signifies [signify] good opinions, when our practice is bad?”

- The use of prepositions is generally considered at the present day to be perfectly legitimate English idioms. The use of prepositions is very important and indispensable but there are some mistakes students make and the sentences sound inelegant for incorrect usage, as the following examples:
 - “To rise *beyond* [above] that is given to the few”
 - “Alike independent *on* [of] another”
- The use of the indefinite article [a] and [an]. They cannot be used with a plural noun, but with a noun of multitude; as, “an army”, “a fleet” etc. [A] is used before all words beginning with a consonant, or a consonant noun, [An], before all words beginning with a true vowel or a silent h; as,

“a man”, “a woman”, “a youth”, “a European”, “a unit”, “such a one”, “a harpoon”, “a harangue”, “an angel”, “an Indian”, “an hour”, “an honest”.
- The definite article [the] may be used before a noun, whether singular or plural, except abstract terms, or names of virtues, vices, or sciences. Articles are also often inserted erroneously, as the following examples:
 - “That is the kind of *a* man of whom we are speaking.”
 - “What sort of *a* charm do they possess?”
- The appendix refers to when the person does not use the verbs correctly referring to the third person singular, in accordance with the foregoing rules:

play, plays; do, does; eat, eats; go, goes;

Seemeen R, Lateefa O and Nwair A (2019) affirm that the most frequent grammatical mistakes in students are: word choice with 24%, the use of preposition 14%, verb tense 11%, plurality 9%, run on sentences 7%, subject- verb agreement, and finally sentence fragments 8%.

Lopez, B (2017) found out that the most frequent grammatical mistakes students present are: The infinitive, verbal tenses, conjugations of verbs in the third personal singular, the use of the form FOR+ gerund, the correct use of the verb to be. In his investigation, it is noticeable that students made some mistakes in basic grammatical patterns, which are essential for them to develop the rest of the skills successfully, because grammar is very much connected to the proper development of the language.

The Communicative Approach as an English Language Teaching Method

Emrullah S, (2010) said that CLT methodologies focus on developing learners’ communicative competence via communicative activities rather than solely providing grammar teaching. They are based on the notion that L2 competence cannot be defined by merely grammatical knowledge. This means that CLT is more emphasized on students’ development of communicative skills in which they can use the language in realistic situations but with a main purpose of a determined grammar pattern that is being taught by the teacher at a specific time. In other words, language must be authentic for learners to have an approach to real language to be introduced.

One of the most principal characteristics concerning CLT is that classes are totally centered in communication and are useful for achieving the goal of communication. In other words, this means that CLT emphasizes more in students rather than teachers, they are who must take more participation in their own learning process with the teachers’ guide. Emrullah S (2010) stated that the primary principle of CLT is that all activities managed and carried in classrooms are supposed to be communication centered.

In addition, there is another principle that is meaningful to be mentioned that explains the importance of authentic and meaningful communication activities. Another aspect to be considered is that learners have the chance to choose what and how to refer everything they want to express. This consists of the fact that learners can use their own language form instead of being controlled or pressured by others. But there is a point that is significant to be stated, which refers to the teachers' role that is to be monitoring students, helping them when it is necessary without distorting and disturbing what students are doing, this means they don't have to influence in the students' development of activities.

For language teaching, if the language used by students is controlled by the teacher, it will be difficult for them to develop their communicative competence. The use of authentic materials is an important characteristic of Communicative Language Teaching. There are various authentic materials, such as a copy of a genuine newspaper article, a live radio or TV broadcast, a menu, a literary text, etc., which expose students to examples of natural language rather than material which has been written for language teaching purposes (Emrullah S, 2010).

CTL classes must follow specific patterns to be developed based on all the characteristics mentioned before. Emrullah, S(2010) stated some of them, such as:

- It is essential to create speaking opportunities for the students to achieve a communicative competence.
- Students get the chance to be creative and express their own attitudes, feeling, emotions, and fears.
- Students concentrate on 'what' they are saying (or writing) rather than 'how' they are saying (or writing) it. The focus is on the meaning of the words more than all the others.
- In short, the CLT is based on teaching English for the purpose of communication, that is, to give students the ability to use the language rather than simply to know its structure, grammar, and vocabulary.

Another principal feature concerning CLT is that all the language skills must be integrated and developed in the classroom. This means that students are focused on the communicative competence; that is why this method is called CLT. Goals therefore must intertwine the organizational aspects of language with the pragmatic. While involvement in communicative events is seen as central to language development, this involvement necessarily requires attention to form. This is the main reason and explanations from some authors who have said that grammar is relevant and take an important role for language communicative development. In other words, communication cannot occur if there is an absence of grammar rules and structure explanations.

One principle which has a huge impact on student if it is not very well applied is related to mistakes. In CLT classes mistakes are considered like something normal because learners are trying to show they are using the language and implementing some certain grammatical structures and patterns that have been introduced and explained by teachers, it is essential to remember that communication cannot be developed if there are not grammatical structures in students' data base information. Grammar encourages learners to think logically and with a huge critical thinking. In other words, they feel more confident with more reliability to express their ideas. Emrullah, S(2010) established that learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error: According to CLT, in the process of language learning, making mistakes is normal and shows what is being understood by the students, it is like a signal for teachers to know what needs to be reinforced. Besides that, the goal of the students' learning foreign languages is to get things done successfully and to communicate with other people.

Emrullah, S (2010) pointed out that teachers may find themselves talking less and listening more. In other words, this appreciation makes emphasis on the fact that the teachers' role is to serve as guides and monitors for students, becoming facilitators, observing learners' development in class. In fact, teachers are like the skillful conductors of an orchestra, giving each of the performers a chance to participate and monitoring their performance to see that it is satisfactory. Students are those who must take more participation in class, being the center of it. CLT engages students to take more participation in their own learning process. Finally, CLT breaks the traditional didactic position of teachers and students, who are now actively involved in interpretation, negotiation of meaning and expression.

Another point to take into consideration is regarding mistakes. When students are talking errors are tolerated in order to encourage and nourish fluency, because of the fact that if they are interrupted their ideas are being cut, promoting a feeling of frustration or tendency to forget their ideas that have been organized in their minds. Because of that when EFL students are new in the language they tend to collect and later organize what they pretend to say in a presentation, so fluency must be promoted to prevent this embarrassing situation. However, it does not mean that errors should not be corrected, or teachers do not have to give a proper feedback, errors can be defined and corrected during teaching rather while students are using the language or practicing. According to Emrullah, S(2010) in CLT activities, students are supposed to interact with each other through the group work activities, which allows the students to be exposed to purposeful and authentic language use rather than mechanical practice of language drills.

Gino G (2018) did an investigation whose main objective was to classify different English teachers into two categories, such as: years of teaching and type of school (private or public). This was done to find out the causes for which students make mistakes, because the author considered that maybe one of the causes why students make mistakes is the lack of experience of English teachers, for the fact that sometimes they ignore some theories and methodologies to teach grammar properly. Moreover, this research identified the common grammatical mistakes in students. The list included using the prepositions in, on and at, observing the correct noun-pronoun antecedent, determining the singular and plural forms of foreign nouns, using the perfect tenses of the verbs, determining the past tense and the past participle of the verbs, observing the correct subject and verb agreement, forming sentences in the active and passive voice.

Omara I, Mohamed A (2018) citing Richard (1971, as cited in Chada, 2014) categorized errors according to their causes into two categories; Inter-lingual Errors, which refer to the language interference from the mother tongue students suffer when acquiring a second language. The other one is Intra-lingual and developmental errors. This kind of error occurs when the knowledge of the language is not very well acquired. In addition, this usually happens when the target language presents some difficulties to the students. Richard (1971) declared that tied with intra-lingual errors exist different types connected to this kind of error, such as: Ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of the rule, false concept hypothesized, overgeneralization errors. These different subcategories refer to the limitation of information concerning the language for which students frequently commit grammatical errors.

Charanjit K, Amreet K, Nur Q & Thilaga, R (2017) developed an investigation in an educational institution in Malaysia. The participants were a group of Diploma students who sat for a university entrance exam. The method and technique to obtain the data was an essay task which students had to complete. They were given forty minutes to write the essay, in which it was found out that learners committed a lot of grammatical mistakes in their writing. In addition, common errors were identified: Subject – Verb Agreement (SVA) 34.7%, Verb Tense 30.4%, Noun 19.0% and Prepositions 5.9%.

Pölzleitner, E (2013) proposed a meaningful activity to teach grammar, which is based on the theory of the communicative language teaching, since it consists of applying contextualized and real-life situations for learners. This author developed a task related to the horoscopes in which students had to express what they think and understand about it. Later, students had to give predictions working in pairs. The

grammatical topic which was focused on this activity was the future simple (WILL). Indeed, it is essential to know that Communicative Language Teaching does not look away from the grammatical patterns that must be taught in class. In other words, there must be a grammatical purpose plotted and a clear objective.

Mantasiah, Yusri, and Jufri (2018) did a research on the development of Grammar teaching material using error and contrastive analysis, which showed that with the use of a Linguistic Approach, student's score in translation and writing test increased significantly. There were three advantages of this teaching material which had triggered student's academic performance, namely easy to learn, composed based on the student's needs, and implementing linguistics theory.

Method

The investigation carried out was a descriptive qualitative-quantitative one. It was developed with students of the last level of English classes in the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador Sede Esmeraldas, in 2020. In the referred university, there are different careers in which students must pass different levels of English and demonstrate their abilities, regarding this language, to get graduated. The population and sample was formed by 24 students from the last level of English of International Business. The reason for which they were considered was to show reliability and confidence of the information provided, because they belonged to the last English level and had a higher knowledge about the English language.

The analytical-synthetical method was used because all the information provided was analyzed and synthesized. In addition, the method of hermeneutics was used to interpret the literature review and the results obtained, and the method of descriptive statistics to process the data.

The techniques used in this investigation were a survey and a test. The survey contained open and close questions by means of which students and teachers were able to demonstrate their answers to collect trusted information and data.

In addition to this, a test was also applied to the students to see and corroborate what mistakes they made and list them to contrast if they coincide with the data provided by other authors and the mistakes teachers in PUCE Esmeraldas consider are the most frequent in students, regarding their experience teaching English.

All the information consolidated in this investigation by means of the surveys and tests were tabulated manually and the whole data were taken to figures using the Microsoft Excel program.

Finally, a booklet was designed for which a substantial review of the communication methodology proposed by López (2017) was made to have coherence and propose relevant and fruitful activities and methodologies to teach grammar communicatively.

Results

Referring to the reasons for which students make grammatical mistakes (Figure 1) the results revealed that the majority (50%) stated that it is because they have lack of practice and time. Others, the 29%, referred that it is because of linguistic interference.

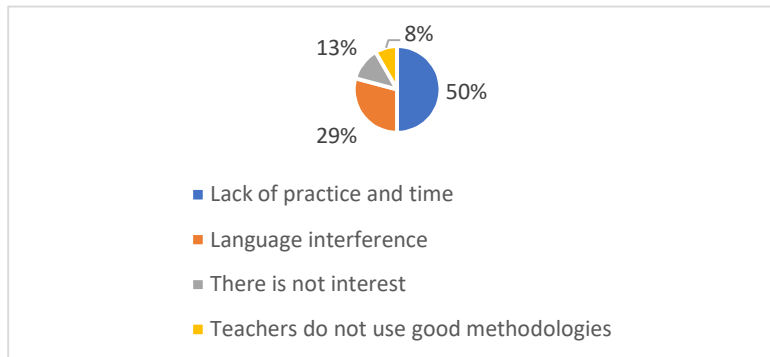


Figure 1: Reasons for which students make grammatical mistakes.

Source: Survey applied to the students of the last semester from PUCE- Esmeraldas in (2020).

Regarding the activities students would like their teachers apply to teach grammar communicatively (Figure 2), the results showed that 20% percent of them referred that games are the best activities for English teachers to apply in class to teach grammar communicatively, because it is a way of breaking the ice and motivate students making them stand up from their chairs and do something different in class. Another activity that also obtained a significant 18% was singing songs. Students see very pertinent that teachers apply contemporaneous activities, because new generations are very connected with technology and music, making students feel interested and engaged if they see their English teachers apply this activity. But it is essential to say that it is not recommendable that teachers impose the songs they should sing, it is crucial to apply here one of the most important principles regarding the CLT which is to provide freedom to students to manipulate the language, letting them to choose what they like to talk about it. In addition, debates, oral presentations, and role plays got 14%, because they consider that these activities are very monotonous and methodical, provoking sometimes students do not get interest nor pay attention to what is being carried out in class.

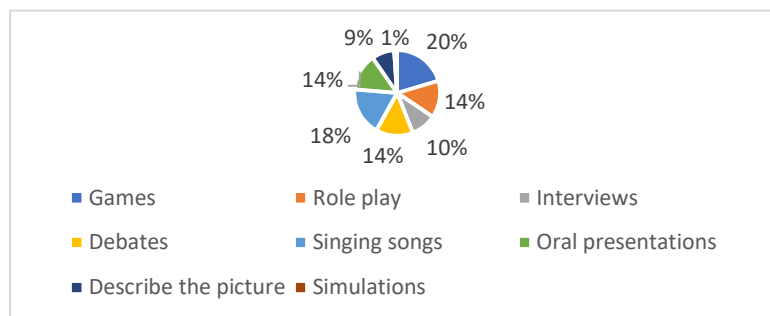


Figure 2: Activities students would like teachers to apply to teach grammar communicatively.

Source: Survey applied to the students of the last semester from PUCE Esmeraldas in (2020)

To refer if the students receive grammatical feedback by their teachers (Figure 3), the results disclosed that 46% of the students declared that teachers usually apply feedback about grammar, helping the students clear up doubts or mistakes they tend to make. Then 29% of learners expressed those teachers always prepare activities to promote feedback in class, making the students learn and take more encouragement of the grammatical learning process, in view that their doubts are being clarified when the feedback is applied. 17% of them affirmed that teachers sometimes apply feedback in class to reinforce grammatical topics. Then 8% said that English teachers often develop feedback activities, inasmuch as

some of them just being the lesson implementing a new grammatical pattern without giving a proper reinforcement of what was studied in previous classes.

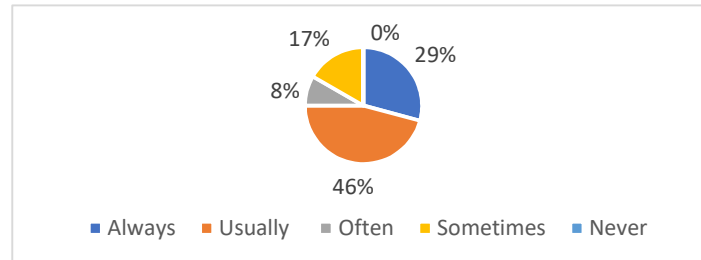


Figure 3: If English teachers apply grammatical feedback in class.

Source: Survey applied to the students of the last semester from PUCE- Esmeraldas in (2020)

This principle belongs to CLT, and it is imperative to know if English teachers supply freedom to students and eliminate it as possible root of the problem (Figure 4). The 92% of surveyed students remarked that teachers do provide freedom to manipulate, which is the major percentage of them.

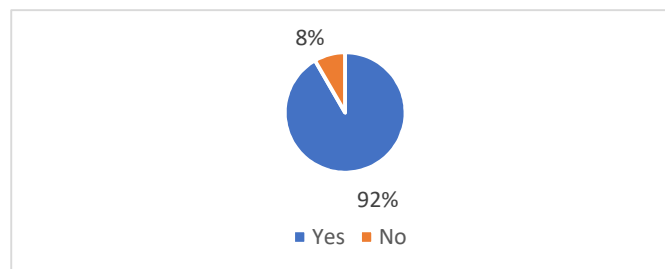


Figure 4: If teachers give freedom to students to manipulate the language

Source: Survey applied to the students of the last semester from PUCE Esmeraldas in (2020)

It is important to remark that also a test was applied to identify the most frequent grammatical mistakes students make. The test consisted of writing a short paragraph about the students' plans when the pandemic ends; the test is linked with one of the principles about CLT, which refers to provide freedom to students to use the language. It was practical to collect a list of different mistakes students demonstrated in it.

In the test the most repeated mistake was about syntax, students have a lot of problems to organize the sentences adequately, losing sense and logic. Syntax obtained the 47% of all the mistakes revealed in the test. Then the other frequent mistake was about dyslexia with 21%, because students did not know how to write the words properly, omitting some letters, making the sentences lose comprehension. Dyslexia got 21% of mistakes. Finally, the grammatical topic about gerund obtained the 14% of mistakes.

Figure 5. Errors committed by the students.

Error Type	Percentage %
Conjugation of verbs	7%
Adverbs	1%
Possessive adjectives	2%
Gerund	14%
Dyslexia	21%

Definite and indefinite articles	2%
Third personal singular verbs conjugation	1%
Grammar tenses	5%
Syntax	47%

Source: A test applied to the students of the last English level

After making the diagnosis, the researchers designed a booklet to teach Grammar using a Communicative Methodology, whose main parts are described below.

BOOKLET TO TEACH GRAMMAR COMMUNICATIVELY

Objective: To teach grammar communicatively

Stage 1: Presentation of the grammatical structure

Objective: To present grammar in a communicative way in contextualized situations

Procedures:

- To introduce and explain the grammatical structure (communicative form) and when to use it (communicative function), for example: If the topic is about the modal verb MUST, it is important to explain and clarify how the sentences must be structured.
- To present the grammatical structure in contextualized situations in which students fossilize the structure of sentences concerning this modal verb MUST and understand and make sure when to use it because of the examples presented by the teacher.
- To show some videos made by the teacher in which students can observe, in a visual way, the structures of the sentences and how this grammatical pattern is used in different real-life situations (contextualized situations). This is done because there are different ways of learning in class and teachers must encompass that.
- To ask students regarding this modal verb MUST about its form and functions in real life to measure students' comprehension.
- To correct student's mistakes immediately.

Stage 2: Focused practice of the grammatical structure

Objective: To let students exploit, manipulate and analyze the grammatical structure, always immersed in contextualized communicative situations.

Procedures:

- To provide students some activities in which they can manipulate the grammatical structure. The activities can be: Fill in the blanks, complete the sentences, rewrite the sentences correctly, etc. Task based learning is focused here for students to fortify the steps to form proper sentences.
- To get the students to work in pairs, promoting at the same time cooperative learning, because most students tend to feel frustrated when they work alone, since they can have some misunderstandings or doubts. In addition, the students should work in pairs or groups because language is learned in social interaction, as stated by Vygotsky (1978). If they work in pairs, they can support each other, exploring, investigating and reinforcing at the same time.

- Students should take more participation in this learning process, teachers must promote autonomy, but it is essential for teachers to move around the class monitoring students' progress and development.
- In this stage, while the students are manipulating the structure with the help and guidance of the teacher, the students make some mistakes, which the teacher must correct immediately.

Reasons about why it is considered for students to learn at first the grammatical structure and after this the proper application of them.

There is a crucial theory which is called SHALLOW-END which means that for learners to use the language (grammatical structures), it is significant that they learn the grammatical rules and then apply them in communicative situations (contextualized situations).

Stage 3: Communicative Practice: Grammar in use in contextualized situations

Objective: To make students use the grammatical structure in contextualized communicative situations.

Procedures:

- To give freedom to students to choose the topic and the code of speaking they prefer in the production of language communicatively. The students must implement the grammatical pattern which is being studied at that moment of their performance.
- To make students work in pairs.
- To monitor students' work moving around the class
- While teachers are moving in class, the mistakes students make may be jotted down.
- To let students must develop their communicative activity in front of the class to promote the decrease of shyness in them.
- The rest of the students must pay attention to their classmates' presentation.

Stage 4: Feedback and correction

Objective: To correct students' mistakes and provide a feedback regarding their free presentations

Procedures:

- As students were ordered in stage 3 to pay attention to all mistakes they heard, now they work in pairs and compare if they agree or disagree with the same mistakes they heard before in the previous presentations. They discuss a little bit and reach an agreement about the percentage of similarity they find out regarding mistakes.
- One representative of each pair stands up and mentions the mistakes they heard.
- The teacher jots down everything they say.
- Finally, teachers also mention the mistakes heard before and students are able to make a comparison between the mistakes the teacher heard before.
- Students pay attention and receive a powerful feedback, in which they were involved most of the time and able to identify mistakes they heard from their classmates, in this way self-confidence is promoted and implemented in students.

Activities and techniques divided in educational sections to teach grammar communicatively.

1. Teaching-Learning by Levels

How is it?

Students are divided by levels from 1 to 5, level 1 belongs to the best students who get from 9.5 to 10 points in each partial during the school year. Level 2 belongs to the students who get from 9 to 8.25 points. Level 3 belongs to the students who get from 8 to 7.50 points. Level 4 belongs to the students who get 7 point close and finally level 5 belongs to the students to get less than 7 points like: 6.70 etc.

Students are able to level up, but it is indispensable that they make an effort to improve their grades, let's illustrate an example: Carl got in the first partial 6 points, so he belongs to level 5, the last one, and he wishes to level up, and in the second partial he made a big effort and improve, getting the score of 8.50, belonging to level 2, that is amazing. And the same thing the rest of students can do.

The benefit of this technique is that teachers can force the students to produce the language communicatively, due to the low grades they can have, to give an example: Mary has low grades, and she wants to improve, and teachers can prepare communicative activities for her to develop, and she is forced to be very well prepared, and does it as well as she can to level up. Students unconsciously are upgrading their English level and speaking, using grammatical patterns taught before.

2. Role Play, Teachers and Students' Involvement

Role play between students: this is a role play, in which students interact among them, where the teacher provides them freedom to choose the topic they prefer to work, settling down the principle of CLT. Learners are given an amount of time to prepare their presentation which must contain the grammatical patterns that are being studied at that moment.

Role play between students and the teacher: this is a type of different role play, in which students interact with their teacher unexpectedly, implementing the grammatical structure that is being studied. With this activity there may be more reduction of freedom than when they do the role play between students, because the professor establishes the topic, dividing it into the situation and the goal. For example: THE SITUATION IS: You have low grades in mathematics and you have a test which is vital for you to pass, but your friends are inviting you to a party. YOUR GOAL: you need to make understand you cannot fail the subject. The purpose of this is that students manipulate the language in a communicative way using the grammar taught previously.

3. Singing with a Purpose

Students are asked to sing a song by the teacher. Nevertheless, the songs students must sing have to contain the grammatical structure they are studying at that moment, for example: They are studying the modal verb (MUST) so learners must find songs which have this grammar. In this way teachers motivate their students, because they are teenagers and love music. With this activity encouragement is promoted.

4. Analyze the Picture

In this activity, learners must observe some pictures shown by the teacher in which they have to describe the situation or what is going on there, and then express sentences using the grammatical structure that is being carried out. For example, the topic is Modal verb (MUST), the professor shows the students a picture of somebody using the cell phone inside the bank, and the security guard approaches to that person to tell something. The students' job is to describe where the person is, what is happening and what things the guard is telling that person, for instance the student can say: There is a person using the cell phone inside the bank and the guard is saying, YOU MUSTN'T USE THE CELLPHONE IN THE BANK, etc. Students can manipulate the language communicatively by means of pictures, because many students learn by seeing.

5. Nonsense Paragraphs

One of the difficulties of communicative language teaching is that, by de-prioritizing grammar rules, it can be difficult to teach the nuances of grammar. This can be especially problematic for students who will eventually need to be able to write correctly in the target language. Nonsense paragraphs can help overcome this roadblock. Whereas the above activities encourage target language communication, this activity reverses engineers' communication, so to speak.

Students are given a paragraph made up largely of nonsense words—their task is to identify what parts of speech is nonsense. Then students say their nonsense paragraphs in front of the class but as always those have to contain the grammatical topic that is being studied. This is a way to encourage students to start feeling good at writing, with the time they would improve unconsciously their writing and speaking as well, due to when you write and read you enrich the vocabulary and lexical and this rebounds in the improvement of speaking and communication. Everything is connected like a chain.

6. Breaking Ice Games

Games are fruitful for students to learn and feel engaged with the subject and topic. One of the games in which they can mix fun with knowledge is GOSSIP CALL. This game consists of telling something to someone starting from a specific place of the classroom; it can be from the corner or the middle. After this the message has to get to the final person correctly as the first person mentioned. As an example, the message is: SHE MUST SLEEP EARLY BECAUSE OF THE TRIP, that message is going to pass through one by one of the students and the last students who receive it must tell everybody how he caught it. But it is important as well to implement the topic which is being carried out at that moment.

Discussion

There have been some coincidences between the results obtained in the test in this investigation with some investigators concerning the most frequent mistakes students make. Fitikides (2002) established that the construction of sentence is the most common and frequent mistake students make to apply grammar in their academic lives. In the test applied in this research, the mistake with higher percentage was related to Syntax, which means that students do not know how to construct sentences, learners do not use the words correctly and commit some violations of this rule, for example, they say: you "was", for you "were".

On the other hand, Lopez, B (2017) in his previous investigation also mentioned that the conjugation of the verbs in the third personal singular and the gerund are the most common grammatical mistakes in students.

Nevertheless, in the test implemented in this investigation learners did present mistakes in the conjugation of the verbs in the third personal singular, which means there is a considerable coincidence between Lopez' investigation and this one that was carried out at PUCE-Esmeraldas.

According to López, J and Luque, G (2012), there is an immense importance that English teachers must apply proper and beneficial strategies and methodologies to engage students in grammar and increase the level of knowledge to produce the language communicatively. Despite this, in the survey applied to students, it was visible that students do not learn because of lack of knowledge from the teachers concerning to strategies to teach grammar communicatively. In the present investigation 29% percent of students stated that teachers really do not apply proper methodology to teach grammar communicatively. In other words, there is a significant connection of principles between Lopez' theory and the results students declared concerning to the methodologies in class, which result perfect, if they are very well applied.

About the issue if English teachers provide freedom to students to manipulate the language, making students learn more and better the grammatical structures because students are more interested when they develop the activities referring to topics they like and wish. (Emrullah S, 2010) stated that learners should have the chance to choose what and how to refer everything they want to express. As Maramag-Manalastas & Batang (2018) state, “English should be used as much as possible in English lessons, as English proficiency is the main objective of English teaching and learning” (p.98). It coincides with the researchers’ arguments why it is necessary to provide freedom in class.

Even so, this consists of the fact that learners are allowed to use their own language form instead of being controlled or pressured by others. Furthermore, students specified that teachers do give them freedom to manipulate the language, reflecting that in this was one of the most important principles is being respected by teachers. Finally, concerning the activities the students would like their English teachers to apply in class to teach grammar communicatively, there was a huge coincidence with the proposal established in this research in which some activities have been designed to promote that grammar can be taught communicatively instead by means of the form, in other words structurally. For instance, in the survey the activity about games obtained the highest percentage with 20%, exhibiting a connection between the proposal in this investigation and what the students stated as the best activity to learn grammar communicatively. The reason is that in the booklet design “game” is one of the activities, which is stipulated as the most important to teach grammar and promote the communication.

Gino G (2018) expressed that “using the prepositions and observing the correct subject and verb agreement” are the common mistakes that obtained high percentages in the data collection. This fact coincides with the results obtained by Charanjit K, Amreet K, Nur Q&Thilaga, R (2017), which reflect in the task essay designed for students to collect the information that Subject – Verb Agreement (SVA) 34.7%, Verb Tense 30.4% and preposition 5.9%. It is discernible that there is congruity between the two different investigations which had the same purpose about identify the common grammatical mistakes in students.

This theory of providing freedom to teach grammar communicatively connects with the theory of Communicative language teaching proposed by (Emrullah S, 2010) which says that freedom is principle to teach grammar communicatively, because students do not feel forced and the levels of pressure diminish, creating an environment of respect of interest and pleasures, but without getting deconcentrated from grammatical topic which is being taught in the class.

Conclusions

This investigation reflects that most of the students show a huge coincidence in the mistakes committed in the application of the test, encouraging teachers to study and analyze the causes for which students have fossilized those mistakes and how to eliminate them successfully. Regarding to the origin for which students make grammatical mistakes, it is highly noticeable through the survey applied, that most of students states that there is remarkable lack of practice in students. This can derive that there is no interest to learn English with optimism and motivation, adding that language interference from the mother tongue also influences for committing mistakes, since there is a non-existence practice of the English language. This means that there is something which is wrong in teachers when they impart the English language classes and grammar specifically.

Today, English teachers must help students discover the knowledge and innovate in things that are interesting for them, guiding students to detect themselves the best ways they learn. That is why, it is important to plan the lessons implementing good and motivational activities for students to learn and apply their grammar knowledge communicatively, because the purpose for the English teacher is to make learners produce the language in the different existing ways, but principally orally. Due to the lack of organization from some teachers to promote the implementation of a communicative class, most of

students tend to get bored when they perceive their English teachers develop the same activities all the time and forgetting that in a class there are different ways of learning and multiple intelligences. It has been seen that some teachers just present some papers to the students in which they just must complete activities or solve exercises without giving them the chance to produce the language communicatively. There is a theory which is named Shallowed –end which says that grammatical structures must be taught at first structurally and then by meaning which means in a communicative way, however, it does not stay just by means of the form, it must reach the main aim which is that students produce speech using the language communicatively. According to different authors and what this research also reflects, students prefer active activities, which contain more participation, enthusiasm, effort, and responsibility from students such as: Games, singing songs, oral presentations, debates and interviews, because students feel they must apply and show what they know and learn in class, instead of keeping in papers completing exercises.

Every time when the English class is being carried out, English teachers must take advantage of the time and each minute, considering that the process of English language learning follows specific steps to achieve the goal, that is why English professors must organize the time that each activity would take to be developed in class in order to encompass the different needs of students.

Finally, it is essential to implement contemporaneous communicative activities to our students, since they prefer to study with things that make them feel comfortable and relax in class; fomenting students take more participation in class and responsibility. Teachers must think about their students' needs and preferences and always provide a correct feedback to them to strengthen the previous explanation and knowledge already taught.

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