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FEM
Facultad de
Educación Media

**Title:" Communicative Exercises to Practice the
Simple Present Tense in 10TH Grade, at "Reinaldo
Urquiza Ceballos" High School"**

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Date: June 2018

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THOUGHT

“The greater parts of the world’s troubles are due to questions of grammar.”

Michel de Montaigne

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank from the bottom of her heart for their great effort and contribution to all those who in one way or another helped her to accomplish this research.

- First, a special thank to my adviser Idelse, her help was crucial in this process and she was always willing to help me.
- My parents, my boyfriend and my close family for all their love, support and positive feelings.
- All the teachers I had during the last five years of studies, who built up the professional I am now.
- My classmates who were by my side all the time, especially Arletty, Alianny, Yaisniel and Rosmery.
- The teacher and the students from Class D, 10th grade at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school for their unlimited assistance and cooperation during all the research process.
- Last, but not least, the other teachers that contributed with me to accomplish this research: Betsy, Raquel and Estrella.

For all of you, my eternal gratitude

Abstract

The teaching of English in High School is one of the objectives of the Cuban Educational System and speaking, the main ability to be developed. Everyday, teachers face several situations that hinder the students' proper development in the English language and among these problems; grammar is one of the most troublesome aspects of language. The present participant action research was carried out in 10th grade, Class D at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school. It aimed at improving students' grammar as a way to back up the development of the speaking ability. In order to achieve this goal, some theoretical methods were administered to gather the necessary information about the treatment given to the speaking ability with emphasis on the teaching of grammar, as well as some empirical methods to diagnose the current situation in the study group. As a result, some changes in the teaching learning process of English were implemented in order to know the possible transformations occurred in the subjects of research and with that data build up a final scientific result. After finishing this process, The scientific result that emerged was a system of five lessons with two communicative exercises each one, all of them aim at dealing with the third person singular and the forms of the verb to be in the simple present tense to back up the development of the speaking ability.

Key words: speaking ability, grammar, Simple Present Tense, system

Résumé

L'enseignement de l'anglais à l'école secondaire est l'un des objectifs de l'éducation cubain et de la parole, la principale capacité d'être mis au point. Tous les jours, les enseignants sont confrontés à plusieurs situations qui entravent le bon développement des élèves dans la langue anglaise et parmi ces problèmes, la grammaire est l'une des plus nuisibles aspects de la langue. La présente recherche-action des participants a été effectué en 10ème classe, Classe D à "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High School. Elle vise à l'amélioration de la grammaire des étudiants comme un moyen de sauvegarder le développement de la capacité de parole. Afin d'atteindre ce but, certaines méthodes théoriques ont été administrés pour recueillir les informations nécessaires sur le traitement réservé à la capacité de parler avec l'accent sur l'enseignement de la grammaire, ainsi que des méthodes empiriques pour diagnostiquer la situation actuelle dans le groupe d'étude . En conséquence, certains changements dans le processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage de l'anglais ont été mis en œuvre afin de connaître les transformations possibles est produite dans les sujets de la recherche et avec les données que construire un résultat scientifique final. Après avoir terminé ce processus, le résultat scientifique qui s'est dégagé est un système de cinq leçons avec deux exercices de communication chacun, tous d'entre eux visent à faire face à la troisième personne du singulier et les formes du verbe être dans le temps présent simple pour sauvegarder le développement de la capacité de parole.

Mots clés : capacité de parole, grammaire, Temps Présent Simple, système

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Introduction

English has been described as “the language of opportunity “. Learning English is important and people all over the world decide to study it as a foreign or as a second language; that is why, many countries include this language in their school curricula and children start learning it at a very young age.

It is said that there are some good reasons to know why learning English is important: English is the most commonly spoken language in the world, it is the official language of fifty three countries; it is the language of science, aviation, computers, diplomacy, and tourism, of the media industry, the language of the Internet; this language is based on a simple alphabet, so it is fairly quick and easy to learn compared to other languages. In addition to this, learning it permits you to learn about other cultures, which will make you grow as a person or professional among other reasons.

Due to this, English is included in the curricula of most schools around the world since primary to tertiary education.

Cuba is not an exception to this. The Cuban educational system has been making great efforts to favor the teaching and learning process of English for many years, including it as a school subject since third grade on, taking advantage of the fact that children can learn foreign languages fairly easily, as the experience has proved in many other parts of the world, where children grow up speaking two or more languages at a time.

According to the syllabus that rules the teaching and learning process of English in Secondary School, when students finish this level, they should be able to master the simple tenses (Present, past and future) to express different communicative functions; therefore, when they begin High School, they must not face difficulties concerning those tenses, however, the author of this major paper could observe during her practicum (as an observer not as a teacher) that tenth graders from Class D, at “Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos” High School in Manicaragua still make mistakes when they had to use the Simple Present Tense in order to talk about present activities and give personal information, since they omit the inflectional morpheme – s or -es in the third person singular; and consequently, they do not pronounce its different realizations. In addition to this, they presented problems concerning the subject-verb agreement of the verb to be, mainly in those cases in which the subject of the sentence is not a personal pronoun. The problematic situation described before was later corroborated by administering the students a pedagogical test.

Looking for previous studies related to the teaching of the speaking ability with emphasis on grammar, particularly on the Simple Present Tense (third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be*), no major papers were found in the province in the last fifth years.

Taking into account the problematic situation previously described regarding the Simple Present Tense (third person singular and the forms of the verb *to be*) in

English Language in 10th grade, Class D at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school, the following scientific problem was derived.

Scientific problem:

How to contribute to enhance can the use of the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present Tense in 10th grade, Class D at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school?

Object of research: Enhancement of the use of the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present Tense in 10th grade, Class D at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school.

Objective:

To build up a scientific result that may contribute to the enhancement of the use of the 3rd person singular and the forms of the verb *to be* and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present Tense in 10th grade, Class D at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school.

Scientific Questions:

1. What strengths and weaknesses does 10th grade, Class D at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school have, concerning the use of the 3rd person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present Tense?
2. What theoretical and methodological bases support the teaching and learning of the Simple Present Tense, with emphasis on the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be*?
3. What changes could be introduced in the teaching and learning process of the 3rd person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be* in 10th grade, Class D at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school?
4. What went well, what did not go well and what transformations will occur in the subjects of research with the changes introduced during the process of research?
5. What scientific results will emerge from the building up process carried out during the research?

ScientificTasks:

1. Diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses that 10th grade, Class D, Class D at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school have, concerning the 3rd person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present Tense.

2. Establishment of the theoretical and methodological bases that support the teaching of the Simple Present Tense with emphasis on the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb to be.
3. Establishment of the necessary changes in the teaching and learning process of the Simple Present Tense with emphasis on the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb to be in Class D, 10th grade at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school.
4. Evaluation of what went well, what did not go well and what should be changed during the building up process, as well as the students transformations.
5. Proposal of the final scientific result that emerged from the building up process carried out during the research.

Scientific Methods

This major paper mostly follows a qualitative approach, specifically the action-research method in order to find a solution to the scientific problem previously declared. Through its development the following dialectic- materialistic scientific methods were used:

From the Theoretical Level:

- **Analytic- Synthetic:** It was used to process the methodological and theoretical information obtained from the different sources consulted, as well as in the analysis of the resulting data obtained from the administration of the different empirical methods.
- **Inductive - deductive:** It was used in the establishment of general and particular theoretical considerations expressed by different specialists on the topic object of research and in the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained through the administration of the different empirical methods.
- **Historical- logical:** It allowed the historic study of the Teaching and Learning Process (TLP) of English worldwide, as well as the analysis of the poor treatment grammar has had at school so far.
- **Systematic approach:** It guaranteed the coherence and unity among the elements that make up the system of lessons proposed.

From the Empirical level:

- Analysis of documents
- Pedagogical test.
- Participant observation.
- Interview.
- Survey.
- Teacher's diary.
- Peer observation.
- Triangulation.

Those methods were used to corroborate the problematic situation stated in the introduction.

In order to back up the development of the research, the author used the discussion group as a technique.

It consisted of ten fifth-year students majoring in English and French, who were doing their major papers too. The group was conformed with the purpose of discussing the different problems that emerged from the process of research, and consequently reflecting and giving suggestions to do away with those difficulties previously mentioned.

. Structure of the main paper

It is structured in six parts: Introduction, Main Part, Conclusions, Recommendations, Bibliography, and Annexes.

Main part

1. Needs Assessment

1.1. Characterization of the subjects of research:

This major paper was carried out in 10th grade, Class D at “Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos” High school in Manicaragua. The study group consisted of twenty-eight subjects of research. Their average age ranges between fifteen and sixteen years old. They are not totally motivated towards the subject; and sometimes they present some discipline problems. Most of them dislike the English subject because they find it very difficult. Those subjects of research are still searching for their individual identity and consider their friends’ and peers’ approval more important than the teacher’s attention.

1.2 Results of the implementation of the empirical methods

Taking into account the theoretical and methodological bases that support the teaching and learning of grammar and the problematic situation described in the introduction of this study, two categories were identified by the author as key points to develop this analysis regarding grammar. Moreover, in order to develop the diagnosis process, some empirical methods were administered to obtain as much information as possible about the students’ strengths and weaknesses. The categories and subcategories established, as well as the methods employed for obtaining the necessary data and corroborating the problematic situation previously described are mentioned below:

| Methods | Categories | | Subcategories |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Pedagogical test | Verb to Be | 3 rd Person Singular | Form, meaning and use |
| Participant observation | | | |
| Interview | | | |
| Survey | | | |
| Teacher’s diary | | | |
| Peer observation | | | |
| Triangulation | | | |

Methods from the Empirical Level:

- **Analysis of documents:** Two main documents were analyzed: the syllabus to know the objectives of the grade as well as the contents, the principles and methodology that conduct the teaching and learning process of English in High School, and the students’ workbook to know whether the exercises from it followed the principles of CLT. And included the treatment of grammar.

- **Pedagogical test:** It was administered to the study group to corroborate the students' knowledge regarding the grammar points referred to in the problematic situation.
- **Participant observation:** It was employed to identify and describe the transformations occurred in the study group with the implementation of the initial proposal and on this bases draw the final one.
- **In depth- Interview:** It was administered to the teacher of the study group to assess the actual situation of it regarding grammar, to know the methodological treatment given to this component of language as well as to know the teacher's opinion and criteria during the process of construction carried out.
- **Survey:** It was administered to the subjects of research to know their opinion of about the English subject, to assess their knowledge regarding grammar, the main causes of their difficulties in this component of language and the type of activities they preferred to improve it.
- **Teacher's diary:** It was used to record all the transformations occurred in the study group with the changes introduced, as well as to register what went well and what did not go well and on this basis design the final proposal.
- **Peer observation:** It was employed to identify and describe the transformations occurred in the study group with the changes introduced and on this basis design the final proposal.
- **Triangulation:** This method allowed the author to analyze and process the results obtained during the administration of the empirical methods and to establish the regularities.

From the mathematical level:

- **Percentage analysis:** It was used to process and quantify the data obtained from the diagnosis and construction stage.

Analysis of the results

- One of the empirical methods used was the analysis of documents; it was carried out following a guide to analyze the regulations for the teaching of the English subject in High School, particularly those for tenth grade level (See Annex 1). After finishing this process, it was confirmed that the syllabus of the English subject for tenth grade level gives essential importance to the development of communicative abilities, so that students can understand oral and written information as well as express themselves about their personal information and present activities. The syllabus includes three units and each one should be taught in at least twelve hours.

Most of the hours should be devoted to practice the speaking ability, as it is the main ability to be developed in High School, and to do that, the communicative

language teaching approach is suggested. The syllabus of the subject is organized taking into account the communicative functions and the other aspects of language, such as pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. As it could be observed, the teaching of grammar is included.

Analyzing the documents, the author found that there is no English text book for tenth grade students, but a students' workbook which covers the three units which go from the easiest exercises to the most complex ones. All the exercises are related to the contents of each unit. Most of them are devoted to develop the speaking ability, but some of them result very difficult for average students; so it constitutes part of the teacher's work to adapt them in order to make them easier, or look for others. Concerning grammar, it could be confirmed that there are no exercises devoted to grammar as such.

- Another method used during the process of diagnosis was a written pedagogical test. After administering it, the authoress realized that most of the students omitted the – s or – es at the end of the verb in the 3rd person singular and when they were answering questions, giving some personal information, they confused the form of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present Tense. Eighteen of the subjects of research did not pass the test, five obtained the category of fair, three obtained the category of good and only two obtained the category of very good.
- Another method used was the participant observation. This method was administered to the study group following an observation guide that included the categories and subcategories established by the author (See Annex 3). It was confirmed that most of the students only participated in the lessons when they were compelled to do it and in many cases they refused to participate, claiming that they did not know how to express themselves in English. In another case it was clear that they avoided participating, because they were afraid of making mistakes and have the rest of the group laugh. Concerning the verb *to be*, it was observed that students did not know when they had to use one form of the verb *to be* or *another* in the Simple Present Tense; they did not establish the subject-verb agreement properly.
- During the needs assessment, an in-depth interview to the teacher of the study group was administered (See Annex 4). In the teacher's opinion, a conscious treatment to the students' grammar is very important since it constitutes a component of language which has a great influence on successful communication. The teacher said that grammar is one of the main difficulties that students face in speaking activities and it is one of the reasons for which communication is rejected by students nowadays.

She also added that other ways to improve students' grammar that could be used in controlled and free practice activities were pair work activities without forgetting motivating them enough to involve students in learning. In addition to this, she pointed out that students in general were not motivated to learn English, because they arrived at High School with a very limited knowledge of this language, except few cases. She also added that the syllabus of the subject in High School demands a fast progress regarding what students were supposed to have learn in Secondary School; nevertheless, the time allotted to teach the subject in High School is only four hours per week what does not meet the students' needs. However, the students attend lessons

systematically, they are always on time for lessons and do the homework assigned by the teacher.

- Another method administered to the study group was a survey (See Annex 5). This method let the author know that 60% of the students were not interested in learning English because they did not like the subject and they considered it too difficult for them; the rest of the students like English even when they also consider the subject difficult to learn. All the students coincided that the most difficult ability for them is speaking, and when they were asked the reasons why speaking was so difficult, 90% of the students agreed that it was difficult because of the lack of phoneme-grapheme correspondence. In addition to this, they stated that they faced problems with the subject-verb agreement and word-order in sentences, and that they did not know some important grammar rules that they should follow.
- Teacher's diary and peer observation: They allowed the author to observe and record what went well and what did not go well and make the necessary changes where it was necessary.
- Through a methodological triangulation of the observation, the survey, the pedagogical test, and the in depth-interview to the teacher, the author could arrive at the following regularities:

Strengths:

- The students engage in the lessons when they are motivated.
- They like working in pairs and groups.
- They attend lessons systematically and are always on time for lessons.
- Most of them always do the homework.

Weaknesses:

- The most difficult ability for the students is speaking.
- Most students do not like the English subject.
- Most students do not want to participate in English lessons, because they are afraid of making mistakes in front of their classmates.
- Most of them find grammar very difficult for them to learn.
- The time allotted for a lesson is not enough.

3. Theoretical and methodological bases that support the teaching and learning process (TLP) of the speaking ability.

3.1 A brief historical overview about the different methods used in the TLP of the speaking ability in English.

- **Grammar Translation Method (GTM)**

The Grammar Translation Method grew up in the early nineteenth century. This method is based on a sequence of classroom activities. The sequence starts with a clear statement of rules, followed by a lengthy vocabulary list intended to be learned by heart. In the classroom where students are learning a foreign language using this method, it exists a variety of translation exercises into and out of the target language. Grammar Translation Method involves very much engagement of the mind. (Johnson, 2001)

Richards and Rodgers (1986) came to state that:

"Grammar Translation is a way of studying a language that approaches the language, first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language " .(p 3)

Hence , through the application of this method , the progress in language was measured not by the learner's ability to communicate and use the target language , but rather by the ability to read prestigious literary texts as well as the translation of passages from one language to another .

Richards and Rodgers (1986) argued that: "Reading and writing are the major focus ; little or no systematic attention is paid to speaking or listening" (p3)

And Johnson (2001) explains that this method tended to improve the intellectual discipline rather than a path for communication. According to him the non communication leads to what is known for the modern readers " the lack of authenticity " , since it tends to use sentences concocted to contain particular grammar points that were being taught.

According to these authors, this method is still used in contexts where understanding literary texts is the primary focus of foreign language study with a little need or use of the speaking knowledge.

- **The Direct Method**

The Direct method appears to compensate the lack committed by GTM, it comes to destroy its principles and to support the idea that any foreign language could be taught without translation or the use of the learner's mother tongue if the meaning is conveyed .

According to this method, language could be best taught by using it actively in classroom. The direct method assumed that the native speaker's language is the model, but it supports creating an oral based methodology. Its emphasis was placed very firmly on the spoken language which can be successfully realized through a systematic attention to pronunciation.(Richards and Rodgers , 1986).

"Teachers must encourage direct and spontaneous use of the foreign language in the classroom". (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:9) .

In this trend, Richards and Rodgers (1986) added that:

"In the Direct method , oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression organized around questions and answers exchanged between teacher and students " (p32). Unless, the Direct method represented a great shift towards developing oral /aural aspects of language, but it was criticized by the more academically based proponents of the reform movement. As a result, there exist many arguments against this teaching method. Those drawbacks were noticed through a deep observation on the practical side of the method to include the failure to realize a true communication; since the emphasis was on dealing with listening just for developing pronunciation rather than communication .Speaking was limited to the mastery of certain teaching aspects mainly based on question-and-answer exchange. (Richards and Rodgers, 1986).Other drawbacks come to appear through their statements:

- It required teachers who were native speakers or who had native like fluency in the foreign language.

- It was largely dependent on the teacher's skill rather than on a text book and not all teachers were proficient enough in the foreign language to

adhere to the principle of the method".
(Richards and Rodgers, 1986,28)

- **The Audio-lingual Method**

"Audiolingualism is a foreign language teaching method that shares many characteristics with the reform methods; nevertheless, it has a clear identity of its own"(Johnson, 2001, 171)

It has appeared by the entry of the U.S.A into the World War II .This later had a significant effect on the language teaching in America. In its beginning, it seemed to be a method created just for the sake of fulfilling military duties applicable in a war circumstances, but later, it has been emerged as a result of the increased attention given to foreign language teaching in the U.S.A toward the end of 1950's as well as the need for foreign language proficiency in listening and speaking and a radical change in this field. The method was based on a bending of principles, of behavior psychology and precepts of Structural Linguistics. It has many characteristics such as: primacy of speech, stimulus response reinforcement, habit formation through repetition instrumentalism, contrastive linguistics and inductive learning. (River, 1964 quoted by Johnson, 2001)

Harmer (2001) comes to focus on two characteristics among those cited above .He explained that this foreign language teaching method tends to use more stimulus –response reinforcement model, and through a continuous process of such a positive reinforcement, it attempted to engender the other characteristic which is the good habits in language learning through repetition .This method depends on what is known as drills to form these habits.(Harmer,2001). When this method is followed, the teacher presents the structures through dialogues to be repeated and memorized by the learners. After that, many exercises have to be used to reinforce the structure which had been taught and ensure the learners' ability to use it in other contexts. It depends on mimicry, memorization of a set of sentences and the teaching of patterns using repetition with the great emphasis on accuracy .(Harmer,2001)

Attention was paid to improve learners' speaking abilities , the teaching materials used changed to include language laboratories , tapes and tape recorders and consider them as basic aids to improve speaking and listening, these teaching aids should be used in case of non- native speakers.(Richards and Rodgers , 1986)

There was a tendency in this method to focus on manipulation of the target language and to disregard content and meaning.

- **The Silent Way**

It is a method of language teaching devised by Caleb Cattegno .It was originated in the early 1970's .The basic tenets of the approach are that learning is facilitated if the learner discovers rather than remembers or repeats, In other words, it supports the idea that students must take part in their learning by taking their responsibilities to choose their own strategies rather than repeating inputs from the teacher. "Repetition consumes time and encourages the scattered mind to remain scattered" (Richards and Rogers, 1986:102).

The learning process in this foreign language teaching method is aided by physical objects such as colour - coded pronunciation charts, especially rods "Cuisenaire rods" , with different lengths and colours for the sake of improving students' ability to recall and illustrate meaning. (Richards and Rogers , 1986).

"Rods, colour – coded pronunciation charts (...) create memorable images to facilitate students' recall. Those visual devices serve as associative mediators for students learning and recall" (Richards and Rogers, 1986, 100) Cattegno's silent way is based on the premise that the teacher should be as silent as possible in classroom in order to encourage students to produce speech as much as they can .In addition , this approach stresses the use of problem solving activities and consider them to be central to learning and better than learning through memorization.

The silent way method aims at:

- Enabling students to answer questions about themselves (family, travelling, education) and speak with a good accent;
- Speakers of the target language can perform adequately in spelling , grammar, reading and writing (Richards and Rogers, 1986, 104).

This method has been criticized by many scholars , because of its apparent lack of communication, arguing that this lack is due to the over emphasis on teacher's silence and with only motivating students to generate real communication by using rods. In this case, students aren't exposed to any kind of oral input.

- **The Total Physical Response (TPR)**

This teaching method was developed by James J. Asher to aid learning foreign languages .It relies on the assumption that learning a foreign or a second language is through a process similar to the first language development.

"TPR worked from a premise that adult second language learning could have similar developmental patterns to that of child language acquisition" (Harmer, J, 2001:90).

In the same trend, Richards and Rogers (1986:87) argue that: "Asher sees successful adult second language learning as a parallel process to child first language acquisition" .

TPR is categorized under the rubric of the comprehension based approaches; it supports the idea of listening comprehension before the oral production. Students in TPR classrooms are asked to understand the spoken language before developing the skills of speaking (Richards and Rogers, 1986). They deduce that: "Comprehension abilities precede productive skills in learning a language, the teaching of speaking should be delayed until comprehension skills are established". Besides these basic principles, proponents of TPR add that an essential condition for the realization of a successful language learning is the total absence of stress and anxiety from the teaching/ learning situation .Students aren't forced to speak, but are allowed an individual readiness period with a spontaneously begin to speak when they feel comfortable and confident in understanding and producing the utterances. "Teaching should minimize learners' stress" (Richards and Rogers, 1986:87-88).

Critics of TPR point out that this teaching method may only be appropriate for beginners, it is insufficient to cope with other situations, this later was quoted by (Harmer, 2001)

Asher himself says it should be included together with other methods.

This method is said to be based on stimulus –response model, this latter explains that oral comprehension is expressed through physical responses to command, and this view had been abandoned since "comments and actions" concepts did not reflect the way native speakers use the language. Asher in his TPR doesn't give care to relate between comprehension, production and communication. Students are not generally given the opportunity to express their own thoughts in a creative way.

The Communicative Approach

The Communicative approach or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to the teaching of second or foreign languages. CLT was partly in response to many leading scholars' proclamation about the need for a critical re-consultation of the way foreign languages were taught. It was described by Harmer (2001) to be: "A set of beliefs which included not only are examination of what aspects of language to teach, but also a shift in emphasis in how to teach" (P, 84).

Communicative Language Teaching places great emphasis on helping students to use the target language in a variety of places and contexts as well as on learning language functions (Harmer, J, 2001). Its main focus is on helping learners create meaning rather than helping them develop perfectly grammatical structures or acquire native like pronunciation. This means that this approach supports the idea that success in teaching a foreign language depends on how well learners have developed their communicative "competence"; a term first introduced by Hymes (1972) then expanded upon by Canale and Swain (1980). This communicative competence is the learners' ability to apply knowledge of both formal and sociolinguistic aspects of language with adequate proficiency to communicate. (Littlewood, 1995).

Due to Communicative Language Teaching, the nature of listening and speaking has been greatly recognized.

"The active nature of listening means that, no less than in speaking, the learner must be motivated by communicative purposes". (Littlewood, 1995, 67, cited by Bernal, L. (2017:8)

Hence, it is usually characterized as an approach to teaching rather than a teaching method, to include a set of classroom practices.

According to Richards and Rogers (1986: 66), "The scope of CLT has expanded; both American and British proponents see it as an approach, not only a method that aims to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching".

In addition to what was cited above, CLT attempts to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom in order to show the learners' need and desire to connect between the language as it is taught in their classes and as it used to be outside. This leads to one among the most important characteristics of the Communicative Approach, it is the use of "authenticity" in classroom through different activities to be performed such as role plays and simulation. (Harmer, J, 2001).

According to Harmer (2001), pair and group work require negotiation and

cooperation between learners, roles plays in which students practice and develop their language functions. However, not all courses that utilize Communicative Language approach will restrict their activities solely to these. Despite the CLT importance to bring up a real communication as well as developing the oral language skills (listening and speaking), but still it was criticized by many scholars for paying insufficient attention to the context in which teaching and learning take place. "Reports abound on the practical difficulties of implementing a communicative approach when teaching English in English-as-a-foreign language (EFL) settings. These settings are the environments in which students have little exposure to English outside the classroom. Some reports attribute the failure of the approach to inadequacies of the teachers themselves. Part of the problem stems from the instructors' misunderstanding of the very nature of communicative language teaching (CLT). Thus, it is found that even when using textbooks designed for communicative activities, teachers tended to revert to traditional teacher-centered routines. Teacher trainers sometimes simply fail to equip teachers with the skills and techniques they need for implementing CLT in their classrooms.

2.1.1 Communicative Language Teaching Principles.

The communicative Language Principles were defined by Morrow, K. in 1981 and later by Naiman, N. at Félix Varela Pedagogical Institute in 1988 and redefined by Camacho, A. in 2003 and finally by Font, S. in 2016 for the Cuban context. The author joins Font's, since they were redefined by the present Cuban context. They are given as follows:

| Principle | Suggestions for application |
|--|---|
| 1. Authentic materials are used. | Teacher uses newspaper columns, job advertisements, weather reports, menus, catalogues, etc. In the context of Cuban secondary schools, teachers may also use brochures, short fragments of films, as well as video materials with native speakers of English. |
| 2. One function can have many different forms. | Students can communicate for a specific purpose in many ways. This means that the same communicative purpose may be achieved by means of different language forms. Students should be provided with several forms for one single function. For instance, to invite someone (communicative purpose) you may use a variety of forms that may include: <i>Let's go to...</i> , <i>Why don't we...</i> , <i>How about...</i> , <i>Would you like to come...</i> , <i>I'd like to invite you to...</i> , among others. Teachers should not forget to explain that the choice will generally depend on the social relationships between the participants in the conversation. |
| 3. Students need to learn | Teacher uses activities such as scrambled |

| | |
|--|--|
| cohesion and coherence. | sentences and others. This principle is connected mainly with discourse competence as explained above. Make your students aware of the importance of constructing cohesive and coherent texts. |
| 4. Errors are tolerated to a certain extent. | The form of error correction depends on what stage of the learning cycle is underway. Most errors must be corrected during controlled and guided (semi-controlled) practice, while correction should be made during communicative practice only when the errors cause breakdowns in communication. |
| 5. Cooperative relationships among students are crucial. | Cooperation is very important in communicative language teaching. Students are expected to work in pairs and small groups, in which they must generally use the foreign language to communicate. Pair and group composition may depend on many factors. At times you may want to have advanced learners working with slow learners. Some other times it is advisable to reshuffle the groups to allow advanced learners to work together and learn from one another, while the teacher takes care of other groups composed of slow learners who have been given a less demanding task. The teacher may use strip stories, for instance, for the students to work together to predict the next picture. |
| 6. The social context is essential. | Design controlled and guided activities in which the social context is taken into consideration. Make your students aware of the influence of the social context in the choice of language forms to fulfill a certain communicative purpose. If you do so from the early stages of the cycle, you will ensure that your students will bear these social relationships in mind when they are given more communicative tasks at the end of the cycle. |
| 7. Language items include form, meaning and use. | This principle was already explained in the description of linguistic competence earlier in this chapter. |
| 8. The teacher acts as advisor/facilitator. Lessons | The teacher moves from group to group, offering advice and answering questions; |

| | |
|--|---|
| are learner-centered. | and collaborates with students to select goals, content and processes. Plan your lessons in such a way that your students do most of the talking. Do not make yourself the center of the lesson, and do not try to speak more than necessary. The amount of teacher talk will, of course, vary according to the type of lesson (stage of the learning cycle), but learner talk must be intentionally favored in English lessons at all times. |
| 9. Students should be given opportunities to develop strategies for interpreting language as it is actually used by native speakers. | Ask your students to watch films in English and try to understand a few words, write them down and bring them to class. Use idioms and sayings. They are very motivating. |

3.2 Speaking ability

According to Camacho, A. (2003), speaking is the ability to use the language in a fluent way for interactive communicative purposes during the oral communication act. It is the use of communicative strategies and the mastery of the language system, expressed in the students' productive capacity.

For Garcia, S. et.al. (2010), "speaking is a productive skill that belongs to oral communication and in that process the speaker interacts with a listener where both change their roles in the conversation".

3.3 Grammar

Grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are considered the three main components of language, but for some specialists, among them David Crystal and Rivers, W. (cited by Bermello, G. and Vega, J.C (1995:1), the most important of all is the first component, grammar.

Crystal defines it as "the rules controlling the way a communication system works", and adds that if there is no grammar, there is no communication.

Rivers, W. states that "a language does not function without its grammar, in the same way that a chicken will not stand or walk without its bones". She considers grammar the "skeleton" of language.

In Celce- Murcia's, opinion (1988:16), "a language is a type of rule-governed behavior, so grammar is a subset of those rules which govern the configurations that the morphology and syntax of the language assume."

Batstone, R. (cited by Alvarez, I. 2006: 14) in his book *Grammar*, trying to define this term, asks: What's grammar? , and answers the question as follows: "It depends on how you look at it: a formal mechanism, a functional system or a dynamic resource, which does not exist in a void, but closely tied to discourse and interrelated to lexis and context to such an extent that in many

cases grammatical regularity and acceptability are constrained and conditioned by words (lexis), and later adds: "There is a close relationship between grammar and discourse that grammar is seen as the on-line' processing component of it and not the set of syntactic 'building blocks' with which discourse is constructed" .

The author of this study joins Batstone's definition of grammar, since in her opinion, it is the most complete of all and it is on line with CLT.

As it can be appreciated before, all the authors consider grammar of paramount importance in the acquisition of a foreign or a second language.

2.3.1 Dimensions to grammatical knowledge in second language learning and teaching

According to Professor Jack C. Richards (<https://www.professorjackrichards.com/definition-of-grammar>) ,there are two dimensions to grammatical knowledge (also known as grammatical or linguistic competence) that are central in second language learning and teaching:

- knowing how to use the grammatical system of a language to create sentences
- knowing how to use the grammatical resources of a language as part of the processes used in creating spoken and written texts

The system of rules used to create sentences refers to the knowledge of parts of speech, tenses, phrases, clauses and syntactic structures used to create grammatically well-formed sentences in English. The rules for constructing grammatically correct sentences belong to "sentence grammar".

What professor Richards calls "sentence grammar is what is known as form or structure, which is a very narrow perspective to grammar, employed in the teaching and learning process of foreign languages before CLT; however, when he refers as" knowing how to use the grammatical resources of a language as part of the processes used in creating spoken and written texts", he is advocating for using those resources to go beyond the sentence level; that is, for achieving the discourse competence ,what is on line with CLT.

Odlin, T. (cited by Alvarez, I. 2006: 18) is another author that states that nowadays, grammar has widened its scope to reach the discourse and pragmatic dimensions.

This means that when teaching grammar following the communicative or broad perspective teachers should go beyond the sentence level and teach not only form but also meaning (notion) and use (function) , as well as those sociolinguistic or contextual factors certain structures are sensitive to.

2.3.2 Different methods used in the TLP of grammar

Some methods mentioned in <https://www.inklyo.com/methods-of-teaching-grammar> are:

Diagramming sentences

This method involves visually mapping the structures and relationships between different aspects of a sentence. Especially helpful for visual learners different forms of diagramming are used to visualize sentences, from the Reed-Kellogg System to dependency grammar, but all organize the functions of a sentence in a way that illustrates the grammatical relationships between words.

Learning through writing

Students are encouraged to explore language through creative writing, picking up correct grammar usage along the way.

Interactive teaching

Another method of teaching grammar is to incorporate interactivity into lessons. Using games to teach grammar not only engages students but also helps them to remember what they've learned. This method allows teachers to tailor their lessons to the different learning styles of students. Other games can include word puzzles or fun online quizzes.

Other methods used in the teaching and learning process of grammar mentioned by Celce-Murcia, M.(1988:11), perhaps the most known and used by teachers, in the author's opinion, are the following:

Inductive method: It goes from the examples to the rules (The students elicit the rules by themselves analyzing the examples).

Deductive method: It goes from the rules to the examples (the teacher gives the rule and examples are given).

Of all the methods previously mentioned, the authoress considers that the most appropriate is the inductive one.

2.3.3 The grammar lesson

Celce-Murcia (1988:27) suggests the following structure for the grammar lesson:

1. Presentation, in which we introduce the grammar structure, either inductively or deductively. There are a variety of techniques and resources that can be used during this step. Selection should be made according to teacher strengths, student preferences, and the nature of the structure.
2. Focused practice, in which the learner manipulates the structure in question while all other variables are held constant. The purpose of this step is to allow the learner to gain control of the form for communication. The teacher should not proceed to the next phase until most students have mastered at least the form of the structure.
3. Communicative practice, in which the learner engages in communicative activities to practice the structure being learned.

In other words, what she calls focus practice is what other authors call controlled practice, and communicative practice is the same as free practice .

2.3.4 Different techniques and resources used for teaching grammar according to Celce-Murcia, M.(1988:11)

This authoress suggests the following techniques and types of activities for the Controlled – practice stage:

Oral repetition: chorus, small groups, pairs, individual

Drills: substitution, transformation,

Meaningful practice: guessing drills, ticking, completing, matching, imaginary situations.

Questions and answers, questionnaires, quizzes

Pictures: picture sets, picture completion

Language games: find the right picture, Desert Island, Hide and seek building up descriptions, word games

Dialogues: gap, cloze, mapped,

Chain

While she suggests the following techniques and types of activities for the free – practice stage:

Pictures: for interpretation, for dialogue production and role-playing, sets for discussion.

Open talks

Projects

Round table; inside, outside circles

Games: Twenty questions, guessing games, elimination games, Simon says, find the difference, describe and draw, complete the draw and describe.

Open- ended dialogues, sets for discussion.

Open talks

Projects

Round table; inside, outside circles

Games: Twenty questions, guessing games, elimination games, Simon says, find the difference, describe and draw, complete the draw and describe.

Open-ended dialogues

2.4 The Simple Present

The tense aspect system, according to traditional grammars, comprises twelve tenses: Simple Present, Present Continuous, Present Perfect, Present Perfect Continuous, Simple Past, Past Continuous, Past Perfect, Past Perfect Continuous, Simple Future, Future Continuous, Future Perfect and Future Perfect Continuous.

Most syllabuses start with the Simple Present, since it is supposed to be the easiest of all. However, for Spanish learners it is not so due to the different forms that the verb *to be* has as well as the inflections that verbs denoting actions and events take to express the third person singular in this tense.

2.4.1 Form, meaning and use of the Simple Present Tense or *Present Simple* (as some authors refer to it).

Form

This verb has three different forms: am, is and, are, which vary in correspondence with the grammatical person. The form am is used with the first person in the singular, the form are is used with the second person either in the singular, or in the plural and with the first person in the plural, while the form is is used with the third person in the singular

- *The verb to be in affirmative sentences: subject + verb + complements (SEE ANNEX 6 Chart 1)*
- *The verb to be in negative sentences: subject + verb + not + complements (SEE ANNEX 6 Chart 2)*
- *The verb to be in yes/no questions: auxiliary verb+ subject+ complements (SEE ANNEX 6 Chart 3)*
- *The verb to be in information questions: question pattern+ auxiliary verb+ subject. (SEE ANNEX 6 Chart 4)*
- *Verbs denoting actions in affirmative sentences: subject+ verb+ complements. (SEE ANNEX 6 Chart 5)*
- *Verbs denoting actions in negative sentences: subject+ auxiliary verb (to do) + main verb+ complements. (SEE ANNEX 6 Chart 6)*
- *Verbs denoting actions in Yes/No questions: auxiliary verb (to do)+ subject+ main verb+ complements. (SEE ANNEX 6 Chart 7)*
- *Verbs denoting actions in information questions: question pattern+ auxiliary verb (to do)+ subject+ main verb+ complements. (SEE ANNEX 6 Chart 8)*

Meaning :(the concept of the structure): state, action or event that takes place at the moment of speaking , or at a span of time related to it.

Use: the context in which the grammar point is used.

According to Harrison , L. , Cushen ,C. and Hutchison, S, we use the present simple to talk about:

- something which happens on a regular basis; repeated actions and feelings
- facts
- timetables

According to Walker, E. and Elsworth, S. the Present Simple. is used :

- for something that is permanently true:
E.g.: She comes from Argentina.

E.g.: I don't speak Chinese.

- for habits and repeated actions:
E.g.: How often do you go to the gym?
E.g.: He usually leaves work at 6 o'clock.
- The present simple is used to express permanent facts.

According to Redston, C. and Cunningham, G., we use the Present Simple to.

- talk about things that happen every day/week/month, etc.
- We usually use the Present Simple with these words: usually, sometimes, always, often, normally, hardly ever, never, every day/week/month, etc.

As it can be appreciated, all the authors coincide concerning the uses of the Simple Present or Present Simple, although the summary of uses identified by Walker, E. and Elsworth, S. seems to be the most complete of all.

2.5 Building up process.

2.5.1 Description of the building up process.

At the beginning of this academic year (2017-2018), it was observed that Class D, 10th grade at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High school presented some difficulties in the development of the speaking ability due to some problems concerning grammar, they omitted the inflectional morpheme – s or -es in the third person singular; and therefore, they did not pronounce its different realizations. In addition to this, they used the forms of the verb *to be* incorrectly, mainly in those cases the subject of the sentence was not a personal pronoun.

Thus, an initial proposal of a system of lessons aimed at contributing to do away with the students' difficulties concerning those grammar points was designed to be included in Unit 1 "All about you". This is a review unit, in which the communicative functions to work with are: Give personal information and talk about present activities.

At the beginning, the proposal consisted of only four lessons, two of controlled practice and two of free practice, with two communicative exercises each, plus an exercise for homework in each lesson.

During the intervention, the authoress realized that two controlled practice lessons were not enough for doing away with the students' difficulties; for this reason, she considered necessary to add another controlled practice lesson, but for working in pairs with the same amount of exercises to guarantee the

success in the free practice lessons and to contribute to develop their speaking ability.

What did not go well:

In the initial proposal, in lesson one, exercise 1 had been designed for 15 minutes' time and students were supposed to work individually. The exercise consisted in choosing the right forms of the verb 'to be' in the Simple Present Tense to complete simple sentences in English. At the end, the teacher checked the exercise first orally and then in a written way.

The exercise had to be changed, because the students continued facing problems with the subject-verb agreement, because the subjects of the given sentences were not pronouns. Then, the authoress designed a new exercise in which she gives them complex sentences. In the first clause, the subject is not a pronoun, but in the second it is. Apparently, the level of complexity of the exercise increases, however it is not so, because this time the teacher provides them with an important cue the personal pronoun in correspondence with the previous subject .

In lesson two, exercise 1 did not go well either, because the students presented the same problem with the subject-verb agreement of the third person singular in the Simple Present Tense, because the exercise had the same characteristics as exercise 1 in lesson one. So, the teacher changed it. She planned an exercise similar to the one designed for lesson one in the final proposal.

The free practice lessons did not go well at all, because the students continued omitting the third person singular in some cases and continued facing problems with the subject -verb agreement of the verb *to be*; that is why; the authoress added another controlled practice lesson in which she included exercises for practicing both grammar points.

What went well:

Exercise 2 in both controlled practice lessons went well because, the exercises went beyond the sentence level, and students realized more easily when they had to use the different forms of the verb *to be*, or the inflectional morpheme for the third person singular, because the exercises were more contextualized.

In those exercises, the students were more confident, since they participated more enthusiastically and actively.

2.5.2 Systematic nature and peculiarities of the scientific result

The scientific result is a system of lessons to deal with the third person singular and the forms of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present Tense to back up the development of the speaking ability.

It consists of ten communicative exercises, six for controlled practice and four for free practice to be worked within Unit 1: "All about you".

There is a diversity of existing definitions of the term *system*, but the authoress of this major paper joins the one given in the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (Eleventh edition), because, in her opinion, it is the most complete of all.

"A system is a complex whole, a set of things working together as a mechanism or interconnecting network; an organized scheme or method. Also an organized set of ideas or theories or a particular way of doing something".

The scientific result that emerged from the building up process is considered a system of lessons, because it is structured within the course syllabus, taking as starting points the objectives of the grade and the unit, the contents of the unit especially, the communicative functions with their corresponding grammar points. Moreover, the activities are graded according to the students' characteristics and the level of complexity of the contents, always departing from the easiest exercises to the most difficult ones in the lessons, but there is a close interrelation and interdependence among all those elements that function as an indissoluble whole, giving the proposal a systemic character.

2.5.3 Description of the proposal.

The proposal consists of a system of five lessons, three controlled practice lessons and two free practice lessons. Although the authoress' aim is to achieve accuracy, she considered necessary to plan the free practice lessons as a way of having feedback.

Each lesson consists of two exercises. In the first lesson, the exercises are aimed at practicing the different forms of the verb *to be*, in the second lesson the exercises are aimed at practicing the third person singular in the Simple Present Tense and in the third lesson, the exercises are aimed at practicing both grammar points by means of pair work activities (mapped dialogues) to guarantee the success in the free practice lessons and to contribute to develop their speaking ability.

The exercises consist in filling in blank spaces in complex sentences and beyond the sentence level (text). In the two free practice lessons, the exercises are designed for working in pairs. In the first lesson, the aim is to practice freely the different forms of the verb *to be* to give personal information. In the second lesson, the aim is to talk about present activities. The entire proposal can be found in Annex 7.

The lessons were designed considering these aspects: Unit, level, lesson, pacing, teaching aids, topic, stage of the unit, method, grammar point/s, objective, and procedure.

Sample lesson.

Unit 1: "All about you."

Level: 10th grade

Lesson: 6

Pacing: 45 minutes

Teaching Aids: Board, cards and teacher's voice.

Stage: Controlled Practice.

Method: Communicative Approach.

Topic: "Practice."

Grammar point: The same stated in lessons one and two.

Useful vocabulary: The same stated in lessons one and two.

Objective: The students should be able to practice the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb to be in the Simple Present Tense in the communicative functions giving personal information and talking about present activities, through pair work, so as to contribute to solve daily life situations.

Warm up: The teacher activates the students' prior knowledge by reminding them the contents studied in the previous lessons related to the communicative functions giving personal information and talking about present activities.

After that, the teacher will communicate the students the objective of the lesson.

The teacher checks the homework assigned in the previous lesson.

Follow up:

1- Role play

St. A: Imagine you are attending a dance festival. There, you meet a foreigner and you are the only person who speaks English. So you will probably be coworkers. Be polite.

- Greet him/ her
 - Ask him his/ her name
 - Ask him/ her his/ her address
 - Ask him / her the people he/ she lives with
 - Ask him / her his/ her marital status
 - Exchange phone numbers to keep in touch
- Be ready to answer his/ her questions if it is necessary

St. B: Imagine you are a foreigner and you are attending a dance festival. There, you meet a person who speaks the same language as you. Answer his/her questions. So, you will probably be coworkers. Be polite.

Greet him/ her back

- Tell him/ her your name
 - Give him/ her your address
 - Tell him/ her who you live with
 - Tell him/ her your marital status
 - Exchange phone numbers to keep in touch.
- Ask questions if it is necessary.

2- Role play

St A: You are in the school library. A friend of yours sees you, and you tell him/her you have a new girlfriend/ boyfriend. Be ready to answer his/ her questions related to personal information and what he/she does every day.

St B: You meet your friend X in the school library. He/she tells you he/she has a new / boyfriend.

- Greet him/ her
- Ask him/ her for his girlfriend's or her boyfriend's name
- Where she/ he lives
- What she/ he does every day
- Ask him/her for the physical description of that person.
- Say you are happy for his/ her new girlfriend/ boyfriend
- Say good-bye

Close up: The teacher asks the students their opinion on the lesson.

She also comments on their participation in class, stimulating those who had a better participation.

After that, she motivates them for next lesson.

Finally, she assigns them the following homework:

HOMEWORK:

Imagine you are going to start a new course in informatics. It is the first day at school. Be ready to introduce yourself to the rest of the class next lesson, giving as much information as you can about you.

2.5.4 Foundations of the scientific result

From the philosophical point of view, the system of lessons is grounded on the dialectic-materialist method of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy, taking into consideration the teaching and learning process of foreign languages and by investigating its field in the objective reality, analyzing its objective upon the theoretic-ideological basis and the dialectic materialist theory of knowledge. The search of the psychological foundations is on line with the postulates of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy in order to avoid eclectic positions in the design of the system of lessons, and it led the authoress to assume the Historic-Cultural theory of L. S. Vigotsky, enriched by his followers. The sociological foundations, on the other hand, are also in direct correspondence with the assumed dialectic-materialist position. Education is assumed as a social phenomenon oriented towards the preparation of students to face life, being able to interact with reality, and transform it as well as themselves.

From the pedagogical point of view, the proposal is supported by the laws and principles of Pedagogy as a science; assuming the dialectic unit

between instruction and education, teaching and learning, and formation and development. In Vigotsky's theory, it is assumed that teaching goes ahead with respect to development, leading it to higher levels.

From the methodological point of view, the proposal is based on the principles of CLT and follows the suggestions given for dealing with grammar from a communicative perspective, which allows students to progress using the foreign language.

The proposal considers the principles of the educative character of teaching, its scientific character, its attainability, its systemic character, the relationship between theory and practice, the conscious and active character of the students under the teachers' guide, the solidity in the assimilation of knowledge, skills, and habits, the attention to individual needs within the cooperative character of the teaching and learning process and its audio-visual character of teaching: the union between the concrete and the abstract (Reyes and Pairol, 1988).

From the psychological point of view, the proposal takes into consideration that the verbal activity allows men to communicate with others and it is closely related to the processes of analysis, synthesis, induction and deduction, as well as those processes related to memory and the concepts of knowledge, habit and ability which have a linguistic character. The teaching and learning process of any foreign language is intimately related to them; therefore, language is its subject matter as a means of communication and in the system of knowledge of the foreign language not only the mastery of the linguistic material is present, but also the knowledge of rules. (González Cancio. R G 2009:17) and rules are precisely provided by grammar.

In addition to this, the proposal takes into consideration the characteristics of the subjects of research, their interests and age, among others.

CONCLUSIONS

The accomplishment of this major paper enabled the authoress to state the following conclusions:

1. The diagnosis carried out in 10th Grade, Class D at Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos High School revealed some students' strengths that favor the teaching and learning process of the English subject and some weaknesses that hinder it.
2. The theoretical and methodological bases that support the teaching and learning of the Simple Present Tense, with emphasis on the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be* are based on the Communicative Approach.
3. The main transformations in the subjects of research were concerning accuracy in the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be*, which allowed them to achieve a better performance in the English Language, mainly in the speaking ability.
4. The subjects of research were more confident, they participated more enthusiastically and actively and enhanced the use of the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be*.
5. The scientific result that emerged from the process of building up carried out during the research was a system of lessons for controlled and free practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To continue working on this theme in order to enrich and improve the proposal.
- To validate the proposal by implementing it in other 10th grade classes.

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Annexes

Annex # 1: Analysis of Documents

Objective: To check the objectives, contents, methodology and activities suggested for the teaching of grammar in 10th grade.

Documents and aspects to be evaluated:

1. The syllabus of the subject in 10th grade:

- Objectives of the grade
- Number of units to be taught in the course
- Time allotted to teach each unit
- Distribution of contents per unit
- Methodology suggested for teaching the subject

2. Students' workbook

- Number of exercises per unit.
- Kind of exercises per unit.
- Relationship between the exercises and the objectives and contents of the unit.
- Number of exercises to practice the use of the 3rd person singular and the forms of the verb *to be* the Simple Present tense.
- Kind of exercises suggested for practicing those grammar points.

Annex # 2: Pedagogical Test

Objective: To diagnose the difficulties that Class D, 10th grade at “Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos” High School have regarding the grammar points previously mentioned in the problematic situation.

Aspects *to be* evaluated:

- The use of the 3rd Person Singular and the use of the forms of the Verb *to be* in the Simple Present Tense.

WRITTEN TEST:

Answer these questions in form of a paragraph.

- 1- What is your name?
- 2- What are you?
- 3- What are your parent’s names?
- 4- Where do you live?
- 5- Do you live in a house or in apartment?
- 6- What is your telephone number?
- 7- What does your mother do for a living?
- 8- What is your father’s job?
- 9- What is your favorite color?
- 10-What do you do on weekdays?
- 11-What do you do on weekends?
- 12-What does your mother do on weekends?
- 13-And what does your father do on weekends?

Key:

The authoress considered the following categories:

Very good: Those students who answered correctly 12 -13 items.

Good: Those students who answered correctly 10 - 11 items.

Fair: Those students who answered correctly 8-9 items.

Poor: Those students who answered correctly less than 8 items

Annex # 3: Observation Guide

Objective: To assess the students' performance regarding the grammar points object of through the observation of several speaking activities

.

Unit number: ____

Lesson number: ____

School: _____

Subject: ____ Class: ____ Grade: ____

Date: _____

Teacher's name: _____

Observer's: name _____

Use the categories and subcategories below:

| Categories | Subcategories |
|---|---|
| Verb to BE in Simple Present Tense | Agreement between subject and verb, Word order (syntax). |
| 3 RD Person Singular in Simple Present Tense | Form, Meaning and Use, Spelling, Pronunciation. |

Annex# 4: In-depth interview to the teacher:

Objective: To know the teacher's opinion regarding the teaching of grammar in Class D 10th grade at "Reinaldo Urquiza Ceballos" High School.

Guide for the interview:

- 1- Do you consider the treatment of grammar important for the development of the speaking ability and communication in general ?
- 2- Do your students enjoy speaking activities and English lessons in general? Why or Why not?
- 3- What are the main problems that hinder speaking in your English lessons?
- 4- In your opinion, how can grammar be improved? What kind of activities do you suggest?
- 5- Do you consider the time allotted for teaching the subject enough?
- 6- Are there enough exercises to deal with grammar in the students' workbook?

Annex # 5: Survey to students

Objective: To assess students' motivation, abilities, knowledge, and likes regarding the English subject with focus on grammar.

Aspects to evaluate:

- Students' motivation in lessons.
- The most difficult ability for them.
- Students' knowledge of grammar rules .
- The commonest mistakes students have regarding grammar.
- Materials they would like to use for working grammar.

Consigna: estimado estudiante, como parte de una investigación que se está llevando a cabo con el objetivo de perfeccionar el proceso enseñanza aprendizaje de la asignatura Inglés necesitamos que nos responda las siguientes preguntas de la forma más sincera posible. Gracias

Preguntas:

1. ¿Te gusta el inglés?

si___ no___ ¿Por qué?

2. ¿Crees que es importante para la vida en sociedad?

si___ no___

3. ¿Piensas que aprender inglés es difícil?

si___ no___

4. ¿Cuál de las habilidades es más difícil para ti?

- Escribir___

- Hablar___

- Escuchar___

- Leer___

¿Por qué? _____

5. ¿Qué te resulta más difícil a la hora de hablar?

___ Usar la frase correcta que corresponde a cada situación.

___ Encontrar las palabras más apropiadas para expresarme

___ Pronunciar correctamente lo que deseo expresar

___ Ordenar correctamente las oraciones

___ Lograr claridad a la hora de hablar.

___ Conjugar correctamente las formas verbales en los diferentes tiempos

___Escribir lo que sabes decir en inglés

6. ¿Piensas que la gramática es necesaria para aprender un idioma extranjero en este caso el inglés?

si___ no___

7. ¿Conoces alguna regla gramatical que te facilite hablar o escribir mejor?

___ Si. ¿Cuál? _____

___ No

8. ¿Qué actividades consideras que te facilitarían el aprendizaje de la gramática?

___imágenes

___trabajo en parejas

___audiciones originales

___juegos

___completamiento de oraciones y textos

___otras. ¿Cuáles?

9. ¿Cómo consideras que te sería más fácil comprender la gramática, si te dan el ejemplo y a partir de él llegas a inferir la regla o si te dan la regla y después el ejemplo?

Annex # 6:

Chart 1:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|--|
| <i>I</i> | <i>am</i> | <i>a student.</i> <i>students.</i> <i>a student.</i> <i>a book.</i> |
| <i>You/We/They</i> | <i>are</i> | |
| <i>He/ She</i> <i>It</i> | <i>is</i> | |

Chart 2:

| Subject | Verb+ not | Complements |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>I</i> | <i>am+ not</i> | <i>a student.</i> |
| <i>You/We/They</i> | <i>are+ not</i> | <i>students.</i> |
| <i>He/She</i> | <i>is+ not</i> | <i>a student.</i> |
| <i>It</i> | | <i>a book.</i> |

Chart 3:

| Auxiliary verb | Subject | Complements |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Am (am not) | <i>I</i> | <i>your teacher?</i> |
| Are (are not) | <i>You/We/They</i> | <i>teachers?</i> |
| Is (is not) | <i>He/ She</i> | <i>your teacher?</i> |
| Is (is not) | <i>It</i> | <i>your book?</i> |

Chart 4:

| question pattern | auxiliary verb | subject. |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Where | <i>am</i> | <i>I?</i> |
| Where | <i>are</i> | <i>You/We/They?</i> |
| Where | <i>is</i> | <i>He/ She?</i> |
| Where | <i>is</i> | <i>The book.(it)?</i> |

Chart 5:

| subject | verb | Complements. |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| <i>I</i> | <i>live</i> | <i>in Havana.</i> |
| <i>You/We/They</i> | <i>live</i> | <i>in Cienfuegos.</i> |
| <i>He/ She</i> | <i>lives</i> | <i>in Santa Clara.</i> |
| <i>It</i> | <i>takes</i> | <i>too long.</i> |

Chart 6:

| subject | auxiliary verb (to do) | main verb | complements |
|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| I | do not | live | in Havana. |
| You/We/They | do not | live | in Cienfuegos. |
| He/ She | does not | live | in Santa Clara. |
| It | does not | take | too long. |

Chart 7:

| auxiliary verb (to do) | subject | main verb | complements |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Do | I | live | in Havana? |
| Do | You/We/They | live | in Cienfuegos? |
| Does | He/ She | live | in Santa Clara? |
| Does | It | take | too long? |

Chart 8:

| question pattern | auxiliary verb (to do) | subject | main verb | complements |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Where | do | I | live? | |
| What | do | You/We/They | study | at the university? |
| Where | does | He/ She | live? | |
| How much | does | It | cost? | |

Annex # 7 The entire proposal

Unit 1: "All about you."

Level: 10th grade

Lesson: 4

Pacing: 45 minutes

Teaching aids: Board and teacher's voice

Stage: Controlled Practice

Method: Communicative Approach

Topic: "I am..." Personal Information.

Grammar point: The forms of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present tense (am, are, is) in statements and questions.

Useful vocabulary (According to the syllabus): related to asking and given personal information: name, nationality, age, occupation/job, favorite color, size, etc.)

Objective: The students should be able to practice the forms of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present tense (am, are, is) in statements and questions, giving personal information through individual work, so as to contribute to solve daily life situations.

Warm up: The teacher activates the students' prior knowledge by reminding them the contents studied in the previous presentation lessons related to the communicative function: giving personal information, to do this the teacher will ask them the forms of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present tense (am, are, is) as well as the structure of statements and questions.

After that, the teacher will communicate the students the objective of the lesson.

The teacher checks the homework assigned in the previous lesson.

Follow up:

Exercise: 1 taken and adapted from <http://www.focus.olsztyn.pl/en-exercises-for-present-simple.html#.WrkFeDhDvcs>

Choose the right forms of the verb 'to be' in the Simple Present Tense to complete the following sentences in English. (AM, ARE, IS)

- 1- Nancy and Paul _____ my friends. They _____ students.
- 2- Peter and Albert _____ my cousins. They _____ brothers
- 3- Her name _____ Rose. She _____ ten years old.
- 4- John and Jim _____ doctors. They _____ Cuban.

- 5- ____ Bob, Frank and you engineers?
Yes, we ____.
- 6- Jane and Jack ____ (not) Cuban. They ____ Canadian.
- 7- My mother ____ (not) a dentist. She ____ a nurse.
- 8- .I ____ Tom Clark. I ____ fifteen years old.
- 9- ____ your father an architect or an engineer?
He ____ an architect.
- 10-How old ____ he?
He ____ thirty five years old.

Exercise:2

Complete the following paragraph. Use the correct form of the verb *to be* (am, are, and is).

My name ____ Ryan. I ____ 15 years old. I ____ tall and thin. I ____ Cuban. I ____ student. I live with my family. My mother's name ____ Megan. She ____ a doctor. She ____ 34 years old. My father's name ____ Robert. He ____ an architect. He ____ 36 years old. I have two twin brothers, Jimmy and Johnny. They ____ 7 years old. They ____ students. We ____ a happy family.

Close up: The teacher asks the students their opinion on the lesson.

She also comments on their participation in class, stimulating those who had a better participation.

After that, she motivates them for next lesson.

Finally, she assigns them the following homework:

HOMEWORK:

Fill in the blanks to complete the following conversation. Pay attention to the different forms of the verb *to be*.

It is the first day at school and one of your classmates approaches you...

A: Hello!

B: ____!

A: What ____ your name?

B: My name ____ Rosemary. What ____ yours?

A: I ____ Margaret. How old ____ you?

B: I ____ 15 years old. How about you?

A: I ____ 15 years old ,too.

B: Nice to meet you.

A: Nice to meet you, too.

Unit 1: "All about you."

Level: 10th grade

Lesson: 5

Pacing: 45 minutes

Teaching aids: Board and teacher's voice.

Stage: Controlled Practice.

Method: Communicative Approach.

Grammar point: The 3rd person Singular with action verbs in the Simple Present.

Useful vocabulary: Action verbs to express present activities. (wash, do, take, study, visit, practice, help, go (out), have (breakfast, lunch, dinner), get up, etc.)

Topic: "She/he/it....Simple Present Tense, 3rd Person Singular.

Objective: The students should be able to reproduce statements and questions about present activities through individual work, so as to contribute to solve daily life situations.

Warm up: The teacher activates the students' prior knowledge by reminding them the contents studied in the previous lessons related to the communicative function: talking about present activities, to do this the teacher will ask them when add -s or -es to the verbs.

After that, the teacher will communicate the students the objective of the lesson.

The teacher checks the homework assigned in the previous lesson.

Follow up:

Exercise: 1 Taken and adapted from <https://www.grammarbank.com/simple-present-3rd-person.html>

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate forms of the given verbs.

1. My brother ---- (speak) three languages fluently: Spanish, German and English, but he _____ (not like) how German language _____ (sound).

2. Daniel ---- (watch) his favorite program every Saturday and he _____ (not like) to work this day.

3. My sister ---- (do) her homework after school every day and she _____ (help) her mom in the kitchen.
4. My uncle ---- (not have) breakfast at home, he _____ (have) it in the cafeteria.
5. Paul ---- (not play) tennis when he _____ (go) to the stadium.
6. ____ Clara (get up) early on Sundays?
7. My uncle ---- (not talk) much when he _____ (drive).
8. ---- (she / cook) well? What _____ she _____ (like) to cook the most?
9. My son never ---- (listen) to me, for that reason he _____ (have) some problems.
10. ____ Jessica (kiss) her mother before she _____ (go) to bed.

Exercise: 2

Complete the following paragraph using the correct form of the verb in the 3rd person singular.

My best friend is Dayana. She _____ (live) in Manicaragua. She is married and she _____ (have) three children. She is a teacher. She _____ (teach) English in High School. On Saturdays, Dayana _____ (do) the housework, she _____ (wash) her family 's clothes, she _____ (clean) the house and she _____ (cook) dinner. On Saturday nights, Dayana _____ (read) a good book or _____ (watch) a good film and I after that _____ (go) to bed, but on Sunday nights, she _____ (study) the lessons she is going to teach the following day.

Close up: The teacher asks the students their opinion on the lesson.

She also comments on their participation in class, stimulating those who had a better participation. After that, she motivates them for next lesson. Finally, she assigns them the following homework:

HOMEWORK: Fill in the blanks to complete the following conversation. Pay attention to the different forms of the verb in the 3rd person singular in simple present tense.

David wants to surprise her friend, Megan, this Sunday, but he doesn't know what she does on Sundays. So, he calls up a friend of hers to find it out.

A: Hello Christine! It's me, David.

B: Hello David! What happens?

A: I am calling you because I want to surprise Megan this Sunday, but I don't know if she is going to be busy. Can you tell me what she does on Sundays?

B: OK! On Sundays, she always _____ (wake up) , and _____ (have) breakfast early ,because she _____ (help) her mother to clean the house. At

noon, she _____ (take) a shower .Later, she (have) lunch and after that
_____ (watch) a good film. At night, she _____ (have) dinner,
_____ (wash) the dishes and _____ (go) to bed early ,because she
_____ (not + like) to go out to parties.

A: Thanks! I will bear that in mind. Well, see you soon.

B: Bye.

Unit 1: "All about you."

Level: 10th grade

Lesson: 6

Pacing: 45 minutes

Teaching Aids: Board, cards and teacher's voice.

Stage: Controlled Practice.

Method: Communicative Approach.

Topic: "Practice."

Grammar point: The forms of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present tense (am, are, is) in statements and questions. The 3rd person Singular with action verbs in the Simple Present.

Useful vocabulary: related to asking and given personal information: name, nationality, age, occupation/job, favorite color, size, etc.). Action verbs to express present activities. (wash, do, take, study, visit, practice, help, go (out), have (breakfast, lunch, dinner), get up, etc.)

Objective: The students should be able to practice the third person singular and the subject-verb agreement of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present Tense in the communicative functions giving personal information and talking about present activities, through pair work, so as to contribute to solve daily life situations.

Warm up: The teacher activates the students' prior knowledge by reminding them the contents studied in the previous lessons related to the communicative functions giving personal information and talking about present activities.

After that, the teacher will communicate the students the objective of the lesson.

The teacher checks the homework assigned in the previous lesson.

Follow up: (Each student will be given a card that contains the corresponding instructions to work with after explain to them the procedure to follow)

Procedures for carrying out pair work: cited by Byrne, D. (1989:54)

- 1- Make sure the students know exactly what they have to do. That is, explain the activity and practice as necessary with open pairs across the class.
- 2- Divide the students into pairs (taking advantage as much as possible of the way they are seated). A pair may consist of two students. In this case, a person asks while the other answers. The students then change roles.
- 3- Carry out selective checking i.e. by walking round the class. If the teacher feels that an activity is going badly, stop it, re-present it to the class and let the students start again.
- 4- Control noise level by stopping an activity and asking the students to start again more quietly.

- 5- Gauge the amount of time an activity should go on for. Stop the activity when most students have had a reasonable amount of practice. The teacher cannot expect all the students to go exactly the same pace and some students will naturally get more practice than others.
- 6- Provide any necessary feedback. That is, tell the students how well they have done. If necessary, re-teach any items now or later.

3- Role play

St. A: Imagine you are attending a dance festival. There, you meet a foreigner and you are the only person who speaks English. So you will probably be coworkers. Be polite.

- Greet him/ her
 - Ask him his/ her name
 - Ask him/ her his/ her address
 - Ask him / her the people he/ she lives with
 - Ask him / her his/ her marital status
 - Exchange phone numbers to keep in touch
- Be ready to answer his/ her questions if it is necessary

St. B: Imagine you are a foreigner and you are attending a dance festival. There, you meet a person who speaks the same language as you. Answer his/her questions. So, you will probably be coworkers. Be polite.

Greet him/ her back

- Tell him/ her your name
 - Give him/ her your address
 - Tell him/ her who you live with
 - Tell him/ her your marital status
 - Exchange phone numbers to keep in touch.
- Ask questions if it is necessary.

4- Role play

St A: You are in the school library. A friend of yours sees you, and you tell him/her you have a new girlfriend/ boyfriend. Be ready to answer his/ her questions related to personal information and what he/she does every day.

St B: You meet your friend X in the school library. He/she tells you he/she has a new / boyfriend.

- Greet him/ her
- Ask him/ her for his girlfriend's or her boyfriend's name
- Where she/ he lives
- What she/ he does every day
- Ask him/her for the physical description of that person.
- Say you are happy for his/ her new girlfriend/ boyfriend
- Say good-bye

Close up: The teacher asks the students their opinion on the lesson.

She also comments on their participation in class, stimulating those who had a better participation. After that, she motivates them for next lesson. Finally, she assigns them the following homework:

HOMEWORK:

Imagine you are going to start a new course in informatics. It is the first day at school. Be ready to introduce yourself to the rest of the class next lesson, giving as much information as you can about you.

Unit 1: "All about you."

Level: 10th grade

Lesson: 7

Pacing: 45 minutes

Teaching aids: Board, cards and teacher's voice.

Stage: Free Practice.

Method: Communicative Approach.

Topic: "Practice."

Grammar point: The forms of the verb *to be* in the Simple Present tense (am, are, is) in statements and questions.

Useful vocabulary: related to asking and given personal information: name, nationality, age, occupation/job, favorite color, size, etc.)

Objective: The students should be able to use the communicative function giving personal information, using the subject verb-agreement of the verb *to be* properly, through pair work so as to contribute to develop solidarity and friendship among them.

Warm up: The teacher activates the students' prior knowledge by reminding them the contents studied in the previous lessons related to the communicative function giving personal information.

After that, the teacher will communicate the students the objective of the lesson.

The teacher checks the homework assigned in the previous lesson.

Follow up: (Each student will be given a card that contains the corresponding instructions to work with)

Situation 1: At the hospital. (Pair work)

St A: You are a doctor. You are on guard duty. A patient comes to see you because he/she is not feeling well. Ask him/her as many questions as you consider necessary. Be polite.

St B: You are not feeling well. You go to the hospital to see a doctor. Be ready to answer his/her questions. Be polite.

Situation 2: (pair work) Registering for a course.

St A: You are a school secretary. Some students are going to register for the new course. Be ready to interview them to obtain the information you need.
Sts B: You are at the school secretary's office. You are interested in registering for the new course. Be ready to answer his/her questions.

Close up: The teacher asks the students their opinion on the lesson.

She also comments on their participation in class, and asks each pair to evaluate themselves.

After that, the teacher will select the best performances and ask them to act them out in front of the class.

Then, she motivates them for next lesson.

Finally, she assigns them the following homework:

HOMEWORK

You are a school secretary. You are in charge of selecting the right candidate for becoming an assistant in primary school. You are going to give the principal as much information about the person selected as possible.

Unit 1: "All about you."

Level: 10th grade

Lesson: 8

Pacing: 45 minutes

Teaching aids: Board, cards and teacher's voice.

Stage: Free Practice.

Method: Communicative Approach.

Topic: "Practice."

Grammar point: The 3rd person Singular with action verbs in the Simple Present.

Useful vocabulary: Action verbs to express present activities. (wash, do, take, study, visit, practice, help, go (out), have (breakfast, lunch, dinner), get up, etc.)

Objective: The students should be able to use the third person singular in the communicative function talking about present activities, through pair work, so as to contribute to develop solidarity and friendship among them.

Warm up: The teacher activates the students' prior knowledge by reminding them the contents studied in the previous lessons related to the communicative function: talking about present activities.

After that, the teacher will communicate the students the objective of the lesson.

The teacher checks the previous homework.

Follow up: (Each student will be given a card that contains the corresponding instructions to work with)

Situation 1: At a party.

St A: You are at a party in your town. There you meet a person who was your classmate. Give him/her as much information about a mutual friend you have recently met as you can.

St B: You meet a person who was your classmate at a party in your town. Ask him/her about a mutual friend who you have not seen in a long time.

Situation 2: At the mall.

St A: You are at the mall. You meet an old friend who you have not seen for ages. He/ she does not know about your new marriage. Be ready to answer his/her questions. Be polite.

St B: You are at the mall. An old friend you have not seen for ages runs into you. Try to catch up by asking him/her as many questions as you wish. Be polite.

Close up: The teacher asks the students their opinion on the lesson.

She also comments on their participation in class, and asks each pair to evaluate themselves.

After that, the teacher will select the best performances and ask them to act them out in front of the class.

Then, she motivates them for next lesson.

Finally, she assigns them the following homework:

HOMEWORK

Your English teacher wants to know about your family present activities. Write a small paragraph in which you say what one of your family members does on weekends.

