

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTONOMA DE NICARAGUA

FACULTAD REGIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARIA

UNAN- FAREM Estelí



Use of Visual Means as a Didactic Tool in Teaching English grammar to Students of 7th grade at Nuestra Señora Del Rosario High School in Estelí, during the Second Semester 2016.

Authors:

1. Yajaira María Ortega Miranda.
2. Marta Lorena Ruiz Cruz.
3. Maritza del Carmen Hernández Valenzuela.

Advisor:

Ph.D. Israel Zelaya

Saturday, January 21st, 2017.



2017: AÑO DE LA UNIVERSIDAD EMPRENDEDORA

*Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua, Managua
(UNAN-MANAGUA)*

~

*Facultad Regional Multidisciplinaria Estelí
Departamento Ciencias de la Educación y Humanidades*

Carta de recomendación del tutor

Por medio de la presente hago constar que **Yajaira María Ortega Miranda, Marta Lorena Ruiz Cruz y Maritza del Carmen Hernández Valenzuela**, estudiantes de la carrera Licenciatura en Ciencias de la Educación con mención en Inglés, han cumplido con los requisitos científicos, técnicos y metodológicos estipulados en la normativa correspondiente a la asignatura Seminario de Graduación.

Por lo anterior se autoriza para que realicen la presentación y defensa de su trabajo de investigación, ante el tribunal que se estime conveniente.

Se extiende la presente a los dos días del mes de febrero del año dos mil diecisiete.

Atentamente,

Israel Ramón Zelaya

Docente

UNAN-Managua/FAREM-Estelí

Table of Content

Dedicatory	5
Abstract.....	6
Acknowledgments	7
Chapter One – Introduction	8
1.1. Previous Studies.....	9
1.2. Problem Statement.....	10
1.3. Relevance of the Research.....	11
1.4. Key Terms: Visual Means, Grammar, Didactic Tool and Teaching	13
1.5. Organization of the Paper	13
Chapter Two – Literature Review	15
2.1. What is grammar?.....	15
2.2. Teaching Grammar	15
2.3. What are Visual Means?	17
2.4. Types of Visual Means	17
2.4.1. Picture.....	18
2.4.2. Flashcards	18
2.4.3. Power Point	18
2.4.4. Pictionary and Drawings	19
2.4.5. Postcards.....	19
2.4.6. Photograph.....	19
2.4.7. Video	20
2.4.8. Map.....	20
2.5. Visual Means as a Pedagogical Tool	20
2.6. Importance of use Visual Means as a Didactic Tool	21

2.7.1. Advantages	23
2.7.2. Disadvantages	24
Chapter Three – Methodology.....	26
3.1. Research Questions.....	26
3.2. Research Design	26
3.3. Subject Selection:	27
3.4. Data Collection	28
3.5. Research Site.....	29
3.6. Data analysis	29
3.6.1. Observation guide.....	29
3.6.2. Interview	30
Chapter Four – Results and Discussion.....	31
Chapter Five – Conclusions.....	40
Recommendations for further research.....	41
Anexes	42
Timetable of Activities	42
Bibliography	46

Dedicatory

This research is dedicated to God, who fills our days with wisdom and enthusiasm to learn and move forward. We also dedicate this effort to our parents and families who motivated us to overcome the challenges of this research and despite everything, have given us their unconditional support in all areas of our lives. Last but not least, to our teachers Israel Zelaya and Nahum Torrez for being a good model and inspiration in our lives.

Abstract

This study is aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the process of teaching English grammar to 7th grade students at Nuestra Señora Del Rosario High school in Estelí, during the second semester 2016 with emphasis on the use of visuals aids during the English class.

A qualitative design was chosen for this research, and two data collection methods were used: interviews to get data from the students and class observations. The class observation and interviews provided useful information for the completion of this study. Among the main findings of this research are that visual means facilitate grammar learning, particularly images, a type of means that is commonly used by teachers. Additionally, it is important that teachers use different visual means during the class so as not to lose the attention of the students.

Acknowledgments

We want to say thank you to Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua, FAREM-Estelí, for supporting us and providing all the assistance we required. Also to our teachers, because they provided us with the necessary instruments for the construction of this research, especially to M.A. Nahum Torrez and Ph.D. Israel Zelaya for being so patient and leading us to seek solutions to the challenges that arose during this process. We also thank our families for their moral and unconditional support as well as the authorities at Colegio Nuestra Señora Del Rosario high School for allowing us to use the school's resources and facilitating the access to the information needed for this study.

Chapter One – Introduction

The present research work was done with the purpose of pointing out how Visual aids can facilitate the understanding of English Grammar in ESL students. A poor comprehension of grammar has a negative effect on speaking, and as a consequence, the students are not able to communicate accurately in the foreign language. This investigation was done with seventh-grade students at Colegio Nuestra Señora del Rosario High School in the department of Estelí.

Our main objective is to determine the effectiveness of the use of visual means applied as a didactic tool in teaching English grammar. In order to respond to this objective, first, we implemented visual aids in the teaching of grammar to seventh-grade students, then we noted the effect that these visual means have in that process and finally we suggest alternative uses of visual aids that can contribute to the teaching of grammar to 7th grade students.

Throughout this research, we observed the methodology and techniques that the facilitator uses during the development of the English class. During process, we found out some of the aspects that affect the process of teaching English and the benefits that visual aids have regarding the learning and comprehension of English grammar.

A few years back, education in Nicaragua in all subjects used to focus on reproducing concepts and memorization and there was a lack of participation of the students as the teacher was the center of the class. English was taught only in high school, and it was not as important as it is today. Nowadays, education is focused on the student as an active element of the learning process, but despite the improvements in learning strategies, there are not language laboratories or special didactic English classroom in the schools. In addition, English is still not taught in primary schools; there is not enough materials and visual means for teachers in school libraries and those available are not adapted to the needs of the students and the topics to be taught.

Our Literature Review is composed by theories of authors that express the concepts such as the teaching of grammar, concepts of visual means and types, the importance of their implementation as a didactic tool and advantages and disadvantages. The results of the theoretical sources were compared with the applied instruments.

1.1. Previous Studies

The main purpose of this research is to determine the effectiveness of the visual means that the educator uses to teach grammar. In the area of education, there are no studies about the use of visual aids specifically to teach grammatical structures. Nonetheless, in studies found related to the use of this type of didactic tools, there are some that show some aspects in which visuals are used and those investigations will be explained in this chapter. The subject of visual media as a didactic tool has been investigated by several authors, who are mentioned below:

One of the researches that mention the use of visual is the study called "Influence of pictures on the acquisition of English vocabulary in 8th-grade students at High school REACH, in La Trinidad, Estelí. During the second semester of 2015", it had as the main objective to verify the potential of pictures on the acquisition of English vocabulary.

The conclusions of this research were based on the application of two instruments: an observation guide and a survey questionnaire. The results of the analysis showed that the usage of pictures is of great help to increase the interest of the students in the lessons. As an advantage the learners have the opportunity to participate in class and communicate all their answer to the teacher (Cardoza, Martínez, & Martínez, 2016).

Additionally, another study related to visual means entitled "Innovation in the Teaching process of English Language in writing skill" was carried out. It focuses on vocabulary learning using posters through Linking Language Strategy with students of seventh grade "A" at Colegio Maestro Calixto Moya from March to November 2015. This investigation showed that when the teacher uses images, it helps students to improve their spelling skill and they learn in an easy way (Navarrete & Yescas, 2016).

As can it be drawn from these results, both research works agree on the importance of visual means in the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language. Both investigations go deep into the application of a particular visual aid, for example, the first research provides findings on the influence of pictures on the acquisition of vocabulary of the English language, demonstrating how children are more motivated to participate when the teacher uses those resources. On top of that, the second research reaffirmed the effect of the pictures but also showed that they are a great help to improve the students' skills. These investigations will serve as a theoretical basis for our study since they relate to the objectives set.

1.2. Problem Statement

Currently, students struggle with the comprehension of English Grammar. Most of the time they transfer Spanish Grammar to English Grammar, and they get confused with the word order in English because of the differences in form between both languages. Due to that, students frequently have problems when using grammatical structures. Besides, they struggle when doing translations and interpretations from Spanish to English, and this limits oral communication, reading, writing and especially the understanding of the foreign language. Some students get discouraged and disappointed. As a result, they lose interest in learning the English language.

Students of seventh grade have difficulties understanding grammar and this fact limits the learning of English as a foreign language. As a consequence of their poor grammar, the abilities and sub-abilities in the target language are not fully developed and some students cannot respond to the demands of the English class and the real world. Taking this problem into consideration, there is need to look for new strategies and improve the use of the available didactic tools such as visual aids to provide students an instrument to succeed in the comprehension of grammar.

It has been observed over the years that students of English as a Second Language have difficulties understanding Grammar and this is reflected in the poor academic performance in the English subject, especially for seventh grade students.

Students feel insecure to communicate in front of others. The incorrect use of syntax, morphology and other important aspects of Grammar causes several problems, for instance: misspelled writing, lack of comprehension and most of all, inappropriate speaking. Incorrect Grammar varies the message of an idea or thought and is a barrier that limits communication.

Through the use of different visual aids, we aim at making classes more dynamic and taking advantage of resources that could facilitate the learning process. Visual aids lead the learners in the path of comprehension, motivation and promote speaking. It is crucial to apply the correct visuals, and adapt them to the necessity; environment and context of the students, besides the material, should be attractive and dynamic for them. Showing a picture or photograph in a class will be helpful to develop confidence, so this kind of resource responds to a variety of emotions in learners.

Regarding the context of grammar teaching, we state the following problem:

How can this research determine the effectiveness of using the visual means applied as a didactic tool in teaching English grammar to students of seventh grade?

1.3. Relevance of the Research

The research was carried out at the Colegio Nuestra Señora del Rosario High School as the school provides all the necessary elements for the completion of this study. The relevance of this research is explained in the need of using the correct grammatical structures to make understandable messages when speaking in a native and foreign language. This area is challenging for students of seventh grade, who have problems to memorize and understand the grammar rules as the language is taught for the first time in this grade.

The students at Nuestra Señora Del Rosario High School, come from different schools in Estelí and nearby communities. They have different elementary academic backgrounds, and most of them have not studied or taken English classes in primary schools, neither have been in contact with English as a foreign language in any form. There

is a lot of seventh graders with different personalities and motivation towards the language and for most of them it is very frustrating when they have English class for the first time.

English has been taught in this Colegio from its foundation. Tape recorders, English books, besides an audio-visual classroom are available to the English teachers to plan their classes. In addition, there are two TIC classrooms in which the English Educators are able to assign work on the English subject to the students under the supervision of Computers engineers responsible for that area. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that there is not a specific classroom adapted specifically for English teaching.

Currently, in this school there are three facilitators of English teaching seventh to eleventh grades. The teachers in the high school Colegio Nuestra Señora Del Rosario have been applying the visual aids for a long time. However, visual means have not been measured as a didactic tool to record the advantages or disadvantages that they have in the learning process of English grammar.

As future teachers of English as a foreign language, we expect that the results of this research will contribute to improvement of the quality of education through the proper use of visual means in teaching-learning process of grammar. Also, by studying the effectiveness of various didactic resources, we will be able to share the knowledge that we have assimilated during the development of this research.

Furthermore, by doing research on didactic tools we can help students to understand grammar and use it to express their thoughts accurately according to their academic level. This will undoubtedly contribute to overcome the difficulties found in the classroom with seventh graders. We believe that the use of visual aids will create a good and active environment in the classroom as one of the biggest problems is the lack of attention and indifference. We expect that these didactic tools will keep students motivated and concentrated on the topic, to engage and participate actively in classroom activities, and therefore acquire a higher comprehension of English grammar.

1.4. Key Terms: Visual Means, Grammar, Didactic Tool and Teaching

Visual means: from the point of view of Beth Lewis, visual means are the different learning tools that teachers use in the classroom, for instance: flashcards, video, map, or any other kind of concrete material that allow students to acquire knowledge, to retain information faster and at the same time, to increase their own potential. (Lewis, 2016).

Grammar: It is conventionally seen as the study of the syntax and morphology of sentences. To put it in another way, it is the study of linguistic chains and slots. Grammar is the study of both. Firstly, the way how words are chained together in a particular order, and secondly, the words can slot into any link in the chain. (Thornbury, 1999, pp. 1-2).

According to Patrick Hartwell (2013), Grammar is the branch of linguistic science which is concerned with the description, analysis, and formulization of formal language patterns. Grammar is the set of formal patterns in which the words of a language are arranged in order to convey larger meanings. For this reason, teaching grammatical rules constitutes an essential aspect in the mastering of the English language, thus grammar should be taught since low levels in an attractive way to capture the students' interest.

Didactic tools: according to Oscar García Marchena, didactic tools are in general all the resources that the teacher uses in the classroom to achieve significant learning with their students. Videos, pictures or other kind of didactic resources are very useful as auxiliary materials when covering a new topic. Besides, visual aids may be helpful to address problems such as lack of discipline and attention in class. (García Marchena, 1996).

Teaching: teach: Verb. To give lessons to students, for example in a school or college.
Teaching: Noun (no plural): modern teaching methods. (Oxford, 2012, p. 396).

1.5. Organization of the Paper

This paper is outlined in the following way: Firstly, a brief introduction on the problem statement, then a short rationale on the relevance of this work and why it is important to use visual means as a didactic resource for the teaching of English grammar. In the background, different points of view from the students were described as we worked

on proving the effectiveness of the visual means. Moreover, we have included some definitions of the most relevant keywords of the present work.

In the literature review, we start by describing the different visual means that the teacher may use in the classroom. Also, we explain the advantages and difficulties of the application of these resources as a didactic tool to teach English Grammar. The importance of the different types of visual means is also mentioned, particularly the relevance of those that were applied in this research.

The third component of this paper is the methodology. Here we explain the research design that was followed including the universe, the population, sampling and the data collection methods. Also, some procedures for data analysis are introduced in this section.

There was the application of a diagnostic test to the students; classes observations were carried out several times during two months, and the use of different strategies were observed. The English facilitators took turns to teach the classes in order to see the effectiveness of the different visual means used in the classroom. Finally, the analysis of the results was done. Finally, the recommendations, and conclusions were a fundamental part of this investigation to summarize how we accomplished our objectives and what needs to be done in future works.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

The primary purpose of this chapter is to analyze different concepts and theories of some authors that explain the effectiveness of visual aids used by educators in the classroom for grammar teaching. In the literature review, definitions of visual aids are presented as well as descriptions of the grammar teaching process. The types of visual resources that exist will be mentioned, including some advantages and disadvantages of using some of them.

2.1. What is grammar?

Significant scholars have defined the term grammar. For instance, Harmer (2007, p. 12) defines it as “the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language.” Taking into consideration that daily, grammar is used in written, read and spoken communication.

Thornbury observes that all language in use can be analyzed at each of these four levels: text, sentence, word and sound. These are the forms that language takes. The study of grammar consists, in part of looking at the way these forms are arranged and patterned (Thornbury, 1999, pp. 1-2).

2.2. Teaching Grammar

For so many years, teaching of grammar was the main goal in the process to learn a new language, but when people started to give more importance to oral communication, grammar was left behind. Nowadays we live in globalized societies and there has been some significant changes in teaching methodologies, but still grammar is really important in the development of the speaking ability in foreign languages. Today, students are not simply asked to memorize the rules but also, they are required to be able to speak the target language with proficiency in a way that people will understand what they are saying and transmit a clear message.

According to Harmer (2007), in the world of education there are variables that influence the process of Teaching and Learning. Harmer explains there are two types of students teachers often find themselves working with: passive and active students.

Moreover, in the classroom, teachers could find problems such as demotivation, and problems of attitude, in different language levels (basic, intermediate and advanced). For this reason, teachers have to search for the appropriate aids or tools to help his students in the learning process.

Teaching grammar is a process that involves interaction between the teacher and his students, and it has to happen in an environment with enough interaction, where students will not just be information recipients but build knowledge. There are so many tools to learn and teach grammar and so many ways to apply those resources; the problem is that sometimes the process to learn grammar can be tough or tiresome, which may be because there are some educators who tend to stick to a routine and put aside creativity when teaching new structures.

On the other hand, the English class can be boring sometimes if teachers only show students worksheets. Visual Means have the characteristic to be bright and colorful and make a real impact on visual learners. Willingham, in his research, states a simple question to make his point, "Why do students remember everything that is on television and forget what we lecture" (Willingham, 2009, p. 41). This question suggests that the learning process is eventually more significant when the facilitator makes use of the visual aids to introduce a topic or during the development of the class. For that reason, visual aids are a trustful vehicle to help students learn English.

The practice is a fundamental component in the teaching-learning process. Some children do not have the custom or responsibility to practice in their homes. Thus, the classroom is the perfect scenario to use visual means that help the kids to practice in a funny way so that they are able to remember the topic for the next day without much effort.

2.3. What are Visual Means?

Visual learners prefer to learn a new language when it is contextualized in pictures, graphs, diagrams, and charts. In order to remember vocabulary, students should have access to word maps rather than lists. Students can receive extra help if the teacher uses expressive gestures in class. Pupils enjoy acting and learning a language that allows them to use their imagination to create scenes in their minds.

Visual aid is an object that a teacher shows in lessons to help to learn something (Oxford, 2012). They are sources of data or information in the form of visual representations. According to this author, visual means have the potential to make of the teaching and learning of English an active process, and from the students' perspective, they can catch the new information and knowledge in forms of images rather than plain text.

Visual means is a colloquial expression used to designate devices, such as the television, movies, photography, painting, and so on. However, this definition is highly inexact and misleading. All the so-called visual means turn out, on closer inspection, to involve the other senses (especially touch and hearing). All aids are, from the standpoint of sensory modality, "mixed means" (Michetll, 2005, p. 395). Through of the use visual means the students can be able to use all their senses, feelings and emotions.

2.4. Types of Visual Means

There are different types of visual means, being the following among the most important: flashcards, pictures, postcards, wall cards, posters, photographs, maps, videos, pictionary, and drawings.

Pictures can be used in the form of flashcards (smallish cards which can be held up for our students to see), large wall pictures (big enough for everyone to see details), cue cards (small cards which students use in part or group work), photographs, or illustrations (typically in a textbook). (Harmer, 2007, p. 134). Furthermore, in the classroom the teacher is a kind of teaching aid, a piece of teaching equipment is his/her own right.

2.4.1. Picture

Pictures are different types of images, drawing, painting or photograph (Oxford, 2012, p. 288). As Aristotle said: “The soul never thinks without a picture”. The picture should illustrate important points that are otherwise hard to understand.

2.4.2. Flashcards

A flashcard (or flash card) is essentially a note card with a question on one side and the corresponding answer on the other side. Students can learn and repeat pieces of information by reading the question and trying to recall the answer. You can then check if your answer was correct by flipping the card (Syndeon Soft, 2016).

When the teacher introduces vocabulary to young learners, it is more meaningful to use real items that capture children’s attention. However, it is not always possible or realistic for teachers to use real items in the classroom. Flashcards can be a significant way to introduce new vocabulary so that learners have a very clear understanding of the word or concept.

Flash cards are very versatile teaching resource, especially for ESL (English as second and language) teaching. They can be used visually in any lesson and at every level of teaching ESL. In fact, flashcards are indispensable for beginner and elementary levels, as at these stages the learners are engaged in developing their vocabulary.

Flashcards are useful for teaching vocabulary in a number of ways: matching words to pictures, vocabulary drills, concentration games, singular and plural forms, nouns, verbs, adjectives etc.

2.4.3. Power Point

PowerPoint is one of the visual aids available to you as a speaker. Your ability to incorporate the right visual aid at the right time and in the right format can have a powerful effect on your audience. Because your message is the central focus of your speech, you only want to add visual aids that enhance your message, clarify the meaning of your words,

target the emotions of your audience, and show what words fail to describe clearly. (Kasperek, 2016).

2.4.4. Pictionary and Drawings

Drawing is a picture made with a pen or a pencil, but no paint (Oxford, 2012, p. 116). Pictionary is a game of drawing and guessing pictures; this game works great with large groups as an icebreaker, as well as simply fun game to play and motivate children and also promote oral communication and others speaking skills. It is a fun activity that can be used with both children and adults to review the vocabulary they have learned.

Also, another way to use drawings is through Drawing Dictations. They are a great way to practice vocabulary and grammar and to find out how well the students in your class listen to you.

2.4.5. Postcards

A postcard is a card with a picture on one side that you write on and send by post. (Oxford, 2012, p. 298). Postcards have many uses and they are not only used to write to a loved one or a friend. They can also be used to see a distant place that someone would want to go to. Postcards can be an excellent way of teaching children about places around the world too or about many other topics. Using postcards in class can be a motivating writing task and create expectations in the students about who will receive the postcard and what they will reply back. Students do not have to write too much and it is great to make new friends and practice real communication.

2.4.6. Photograph

A photograph is a picture that you take with a camera (Oxford, 2012, p. 287). A photograph is more than an image, especially when it teaches English. It is essential when it comes to engaging students who are learning a new language at any level. It can be successful study aids during lessons, and it can act as useful prompts to help students when they are practicing speaking and learning grammar structures and vocabulary.

2.4.7. Video

In order to engage students, teachers can show a video or a picture only to half on their class, and ask the other half what they can see. This second group will then have to try to report what the other students have seen, as accurately as they can. Everyone will see something slightly different from the others, and the activity will strengthen their relationship.

2.4.8. Map

Map is a set of points, lines, and areas all defined both by position with reference to a coordinate system and by their non-spatial attributes. Maps are the world reduced to points, lines, and areas, using a variety of visual resources: size, shape, value, texture or pattern, color, orientation, and shape. A thin line may mean something different from a thick one, and similarly, red lines from blue ones. (Lanius, 2016).

2.5. Visual Means as a Pedagogical Tool

In the pedagogical process, the motivation factor is crucial. Consequently, Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) speak about the usage of certain “motivational strategies,” which they describe essentially as motivational techniques or methods. From their point of view, language teachers could effectively employ them to improve their teaching skills and transform their classrooms into more interesting, active and engaging learning spaces. Moreover, these researchers indicate that applying such motivating aids or tools is crucial to determine the effectiveness of the use of visual means to motivate learners and promote language production in the (EFL) classroom (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008, pp. 55-77).

Brinton (Brinton, 2001) explains that visual means can help English educators to motivate students by bringing a slice of life into the classroom and by presenting language in a more complete, communicative context. The students must have the self-confidence to tell about the pictures presented. They should not be afraid to make mistakes.

A picture describes a situation better and can give meaning or tell something to the students. Pictures stimulates students to express their ideas. However, the teacher needs to

consider in choosing a picture for teaching. The picture should be appropriate for the age and needs of the students and be relatively free of cultural bias. Then, pictures should be big enough and visible enough for the students to see. (Kusni & Jufrizal, 2013, p. 55).

In accordance to Penny Ur (Ur, 1991) it is very much easier to concentrate on thinking about something if you can see that something, or at least see some depicted or symbolic representation of it. For Ur, the learning process is more accessible to the learner when the facilitators provide the information using visual instruments. In other words, as the saying goes “a picture is worth a thousand words”, comprehension of vocabulary and concepts is more accessible if the children are able to have a representation of something that is taught by the teacher. Then is when the learning process becomes more productive and efficient.

Visual Aids stimulate the comprehension of the foreign language as the students associate the image with the text, even more if the material is adapted to the real context. As a matter of fact, pupils nowadays are demanding better and more strategies. Additionally, students live in a globalized world and are therefore influenced by technology. They are somehow more active and different from students ten years ago. Under those circumstances, teachers need to innovate, apply and combine new didactic techniques to teach grammar as students normally struggle with grammar.

Empirical research shows that visual means make concepts more accessible to a person than text. They are more meaningful and help with later recall. (Cowen, 1984, pp. 131-144). For the complexity that teaching a foreign language grammar demands, the English facilitators have the responsibility to use all aids that they consider necessary to increase the knowledge of their students, in order to provide them with the appropriate didactic resources they need according to the context and learning styles.

2.6. Importance of use Visual Means as a Didactic Tool

According to Brinton (2001), visual means have a remarkable role and occupy the everyday lives of students; visuals can no longer be ignored. For him, visual means are a powerful and motivating influence for the students to learn a language. Brinton goes further

and adds that the use of visual aids in the EFL classroom contributes richly, positively and constructively to the language teaching process. The implementation of visual aids by the teachers could permit to obtain these results.

Young and Travis illustrate that visual aids can spark interest, build emotional connections, clarify words, explain abstract ideas, and help draw conclusions or increase understanding. This argument leads to the conclusion that the use of visual tools in the classroom will increase the ability to express thoughts, ideas and as a result, the students will be motivated through the use of visuals and show more interest in the class (Young & Travis, 2008, p. 184).

On the contrary, Duarte (2008) and Reynolds (2008), recommend turning as many concepts as possible into images. For them, the definitions are more accessible to the students' brains when we have a physical representation of the information. Studies have shown that people retain more information when they see images that relate to the words they are hearing (Mayer, 2001, pp. 166-167). And when people are presented information for a very short time, they remember images better than words (Reynolds, 2008).

Visual aids can be an important part of conveying a message effectively since people learn far more by hearing and seeing than through hearing or seeing alone (Vasile, 2004, p. 291). The brain processes verbal and visual information separately. By helping the audience build visual and verbal memories, they are more likely to be able to remember the information at a later time (Malamed, 2009, pp. 9-18).

The use of visual aids such as pictures, posters, postcards, word calendars, realia, charts, graphic organizers, picture books, television, videos and computers can help young learners to easily understand and realize the main points that they have learned in the classroom. Therefore, visual aids can help learners understand the deep meaning of a topic and realize similarities and differences between each topic. It is the teacher's job to facilitate the learning of vocabulary using visual materials. The reason may be that they allow young learners to absorb the information through an additional sensory perception. (Konomi, 2014, pp. 254-260).

Regarding visual aids, Mannan (2005) mentions that “They help the teacher to clarify, establish, correlate and coordinate accurate concepts, interpretations and appreciations, and enable him/her to make learning more concrete, effective, interesting, inspirational, meaningful and vivid”(p. 119)

Snow (2001) says that “visual materials use content-based goes from gestures and pantomimes to pictures, photographs and slides. These aids help to make the activities more motivating and meaningful for the students”.

Pictures are essential when they come to engage students who are learning a new language at any level and can function as great conversation starters for students. Teachers can use pictures to teach vocabulary and grammar with this type of materials, increasing productivity in terms of both quality and quantity. Besides, these materials can be used in the classroom not only to ease the work of the teachers; they are meaningful to motivate students to participate actively in class.

In the manner of Oscar García Marchena, didactic tools are indispensable didactic elements to reach different goals when teaching a foreign language, such as indiscipline, lack of attention. He emphasizes the relevance that videos, picture or another kind of didactic resources have for the teacher when they are used as auxiliary material in the development of a new topic. And the learning process turns into a more enjoyable environment. (García Marchena, 1996).

Visualization, however, is conceived in the literature as a mental process (Hoffer, 2010, p. 246). This author defines visualization as “any kind of non-verbal illustration (both symbolic, such as graphs, and pictorial, such as realistic diagrams, pictures, or animations. By making use of visual resources for teaching English as a foreign language, teachers become better equipped to bring content and context to life”.

2.7. Advantages and Disadvantages of Visual Means.

2.7.1. Advantages

According to Harmer (2007) the advantages of visual means are: The use of realia in the classroom is helpful for teaching the meaning of words and motivating students.

Besides, the learning process is more interesting for the learners when realia is applied as it can provide a good starting point for a variety of language work and communication activities.

Besides, he states that pictures can be used in a multiplicity of ways, for instance flashcards are especially useful for drilling grammar items and practicing vocabulary. In addition, pictures are extremely useful for a variety of communication activities, especially when describing or drawing. Harmer (2007, p.178) affirms that students become engaged in conversational activities when they are able to observe pictures to describe objects.

Harmer also refers that pictures can be helpful to stimulate questions, besides they can be used for creative language use, to write descriptions to invent conversations to make predictions about what is coming. For this researcher, visuals are crucial to generate different aspects of a language acquisition in the students when the teacher uses visual aids in the classroom.

Additionally, one of the most versatile pieces of teaching equipment is the board; we can use it as a notepad, an explanations aid, a picture frame, a public workbook, a game board and a noticeboard, among several other uses.

Data shows are extremely useful pieces of equipment since they allow us to prepare slides for the students. They require little technical knowledge, and usually are easy to carry around.

2.7.2. Disadvantages

As Harmer remarks, it is a matter of personal taste to use pictures, but when educators decide to use them, they should take into account three requirements. First of all, the pictures need to be appropriate for the students and not too childish, otherwise students will lose focus on the main goal of the activity and get distracted.

Secondly, when working with specific pictures, it is important to say that each illustration has a cultural message. A careless attitude about this point may offend some students, which is why this is considered as another disadvantage of using pictures.

Thirdly, the size of the visual aids has major importance. Harmer points out that the pictures should be big enough to permit students to see them very well. Making them small will not allow students to observe them, as a consequence leading the students away from the objectives that the teacher set regarding grammatical structures, or any other activities regarding language skills, unreachable.

Projectors are extremely versatile, but they can pose some problems too. They need electricity of course, and bulbs do fail from time to time. Some models are quite bulky too (Harmer, 2007, pág. 136).

Lastly, it is important to mention that one of the limitations with realia is the size and quantity of the objects themselves and the student's tolerance, especially with adults who may think they are being treated childishly (Harmer, 2007, pág. 136).

Chapter Three – Methodology

This chapter introduces the methodology followed in this study. Here we introduce the research questions, the research design that was chosen, information on the participants of the study and the data collection instruments. Moreover, we describe the data analysis procedure followed for the purpose of this study.

3.1. Research Questions

This study aims at answering the following questions:

1. What is the effect of using visual aids as a didactic tool in teaching English grammar?
2. What alternative uses of visual aids can contribute to the teaching of grammar to seventh-grade students?

3.2. Research Design

This research is based on a qualitative design. Qualitative research design is a research method used extensively by scientists and researchers studying human behavior and habits. Qualitative Research seeks to understand social phenomena from the viewpoints of those being studied; it is holistic and relies on flexible research strategies.

This project does not have any numerical and statistical data. It is oriented to be qualitative due to the nature of the research; instead, we will get opinions and points of view of the participants regarding certain issues and facts.

The type of investigation was empirical because it was mainly based in the participation of the English seventh-grade facilitator and students. We also applied interview to the students, observations and the application of a diagnostic test, all of this focused on the use of visual aids in the classroom.

In agreement with Creswell (2014) this design is an inquiry approach in which the researcher explores a central phenomenon. As mentioned before, it is also qualitative based on a naturalistic interpretative approach of the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things attempting to make sense of them and to interpret a phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring to them. In summary, qualitative research emphasizes

the natural promotion of viewpoints of the participants and discussions with the participants.

3.3. Subject Selection:

The universe of this research corresponds to two hundred students of seventh grade, who are all the seventh-graders in Nuestra Señora Del Rosario High School.

The population corresponds to forty seventh-grade students who attend the morning shift in the same school.

The sample corresponds to twenty students. It was intentional, taking into account students' characteristics such as: group age. Their ages go in a range between eleven and twelve years old, among boys and girls. Another factor that was considered to choose our sample was their previous knowledge of the language. Half of them in this particular group come from primary schools where English was not taught so it was the first time for these students to receive English. The selected twenty students represent fifty percent of the total population.

For this study we chose a non-probability sampling technique called convenience sampling in which subjects are chosen based on their availability and the ease for the researcher to study them.

Characteristics of the Sample

The sample for this research paper is formed by twenty seventh-grade students. The learners are in ages between eleven and twelve years old. They have important characteristics such as responsibility, and get along very well with other classmates and teachers; besides, they have an eighty percent of GPA (grade point average). It is very important to point out that the students in this classroom come from different primary schools as well as different neighborhoods in Estelí. Some are from areas like La Trinidad and Santa Cruz. Moreover, half of the students approximately did not take English as foreign language in primary school according to the results of a written survey they filled in.

It is important to mention that in this study, apart from doing class observations and just watching the development of the English lessons, we took turns applying different didactic techniques using visual aids. The regular teacher assisted us during the classes. The purpose of this task was to become an active part of the teaching process and evaluate the use of visual aids. In addition, this experience allowed us to observe one another and analyze how visual instruments applied by the teachers influence the comprehension of English Grammar. Lastly, it is fundamental to express that the educator of seventh grade at Colegio Nuestra Señora Del Rosario participated in this project to look for strategies that permit students grasp and strive grammar issues in a simplified form. In order to have different points of view, we applied both observations and participated actively as teachers in the classes.

3.4. Data Collection

According to Fernandez and Sampiere (2006) for collecting, analyzing and interpreting the data, each research needs to follow five steps proposed: assembling, coding, comparing the data, building interpretations and reporting the outcomes. In order to fulfill the goals of this study, three instruments were chosen: an interview, an observation guide and a diagnostic test.

The population is formed by the seventh-grade class “C”, which contains forty students in total. The sample corresponds to twenty of them. The total of seventh graders is two hundred students distributed in five classrooms.

The sample was chosen for the following reasons:

- It is possible to lead the class better with only half of the original students.
- It is possible to have a credible result because twenty students represent fifty percent of the population of seventh grade C.
- Some of them come from schools where they learned some things about the English language.
- The selected subjects conveniently have all the features needed to study the effect of visual aids in grammar teaching.

3.5. Research Site

The Colegio Nuestra Señora Del Rosario is located in Estelí city, in Juan Alberto Blandon Neighborhood, across from the Municipal Market Alfredo Lazo. It was founded on April 3rd, 1950 by the religious sisters of the sacred hearts of Joseph and Mary. Upon its foundations, it offered educational services only for girls. Nowadays it offers morning shift for middle and high school and afternoon shift for preschool and elementary. Nowadays it has 955 high school students, 396 boys and 559 girls.

At present, El Colegio has sixty-six years of educative labor offering educational services to 1900 students. This educative center offers classes until eleventh grade. Thirty-six facilitators work in the school, which also has a Principal, an Assistant, a Secretary, four more people who work in the administration area and five people who work in maintenance of the Institute. At present, this school is led by The Superior mother, Sister Martha Cecilia Calero Ruiz. In the year 1982, El Colegio Nuestra Señora del Rosario became part of the International Movement Fe y Alegría and a member of the Nicaraguan confederation of Catholic Education (Confederación Nicaraguense de Educación Católica - FENEC).

3.6. Data analysis

This includes creating descriptions and interpreting and validating the results. (Creswell J. , 2014, p. 245). Once the interview guides and observation were applied, we organized the data and carefully studied each item of the instruments instrument with the purpose of answering the research questions.

Eight class observations were carried out since the first week of September to October 25th in order to identify the visual means the English that the facilitator applies in the teaching process of English Grammar. We also observed to identify the drawbacks and positive effects that may occur in the application of visuals in the classroom.

3.6.1. Observation guide

Creswell (2014) mentions that an observation is a data collection method used in qualitative designs; it allows the researcher to get information from the field of

investigation. Observations help us get a better picture of the teaching and learning process and record all the activities that the teacher uses in the class. This instrument was applied to observe the effectiveness of visual means as a didactic tool in English grammar teaching to students of 7th grade in the class. This instrument will be guided by the research question. Weekly observations were carried out in class to observe the behavior of students and the English teacher. Each observation takes 45 minutes (one academic hour).

3.6.2. Interview

The interview is a method to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and /or motivations of individuals on specific ways and also it is a method used in qualitative research (Creswell J. , 2014, pp. 239-240). Interviews can be applied individually or in groups.

In this research the interview to the students consists in five questions. The interview is focused on finding out the points of view of the learners about the effectiveness of visual means used to develop English grammar and with the intention of contributing to the improvement of knowledge on the subject. This information will be crucial to achieve the goal of our study.

Chapter Four – Results and Discussion

In this chapter we analyze the results obtained from the application of our data collection methods, namely the interview applied to the students, the observation of the class and the theory consulted. It is focused on two main questions comparing the answers from the sources highlighted above. It is fundamental to mention that in this research we wanted to get information about the student's prior knowledge and experiences on the use of visual aids before their actual implementation in the classes.

Most of the seventh-grade students in our study do not have previous knowledge of the language. This lack of prior experience and knowledge makes it more difficult for them when they receive English for the first time. First of all, students have not learned vocabulary, so teachers concentrate on introducing new words through flashcards to make it easier for them to remember and understand the new content.

Another problem that students face is the comprehension of word order in English. They get confused most of the time, especially when it comes to adjective placement and understanding that the adjective comes before the noun, so what in English should be “the greenhouse” for students is “the house green”.

Thirdly, they do not clearly understand how the verb “to be” is conjugated for the different pronouns and that these pronouns substitute nouns. Students often use the verb incorrectly. So to make it more understandable, some flashcards of people representing the subject of the sentences were used with the respective pronouns that could replace them properly.

Mastering grammar is also affected by the fact that students are often afraid of making mistakes. Their poor vocabulary, incorrect pronunciation and misuse of basic verbs may be the result of their lack of immersion in the English language.

Shyness and fear of speaking are some of the things students need to actually improve constantly in their learning process. Besides, there are other negative factors that teachers cannot control, for example the submission of homework is often delayed and in

some case students do not turn in their assignments. In this case the teacher gives them some time to finish it in class. However, often times some group of students are often behind the others and do not catch up easily with others.

The literature review of the different researches we cited conclude that visual aids are an excellent didactic tool to promote not just grammar comprehension but also to develop other skills in the target language. Therefore, it is recommendable to use visual resources to get better result in a classroom. They somehow encourage students to participate and to pay more attention when learning new vocabulary through pictures. At the same time, they allow the class to be more attentive and improve the quality of the interactions in the class. Consequently, the students assume an active role in the different stages during the development of the class and assimilate the topics and new grammatical structures more effortlessly.

The theory that states that visual aids help to evoke a variety of emotions in the learners. It is then possible to affirm that these resources have a variety of uses, not just for understanding grammar in the target language, but also to assist in developing skills like speaking, reading and writing, not to mention listening and others key areas like vocabulary and pronunciation.

Before using visual aids in the class, the students' behavior was passive as they showed disinterest, boredom, they did not participate actively in the class activities. Only a few students, some who take extra-curricular English courses, answered the teacher's questions and participated. Having the vocabulary introduced through lists of words on the whiteboard seemed to bring a negative response from the students. The main problems we could observe in some classes were low level of participation, low level of class attention, lack of motivation, and lack of interest.

It was proved by our investigation that when the students brought objects and made in-class projects under the guidance of teachers, learning was apparently more meaningful but most of all, the pupils were more willing to participate in speaking activities.

For the present study, we set two research questions that we will answer in the coming section. Again, these results and discussion are based on the opinions and observations that we carried out during the research process. With the first question stated below we want to find out whether visual aids have a positive effect on students helping them to understand grammar.

Research Question #1 - What is the effect of using visual aids as a didactic tool in teaching English grammar?

One of the problems students face is the incorrect placement of the adjective and the noun because students are thinking in Spanish. In this particular aspect of grammar, the adjectives were presented to the students in flashcards of color blue and on top of them the ordinal number first (1st) and the nouns were presented in color red, and on top of them the ordinal number second (2nd). First, the children identified that adjectives describe nouns and that the number on top means that adjectives come first. After, they were looking at the columns with vocabulary and saying the sentences. They formed short sentences (green mountain). Then, longer ones. For instance : the green mountain is by the lake. Once the students learned the vocabulary, the words (adjectives and nouns) were substituted by flashcards. A picture color blue, a picture of a lake, after a picture representing the preposition of place. Students were saying the sentences and besides that, they wrote them down. The students were learning and playing at the same time.

Through the class observation we had the opportunity to corroborate that is more effective for the learners to study if they are able to have a representation of something that is explained by the educator. It is easier to understand what it is talked about when there is a physical image of the words. Regarding to the effect that visual aids have in the class as a pedagogical tool, it is possible to express that they help students to interact among each other, facilitate comprehension of vocabulary, help them to clarify concepts and stimulate students to participate more actively in the different stages of the learning process and in the different moments of the class development as well.

In addition, our observation of the class allowed us to determine that the most used visual aids were poster papers, drawings, realia, flash cards, pictionary, and videos. Penny

Ur affirms that it is easier to think on something if there is a physical representation of that or a symbolic representation of it. In this case, words are better understood if they are introduced through pictures. We could notice that the vocabulary was more accessible to the learners and could be remembered more easily when they watched pictures representing these words. When we have a representation of an object in our minds and we know how to write it and say it, the learning process becomes more relevant due to the natural associations that are created. It is true what Ur's theory affirms and the analysis of the results also, lead to consider that in the classroom the information is better perceived when there is an association between pictures and text.

On the other hand, there was the opportunity to find out that if the students are not interested in the class, do not participate and do not solve the exercises and limit themselves to do the tasks oriented in class or at home, they are not able to understand any grammatical structure even presented in a more dynamic way.

From twenty students, sixteen affirmed that the educator always uses visual means and four said that he does it only sometimes. Most of them expressed that poster papers help them to understand grammar when they associate the new structures with the illustrations. Eight pupils explained that visual aids facilitate speaking and others shared that the class gets more interesting and these resources also help them to retain vocabulary.

One of the main benefits of the use of Visual aids was the memorization of vocabulary and grammatical structures. All the interviewed students stated that flashcards allow them to remember more words and their meaning easily. During the class observation, it was possible to prove that the educators use flashcards to promote the retention of vocabulary. The educators also used videos to show them vocabulary and reinforced the activity using flashcards. The students were able to identify the object and say the words later, as well as draw the object and write the word.

Following the same activity, they wrote down short sentences using simple present of "to be" and prepositions of place, which also helped learners to recall vocabulary. This agrees with Willingham's concept (2009, p. 41) that claims that students tend to remember what they see and forget what teachers lecture. For him, the learning process is eventually

more significant when the facilitator makes use of the visual aids to introduce a topic or during the development of the class.

To teach the verb to be, the pronouns were presented through pictures and the verb to be in a circle with a specific color for am, is and are. Then the Indefinitive articles a and an, also the occupation was introduced to the students with a picture. For Instance a picture of a girl represented the pronoun she/ Ana, a person pointing himself /herself was for I/me. A picture of a man and a woman represented the pronoun they (Mary and Juan). This activity permitted the students to match the pronouns with the nouns and use the verb to be correctly because they had a clue to help them remember which verb correspond to each pronoun.

With The example cited above, there is the opportunity to take into account what Harmer states in his theory. He expresses that images let the educator teach grammatical structures and when the scholars observe pictures they have the motivation to describe them. Through the application of the technic explained before to teach the verb to be, we could perceive that when the grammatical structures are presented to the learners in a non-conventional form and the words are combined with pictures it is easier for them to understand the topic specifically the grammatical issue and even better, let the children apply it in an oral and written form. At the same time the learning process becomes dynamic and the information is received in a more active and effective manner. Considering what the theory says, the learners' responses and the results found, it is allowed to confirm that the theory and the results are related in this case.

In contrast, not everything resulted positive, there were obstacles during the activity. First of all, the academic hour of forty five minutes is not enough time to implement visuals. Especially to teach a grammatical aspect that students really struggle with. Besides, there are a few learners that do not respond to visual stimulus and do not pay attention to this didactic resource. Further, there are some scholars affected by external problems that interrupt their learning process and do not get involve in the tasks oriented in the classroom or outside of it.

From the selected sample, sixteen students said that grammar was easier to understand with the implementation of visual aids and that they felt more eager to participate actively in the class. Four students noted that these resources made them more attentive and interested in the class.

When using illustrations, according to the results obtained in the observations and the students' answers there was proved that the use of them facilitate comprehension and makes students see the grammatical structures from a more fun, interesting perspective, if it is presented correctly and following a clear goal. Here, it is clear that when people are presented information through pictures, they tend to remember things more easily, particularly vocabulary.

Conforming to Young and Travis (Young & Travis, 2008, p. 184) learners become more interested in a class, clarify doubts and are able to express their thoughts, in a more confident form. For these researchers, visual aids can make the learning process more relevant when the educator implements visual aids to explain grammatical structures and applies these didactic resources to awaken the pupils' interest in the way the language works.

There are countless benefits of using visual aids in the classroom. Sixteen students of the sample affirmed that the use of visual aids facilitate the comprehension of vocabulary and retention as well. Moreover, understanding of grammar was an essential part and allowed them to communicate more confidently in the foreign language. Most of them got involved in the activities and were attentive. It is clearly stated by Young and Travis (2008). That visual means help sparkle interest among the students, are a crucial instrument to clarify words, and when the facilitator applies these resources, the students are able to express their ideas and clearly understand the concepts presented better and faster.

It was then confirmed that the use of pictures motivates the students' participation and makes it easier for them to express ideas related to the topic they are learning about. Furthermore, interest in the target language increases and motivation arises in most of the students.

Research Question #2 - What alternative uses of visual aids can contribute to the teaching of grammar to seventh-grade students?

Apart from learning grammars, students can also enhance their writing, listening and reading skills. Motivation, interest, active participation, integration, discipline and communication between student and teacher were present during the class. As Brinton states in his study, when the students are motivated by the educator through the use of visual aids such as projects, they assimilate the content better and relate it to real situations outside the classroom. Therefore, the learning process becomes more productive and vivid and the students have a motive to communicate with their peers.

In the questions administered to students, they pointed out that flashcards were very helpful to retain vocabulary. Besides, five students confirmed that poster papers helped to understand grammar structures. Four students explained that pictures and drawings were useful to awaken interest and capture attention. And seven pupils expressed that realia was a valuable resource to contextualize vocabulary and grammar in the classroom. With the students' answers and the results acquired, it is feasible to affirm that visual aids have different alternative uses in the classroom providing the occasion to practice different skill in the foreign language to strengthen grammar.

It is clear that when the students feel that what they are learning can be applied to their everyday life, the learning process gets a lot more significant. For this reason, educators should go beyond a lesson plan in order to empower students to grammar difficulties, at the same time they work on continuously developing the language skills.

In the observations carried out, there was the opportunity to observe and identify that communication was very active between students and the teacher. Also the communication between students was very productive. When there was a presentation the rest of the students asked questions to the presenters and interacted actively increasing participation orally. This fact, answers the question research, here it is possible to confirm that visual aids help students to understand grammatical structures through other complementary uses of visual aids such as: speaking, reading, listening and writing due to that these skills permit the reinforcement of grammatical structures.

In one of the classes, several colorful flashcards about the different places and buildings in town were shown to the pupils by the facilitator. Once the students identified them, the teacher presented a grammatical structure: WH/ verb be / article the / noun/? By combining illustrations with words and showing them to the students, they could answer questions and then they were able to make sentences.

As part of the same activity, the students were asked to look at some flashcards pasted on the whiteboard and then write sentences and draw the places they were describing. The learners really liked this activity, all of them were motivated to do this task. It was demonstrated that the use of illustrations facilitated comprehension and allowed learners to see a different side of grammatical structures.

In a following class students brought materials to create their own projects and present them to the class applying the grammatical structure they had learned. Students shared their information and described the buildings and houses they made. Most of the students participated and the listener had the opportunity to ask questions. Here there is a clear representation about Brinton' statement when he affirms that when people bring a slice of life into the classroom, the learning and acquisition of a new language is more meaningful and thus the process is perceived as positive by the students. The theory with the findings gotten with this task are connected, it is evident that the scholars assume more responsibilities when making projects and representing a particular part of reality. And are willing to express their ideas.

Brinton (2001) observes that visual means can help English educators to motivate students by bringing a slice of life into the classroom. He remarks that when the students have a representation of real context creating and using realia in the classroom, led by the teacher, there is a motivation to comment about it and share ideas by communicating with others.

Activities like realia bring a sense of real life to the classroom that allows students to explore their creativity in class. It is extremely fundamental to show that the motivation to share information, challenged students to communicate in the target language.

On the contrary, it was clear that some students did not finish their assignment and did not participate in the class. And a few of them who did not bring any kind of material did not do the task. These students did not have the opportunity to advance in the learning process because of the attitude they have and as a consequence they are behind the others. In these situations realia did not motivate learners, despite the teacher's insistence.

In the interview, eighteen students stated that visual aids are important because when they observe pictures, they understand vocabulary and the topic faster. It also helps that the teacher explains and points at the pictures so they can figure out what he means. Two of them responded that even with the pictures it is difficult to understand grammar.

In the observation carried out on October 11th, a data show, powerpoint slides and flashcards were part of the different types of visual aids used in the class. First of all, a video was played and the students were able to observe the different words for occupations and then the teacher presented slides to clarify and reinforce the topic. a series of flashcards related to the occupations were previously presented in the video, but this time the students were able to say specific occupations. The words were pasted on the whiteboard, and the students spelled them. After that, the flashcards were used to drill vocabulary and passed over from one student to the other.

Chapter Five – Conclusions

It was verified in this research that some students have difficulties to share their thoughts in English and to write simple sentences. The lack of motivation is a reality that affects some of the students in the classrooms and feel frustrated and ashamed when they have to communicate in the foreign language because English Grammar is still a challenge for them. There are some external factors that affect students' learning process, and as a consequence of this fact the foreign language is even more difficult in these cases.

Students of seventh grade lack vocabulary and we could observe that the use of visual means in the development of the class allow the student to interact with other students and the teacher as well as to get the best out of the class activities and materials.

Through this educational experience, it was possible to verify all the advantages mentioned by Harmer in his book "The Practice of English Language". Visual means are excellent tools teaching English grammar and to motivate students to communicate using the new contents in the classroom and in real contexts.

The present study shows that visual means are very useful when teaching grammar and discovering how languages work. This aspect answers our main question about the effectiveness of visual means in teaching grammar. Besides they contribute to other alternative uses such as teaching vocabulary, speaking activities, writing, reading and listening as well.

English, in MINED's curriculum, does not occupy an outstanding place, but nowadays the language is clearly important for our society. Besides, the language is not practiced as much as it should because we live in a Spanish-speaking country, where the opportunities to speak the language are limited. Students have difficulties learning the grammar rules of the foreign language, among several other areas.

Finally, the application of Visual Aids break the walls of fears and shyness and make learners feel confident and interested in the English class taking a participative role in it. It was possible to determine the effectiveness of visual aids in teaching grammar, demonstrating its positive impact on the process and its importance to facilitate and

innovate in the teaching of grammar and at the same time motivate the students to integrate actively during the class. In addition, the different ways of using the visual means were proposed.

Recommendations for further research

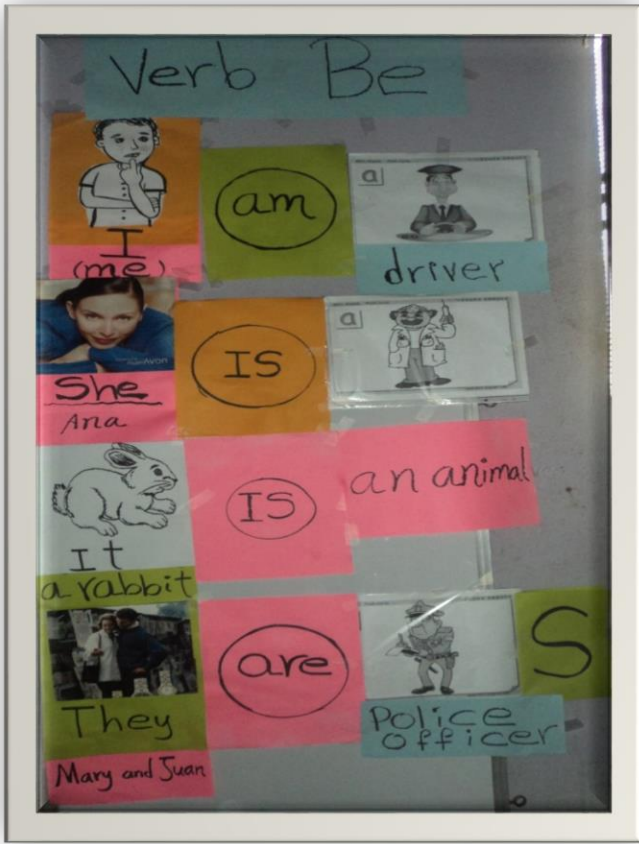
This research has been very helpful to know more about the use of visual aids and how they facilitate the learning process of a foreign language especially for seventh graders. Due to that, we can state some recommendations:

- First of all, Students should create their own visual aids in order to recycle and reuse them for future classes. Students, who present good projects when they work with realia, may donate that didactic material to schools with less financial possibilities or schools located in nearby communities.
- Secondly, the use of visual aids can be very helpful not only in the comprehension of Grammar but also to teach other abilities and sub-abilities. For instance: speaking, pronunciation, reading and stimulate writing.

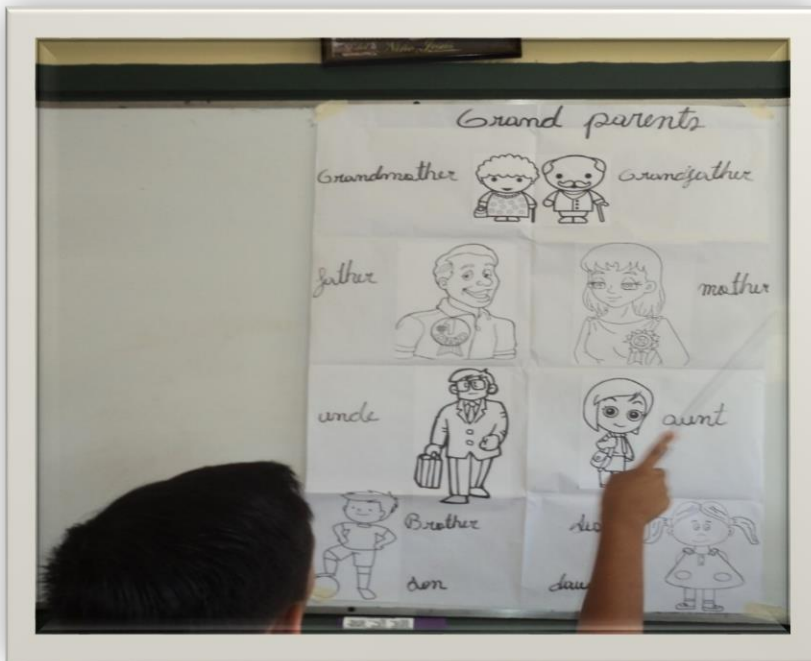
Anexes

Timetable of Activities

No	Activities	Time/Place	Hours	Participant
1	Organization of groups, explaining components of the investigation.	Sep 25 th / FAREM-Estelí	2	Group
2	To work in Introduction and Literature review (important aspects).	Oct 1 st /Martha's house/ FAREM-Estelí	3	Group
3	Collect data to organize and define Methodology and timetable of activities.	Oct 8 th /Martha's house/ FAREM-Estelí	3	Group
4	To prepare instruments to carry out the research.	Oct 15 th /Martha's house/ FAREM-Estelí	2	Group
5	To revision of Introduction and Literature Review.	Oct 22 nd / FAREM-Estelí	1	Group
6	Application of interviews to students	Oct 25 th /Colegio Nuestra Señora del Rosario	45 min	Group
7	Visit to Colegio to observe the class.	Oct 25 th to Nov 18 th /Colegio Nuestra Señora del Rosario	45 min	Group



Verb To Be with Flash Cards



Children explaining the vocabulary with Posters that they draw



Teaching
Wh-questions
and
preposition
of places
with Drawings

Where is the
Living Room?

The Living Room is between
the garage and the kitchen.



Students
explaining
Types of
Houses
with
Postcards



Girl drawing “Parts of the House” and use different grammatical expressions and mention the importance of the places of the house.

Bibliography

- Brinton. (2001). *The use of media in language teaching*. Boston: MA: Heinle and Heinle.
- Cardoza, A., Martínez, G., & Martínez, E. (2016, November 4). *Repositorio Institucional Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua*. Retrieved from Repositorio Institucional Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua: <http://repositorio.unan.edu.ni/1858/1/16381.pdf>
- Cowen, P. (1984). Film and Text: Order Effects in Recall and Social Inferences, Educational Communication. In P. Cowen, *Film and Text: Order Effects in Recall and Social Inferences, Educational Communication* (pp. 131-144).
- Creswell, J. (2014). Designing Research: Qualitative Methods. En J. Creswell, *Educational Research: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (págs. 234-235). Los Angeles: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Creswell, J. (2014). Designing Research: Qualitative Methods. In J. W. Creswell, *Educational Research: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (pp. 239-240). Los Angeles: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Fernandez Sampieri, F. C. (2006). En T. Muhr, *Metodología de la Investigación*. México D.F: Atlasa.
- García Marchena, O. (1996). *Didactic Resources for Teaching English*. Sevilla.
- Guilloteaux, M. J., & Dörnyei, Z. (2008). Motivating Language Learners: A Classroom-Oriented Investigation of the Effects of Motivational Strategies on Student Motivation. *TESOL Quarterly*, 55-77.
- Harmer, J. (2007). Describing Language. In J. Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (p. 12). Cambridge.
- Harmer, J. (2007). Educational Technology and other Teaching Equipment. In J. Harmer, *The Practice of English Language* (p. 134). Cambridge: Pearson/Logman.
- Harmer, J. (2007). Educational Technology and other Teaching Equipment . En J. Harmer, *The Practice of English Language teaching* (pág. 136). Cambridge: Longman.

- Hoffer. (2010).
- Kasperek, S. (2016, Abril 26). *Public Speaking Project*. Retrieved from Visual Aids: <http://www.publicspeakingproject.org/PDF%20Files/visual%20aids%20web%201.pdf>
- Konomi, D. K. (2014). Using Visual Materials in Teaching Vocabulary in English as a Foreign Language Classrooms with Young Learners . *Conference Proceedings: New Perspective in Science Education* (págs. 254-260). Florence: libreriauniversitaria.it.
- Kusni, & Jufrizal. (2013, November 3). THE EFFECT OF USING ADVENTURE GAME AND PICTURE ON INTROVERTED STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL. *Journal English Language Teaching (ELT)*, p. 55.
- Lanius, C. (26 de Abril de 2016). *Mathematics of Cartography*. Recuperado el 3 de Abril de 2016, de Mathematics of Cartography: <http://math.rice.edu/~lanus/pres/map/mapdef.html>
- Lewis, B. (26 de Abril de 2016). *About Education*. Obtenido de About Education: <http://k6educators.about.com/od/educationglossary/g/Visual-Learning.htm>
- Malamed, C. (2009). Introduction. En C. Malamed, *Visual language for designers: Principles for creating graphics that people understand* (págs. 9-18). Beverly: Rockport Publishers.
- Mayer, R. E. (2001). Principles for Reducing Extraneous Processing. En R. E. Mayer, *Multi-Media learning* (págs. 166-167). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Michetll, W. (2005). *There are no visual media*. Chicago.
- Navarrete, I., & Yescas, K. (2016, November 4). *Repositorio Institucional Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua*. Retrieved from Repositorio Institucional Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua: <http://repositorio.unan.edu.ni/2116/1/10432.pdf>
- Oxford. (2012). *Oxford Basic English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford Universtity Press.

- Reynolds, G. (2008). *Presentation Zen: Simple ideas on presentation design and delivery*. En G. Reynolds, *Presentation Zen: Simple ideas on presentation design and delivery* (págs. 1-10). Berkeley: New Rider.
- Syndeon Soft. (26 de Abril de 2016). *Flashcards Learners*. Recuperado el 3 de Marzo de 2016, de Flashcards Learners: <http://www.flashcardlearner.com/articles/what-is-a-flash-card/>
- Thornbury, S. (1999). What is Grammar? In S. Thornbury, *How to teach grammar* (pp. 1-2). Malaysia: Pearson Education Limited.
- Ur, P. (1991). *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. New York: Cambridge .
- Vasile, A. (2004). How Visuals Can Aid You? En A. Vasile, *Speak with Confidence: A practical guide* (pág. 291). Boston: Pearson.
- Willingham, D. (2009). Why Do Students remember everything that is on television and forget everything I say? In D. Willingham, *Why Don't Students Like School: A cognitive scientist answers questions about how the mind works and what it means for the classroom* (p. 41). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Young, K. S., & Travis, H. P. (2008). En K. S. Young, & H. P. Travis, *Oral communication: Skills, choices, and consequences* (pág. 184). Illinois: Waveland Press.