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THE CORRECT APPLICATION OF RULES TO
MODIFY CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

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Presented by

Ana Laura Huerta Ortiz

Thesis Director:

Mtro. Thomas McElwaine



Puebla, Mexico
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**“THE CORRECT APPLICATION OF RULES TO MODIFY
CHILDREN’S BEHAVIOR”**

This Thesis has been read by the members of the committee of

Ana Laura Huerta Ortiz

**And it is considered worthy of approval in partial fulfillment of
the requirement for the degree of**

Licenciatura en lenguas modernas

Thesis Director

Mtro. Thomas McElwaine

Committee Member

Mtra. Sandra Juárez Pacheco

Committee Member

Mtra. Rosalba Leticia Olguín Díaz

Puebla, Mexico

November, 2019

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Abstract

This study research reports on a qualitative study about how the correct introduction and use of rules can help the teacher to have better classroom management and modify children's behavior. This research will also explain how students behave with traditional teacher rules, and the designated rules for the project. The primary aims of this study were to examine and analyze the importance of the use of rules, and how they are presented to the students, investigate the student's attitudes regarding the rules, and how the teacher managed the rules in a classroom to have a better view of how functional the rules are in the classroom.

This study was carried out at a private elementary school. The research data were collected by self-observation (diary, wall chart and take pictures) that were applied in two groups of twenty children, from five to seven years old. The research findings were that the use of rules has a process to make them work and obtain good results in the classroom. It was also found that there are specific rules that changed the student's bad behavior or bad habits, and provided more control over them, but it is necessary to resort to the consequences to make them work. Finally, this study shows that the correct use of rules and their correct introduction benefits classroom management, and modifies the students behavior

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The rules in the classroom are one of the elements of classroom management and although the rules play just a small part, their functions, and role in a classroom become very helpful in the process of classroom management. This thesis explains in broad the purpose of analyzing and carrying out the rules to prove if the rules can modulate the behavior of the students and change their attitude during class.

This chapter is divided into seven sub-topics that explain what this research is about, using the literature to support it and that provides important information which serves as support of the research. It is also mentioned why this research was started, the benefits and its importance for future generations.

1.2 Rationale for the topic selection

At the beginning of the school year, teachers usually introduce their classroom rules to establish the way they aim to develop their class and how they are going to work during the whole academic year (Brady, Forton & Porter, 2015). Some teachers put up a poster with their rules on the wall, some others make students write on their notebook, and some just mention them. The purpose of using rules in the classroom is to increase teaching time and reduce time in controlling children's misbehavior (Denti, 2012). But why, if there are rules, are teachers still having problems with children's behavior? and what is the real role of rules in a classroom?

These are some questions that motivated me to start this research to observe how children behave with rules, and without them, and also to observe how teachers teach these rules, and the role of these during the first month.

1.3 Significance of the study

This study attempts to provide meaningful information about how important the rules are in the control of the class, the organization and environment that must be present in a class, how the rules should be applied, children's learning, what rules are, how they are applied and how students learn them.

There are teachers that in their early years of teaching do not have enough experience and support in classroom management (Brady, Forton & Porter, 2015). Rules are part of classroom management and this research will show the significance of rules and their use.

This research has to do with the importance of rules in the classroom to have a better classroom management, which should be an important contribution for teachers that face problems in classroom management. This study attempted to provide meaningful information about how children understand rules, the strategies to use rules in the classroom, how many rules to establish, how to select a rule and so on. Finally, the information will show the advantages and disadvantages of the use of rules in classroom management. It will, hopefully, help future researchers to compare other aspects of classroom management.

1.4 Context of research

There are some theoretical areas associated with this study. The theoretical areas that are related to this study are classroom management, to know what the main elements of classroom management are, also how children learn, and to get a better result in the

application of rules. It is important to include how children behave and how children learn rules. Finally, we must include teacher behavior; how teachers teach their rules, and how teachers apply rewards and punishments.

This research was carried out in a private school, where the teaching modality is to take English as an extra subject. Per week, students have a total of ten hours of class divided into two hours per day. The primary level is two first-grade groups were chosen to carry out this research. Both groups have the same number of hours in class and have the same behavioral problems, which favored the study to obtain a better result to compare them both and see the differences obtained.

This study was carried out in two first-grade groups, where the main problem is discipline and students' attitude. Both groups have ten English hours per week divided in two hours per day. The English teacher is the same, but the strategies to work with rules were different. In the first grade group A the rules were not applied and they just kept working with Spanish teacher's rules, and in the first grade group B, the rules were applied using the techniques that some authors suggest. In this way it can be observed if there is a change in students' attitudes using rules in an appropriate way.

1.5 Aim of the study

This research had several aims. The main objective of this investigation is to verify if the rules can modulate or change the students' behavior, through their correct use and application.

My objective is to analyze the way teachers use the rules and if it is appropriate for them to meet their objective, analyze the change that the students had when in contact with

the rules, and define the importance of their use, and finally investigate the children's attitudes regarding the rules, and observe how the teacher managed the use of rules in a classroom.

1.6 Objectives

This research investigates the most important elements that a teacher needs to know when teaching such as: the role that rules have in classroom management and how children learn and understand the rules.

The methodology that was implemented in this research involves two groups of participants that were analyzed in the process of teaching and application of rules, one of them following all the steps that a teacher needs to know according to some authors' suggestions and the other one just with the traditional method that a teacher normally uses.

To analyze what happened in both groups and the differences that they had, during the first month of using the rules, a strategy was designed to present the rules to the students, using images and a registration table. During the time that the rules were applied in the classroom, photos were taken to record the behavior of the students at each moment, to later compare them with the group that did not work with rules and obtain a conclusion.

1.7 Research question

So in light of the above aims and related to this research, the research question that guided this study was:

How can rules modify students' attitude during the class?

1.8 Conclusion

Taking into account the problem that some teachers face in a classroom with discipline, this research will be about the use of rules in the classroom with children and the importance of following the steps to make rules work for classroom management.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

As it was mentioned before in the first chapter, this research is about the importance of rules in classroom management, and to get a better comprehension about what it is involved in classroom management. The following topics will provide information about authors that are involved with rules and their use. This chapter is divided into six topics related to characteristics to deal with behavior, learning, and rules.

2.2 Classroom management

As mentioned in Chapter One, one of the topics that would be discussed in this investigation is classroom management because the rules are part of it. According to Denti (2012, p.12), classroom management “is the process that a teacher uses to keep a classroom organized and controlled through plans, rules, materials, and environment.” That is to say, when all these elements are in harmony, the classroom management is appropriate and the objective that teacher has could be reached. In addition, Bosch (2006) mentions that classroom management and discipline are always together and that discipline is perhaps only a small part of classroom management and cannot be separated from classroom management. Although teachers know that discipline is just a small part of classroom management, it is very important to take time to design strategies to use during the class. The proper application of discipline will be the key to obtain a good result in children’s behavior that will favor their learning.

2.2.1 Classroom organization

Classroom organization is part of classroom management. It is not a big part of classroom management but like a recipe, if all the ingredients are not used the results will not be the expected ones in the classroom environment, referring to the physical aspects of the classroom and classroom operations that include all those aspects that the teacher imposes like routines, rules, consequences, and incentives.

Bosch (2006) mentions that classroom management has to include classroom organization to support teachers' instructions and students' learning. In addition, Slavin (2009) explains that classroom organization is the way that teachers assess the needs of students taking into account the levels of prior knowledge, and paying attention to learning styles

2.2.2 Classroom environment

Although classroom environment is a minimal part of classroom management, its function is very important. "The environment and climate of the classroom make a huge difference in how effectively it will be managed" (Houff, 2013, p.5). The most important part of the classroom environment is that the classroom should give a good impression to the children, making them feel comfortable and secure. The classroom environment involves how the lights are distributed, if there is sufficient illumination or not, or where the teacher's desk is. This also involves taking into account the classroom equipment: recorder, projector, computer, TV, and so on. If the classroom has that equipment, the teacher should locate it in a place that does not make children lose their attention. The main purpose of the classroom

environment is to organize all the material and equipment in a way that is accessible to everyone (Bosch, 2006).

2.2.3 Classroom operation

As it is known, during a course, the teacher should establish some aspects before starting like rules, incentives, consequences, routines, and procedures that fall under the heading of classroom operation. Firstly, rules are the guidelines to direct the learner's behavior with the purpose of supporting task orientation learning in which teachers and students share similar outcome expectations. The consequences are the result of rules. Most of the time children show by their actions that they are beginning to consider the results of their actions. They begin to think in terms of: what happens if I do it? So recognition of consequences starts at that moment. However, teachers have to make a balance between rules and consequences. That means that rules cannot be lax and the consequence severe. The other part that the teacher has to take into account are routines and procedures. Routine for the teacher is important for the everyday administration of the class because through routines teachers save a lot of time in giving instructions at the beginning of each class. With established routines, students begin to know what they need to do in terms of their behavior and start to engage in classroom work.

There are a lot of strategies that teachers can use to help with classroom management like establishing rules associated with classroom organization and others that have been mentioned. However, by themselves, those elements are insufficient to get good control of the class, because there are different kinds of children in the classroom that can interfere with the teacher's classroom organization and control (Bosch, 2006).

2.2 Children's learning

For many researchers, social participation is the main activity through which learning occurs. Social activity and participation make children involved in the context. Vygotsky, (1978, as cited in Langford, 2005, p. 91) “the way that children learn is internalizing activity, habits, vocabulary, and ideas of the members of the community in which they grow up”. In other words, children learn through what they hear and what they see, like an imitation of adults' behavior. However in children's learning that is not enough to fully achieve learning. Vosniadou (2001) mentions that to make children obtain better learning it is important that teachers create meaningful activities that are perceived to be useful in real life and are culturally relevant. Brown, (1999, as cited in Campione and Metz, 2007, p.24) concludes that “children's learning depends on the forming of relations of previous knowledge with the new ones”. That means that children build their knowledge through their backgrounds. Finally, Piaget (1970, as cited in Jarvies, 2005) mentions that children learn through making relationships between images and actions and also that children imitate adults' behavior.

As mentioned above, children's learning is influenced by social habits, adults' behavior, and with the relation of image with action, so based on this information the teacher can use this information as a guide to know how they have to teach rules and make good decisions when choosing the rules for the classroom.

2.3 Rules in the classroom

Rules are part of classroom management, and their function is to indicate to students what they can do and cannot do when they are in the classroom, but most of the time rules

do not cause any effect. According to Dörnyei and Murphey (2003), rules and routines help to prevent possible chaos and help the teacher to obtain effective classroom management.

In spite of knowing that the rules are an important part of the class, teachers do not give them the importance that it is required, since the purpose, the planning and the way of working with them should be well known. That is why in the following sections it will talk about everything that has to be taken into account to be able to work with rules and that these have their function.

2.3.1 Teachers teach their rules

Sometimes teachers do not know how to teach rules and they establish them without any support. However, there are some methods that can help teachers to support their rules and that can also help them to have better success in their use. The first method is called the *permissive approach*, it means respectful but not firm (Mackenzie & Stanzione, 2010, p.104). The function of this method is to repeat and repeat what children have to do. The second method is called the *punitive approach* (firm but not respectful). In this method teachers have to act like a detective, judge, jailer and probation officer, in which their job is to investigate children's misdeeds, determine guilt, assign blame, impose penalties, and carry out sentences. As it can be understood, this method is more strict and also the teacher has more participation, and the consequence of a broken rule is a penalty.

The third method is called the *mixed approach* (neither firm nor respectful). As the name implies, this method is the combination of the last ones. In this method teachers keep repeating more than one time until an established time when they finally use a punishment to make rules work.

The last method is called the *democratic approach* (firm and respectful). This method is a win-win method of problem solving that combines firmness with respect and accomplishes all of our basic training goals. In this method the teacher's job is to guide the learning process by providing clear limits, acceptable choices and instructive consequences that hold children accountable for their actions (Mackenzie & Stanzione, 2010 p. 135).

These methods are the most common to teach a rule and to make it work. However, teachers have to know what rules will be established in the classroom for the course.

2.3.2 Application of rules

Another component of classroom management is the application of classroom rules that give support to regulate children's behavior, establish the relationships between behavior and the consequences of behavior, and finally help the teacher to distinguish which child behaviors should be positively reinforced.

Garret (2014, p. 29) mentions that it "is best to develop approximately four or six rules in the classroom, with many rules the classroom will seem overly rigid and students may have a hard time remembering them all". And proposes a set of steps to design and choose rules.

1. Specific behaviors should be identified in a written rules list.
2. Rules should be limited in number.
3. Rules should be phrased in the positive (to do) rather than in negative (don't do).
4. They should be posted in a prominent place.

All those steps should be followed by the teacher to start creating the rules that will be established for the whole course. It is important to keep in mind the second step because having a long list of rules may confuse children about what is expected. Also step number three is important for the teacher to adopt the habit of constructing rules in a positive way. For example, in this step, rather than saying ‘don’t speak’ the teacher could say ‘raise your hand if you want to talk.’

The process of application of rules goes further than the four steps. The teacher has to be working through the whole course with rules, monitoring progress in their use, on the first day, during the first two weeks, the first month, and during the whole year.

2.3.3 How children learn rules

Piaget’s (1970, as cited in Jarvies, 2005) research on children’s intellectual development has shown that children’s thinking is different from that of adults. Children learn and think concretely. What this means is that children learn through what they see, hear, touch and feel, so to teach a rule it is important that children can see what happens with the rules from the beginning until the end. That means that children have to observe what happens when a rule is broken and every child has to suffer penalization to learn through the consequences. There are two ways to teach rules: the rules in theory and rules in action. The rule in theory is when the teacher introduces the rules and explains to the children how rules work. The rule in action is when children have to act the rules and then experience a consequence of a broken rule.

An important part of teaching rules is the limits that the teacher establishes for the rules. The children are anxious to discover the world and feel what happens. That makes the teacher establish limits to control their behavior.

2.4 Limits

Limits are the most important element that the teacher has to take into account to make the rules work and also make the children's behavior change. A limit refers to the limitations that the teacher has to implement in the process of establishing rules. Limits for children operate like traffic signals by providing information in the form of green lights (do that) and red light (stop that) for acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Limits also answer a very different set of questions about the power of the authority like: "How far can I go?" "What happens when I go too far?" Those questions are some of the most common questions that children ask, but never ask verbally. Children usually act to respond to those questions (Mackenzie & Stanzione, 2010, p 155)

However, establishing limits is not as easy as it may look. Limits for some children go further than "STOP DOING IT", because they want to know more about it. For some children that "stop" means "Or what?", and that is the difficult part of limits, how the teacher will make their students stop doing it. On the other hand, there are children that understand the word **stop** perfectly and they really **stop doing it** because they do not know what will happen if they continue doing it. All those factors divide limits into two categories: *firm limits* and *soft limits*.

2.5 Conclusion

As the reader can see, this chapter was focused on the literature review related to this research. For instance, how children learn, classroom management, the use of rules in the classroom, the procedure and design of rules are some of the topics related to this literature review. In the following chapter, the research methodology of this study is presented.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is about the process needed to carry out this research, the methodology that was used according to the characteristics of the research, the context and participants where it was applied, the descriptions of the instruments and the data analysis.

3.2 Methodology

One of the main points of this research is to prove the idea that rules are used to modulate the behavior of children in favor of the teacher to have better classroom management. That is why this research is based on a qualitative method, that consists of “to prove or disprove a hypothetical fact concerned in a phenomenon relating to or involving quality or kind. For investigating the reasons for human behavior.” (Kothari, 2004, p.2).

For all appropriate purposes a better result of this investigation will be applied in a real context. The designed rules follow the correct methodology to do so.

Likewise this research was based on comparative research that “relates to their applications during the initial phases of a project with the goal of developing or referring tools” (Kothari, 2004 p. 62)

3.3 Context

The present research was carried out in a private school, it is located in Pachuca in Hidalgo, a state of Mexico. The mission of this institute is to train students to be able to

develop skills to face the different challenges of life. It has three levels of education: preschool, primary and secondary.

It is in the elementary level where this research will be applied since it has two groups for each level. Each level has 10 hours of English per week which are divided in two hours per day in different schedules. The language level is a beginner level, which means that students understand and produce easy commands and phrases in English and their vocabulary knowledge is appropriate for the level in which they are. Also both groups take classes with the same teacher but in different schedules, which will help to better check and analyze the results of this research.

3.3. Participants

The participants in this research are two first grade groups, First grade group A and First grade group B, to be compared in the use of rules. First grade group A is a group that has twenty-three students, thirteen boys and ten girls. This group presents a problem with behavior. The classroom has a set of explicit rules. These rules are in front of the students, but are applied only in some cases. In this group no rules will be applied but they will just help to compare the differences between those two groups. First grade group B is a group of thirteen boys and eight girls. Here, the conditions are different because there is not a set of rules pasted in the classroom. In this group the rules were written on students' notebooks with some drawings and are used also just in some cases. This group presents more problems with behavior than the first grade group A. For this reason the rules will be applied in this group. In this form we can compare both groups, one with rules and one without rules.

FIRST GRADE GROUP A		FIRSTS GRADE GROUP B	
13 BOYS	10 GIRLS	13 BOYS	8 GIRLS

Table 3.1 Amount of students per classroom

3.4 Description of the overall research design

To carry out this research it was necessary to ask the school director for permission to take pictures, record audio tracks and take a video, during the English classes. The purpose of the research and the reason to do all those activities were explained to him. However, it was necessary to prepare a meeting with the students' parents to explain to them and receive their permission. The result was in favor of carrying out the project over six weeks. The chosen grade levels were the first grade because those groups were the ones with the most behavior problems. First, the groups were observed to choose the one with more needs. 1B was the chosen group to follow the rules and 1A the group that will not have rules.

To continue with the research four rules were designed that modify students' attitude. Students' rules needs to have an equivalent with teachers' rules. In that way students feel more motivated to know that the teacher also needs to follow rules. (Brady, Forton & Porter, 2015). Following that structure the rules were:

1.-Students-- I listen to the teacher when she is speaking---Teacher listens to students when they want to talk.

2.-I raise my hand to participate---Teacher lets me participate.

3.-I finish my work on time ---Teacher helps me and solves my doubts. 4.-

I keep my place clean ---Teacher gives me time to clean my place.

Before establishing the rules a wall chart was designed with the students' names and days of the month to match per day how they follow rules. They get a happy face on the day that they complete the rules. and as mentioned in the rules process, when you use rules it is necessary to give students rewards. The reward for students is a movie day for all those that get more than 20 happy faces.

The first week the teacher explains to students the use of rules and presents the rules that there will be in the classroom, the rewards if they follow the rules and the punishment if they do not follow them. During the remaining weeks the teacher will take evidence of their behavior, collecting data to support the research.

3.5 Instrument

The instruments that were used in this research were a diary, photographs and an observation sheet. "A diary is the researcher's companion documenting the development of perceptions and insights across various stages of research" (Somekn & Lewin, 2005, p. 24). The diary used in this research was a descriptive sequence that contains accounts of activities, and descriptions of events. It was used for six weeks, and the information that was registered was about students' attitudes related to rules.

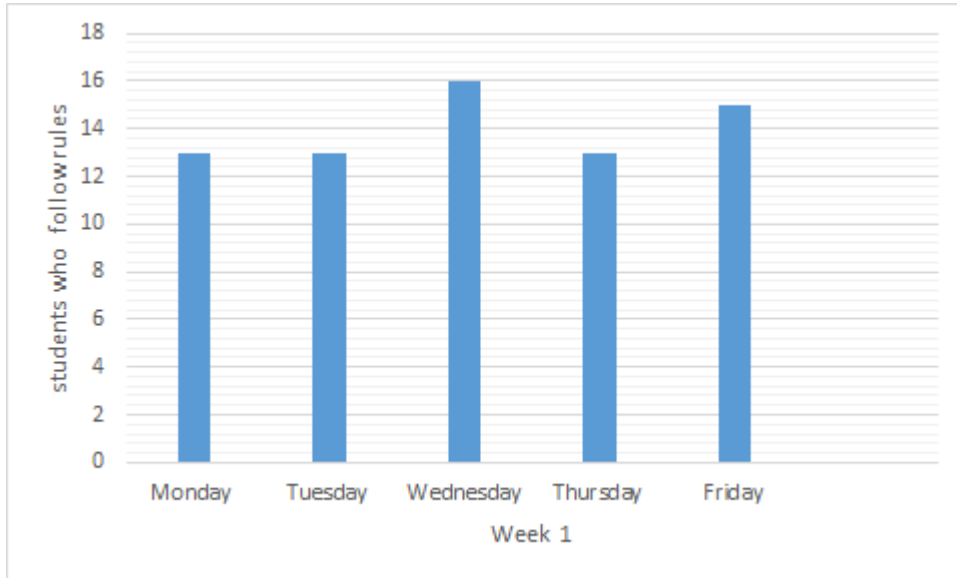
The photographs "are a visual data that can remind you what was happening and capture a specific moment of an event" (Burns, 2010, p. 76). This instrument was used in this research because I need to capture a specific moment from students' behavior. The pictures were taken every week and show the moment in which students are performing the rules, or they are not.

The last instrument that was used in this research was an observation sheet. “The observation sheets are used in what is sometimes called systematic or structured observations, which involves using a coding system or checklist, records the things he or she observes as categories of events” (Burns, 2010, p. 73) These observation sheets contain all the names of the students and the days of the week per month, and were used to record compliance with the rules by the students, in which a happy face is placed if the students performed all the rules during class, and with a dash if students do not follow the rules.

3.6 Data Analysis

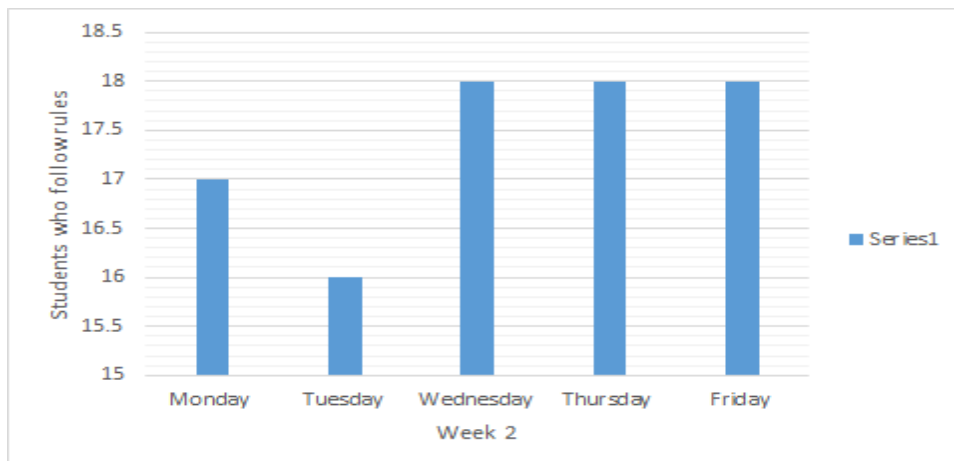
The pictures and diary information will be registered in a chart (See Appendix A). This chart contains twelve pictures that are divided into two pictures per week, and show different moments in which students are working during the class. In the second column there is a short description about what was happening and which rule students were following.

The following chart presents the numbers of students that followed the four rules during the first week. It is important to remember that it is a group of twenty students. On the first day just thirteen students out of twenty followed the rules. On that day just one student was absent so that means that just six students did not follow the rules. The second day the same thing happened but that day there were no absent students. On the third day, the number of students who followed the rules increased from thirteen to sixteen and that day there were also no absent students. On the fourth day, the number of students who followed rules were thirteen but that day five students were absent, which means that just two students did not follow the rules, and the last day of the first week, fifteen students followed the rules, and there were five absent students. As a result, that day the whole group followed the rules .



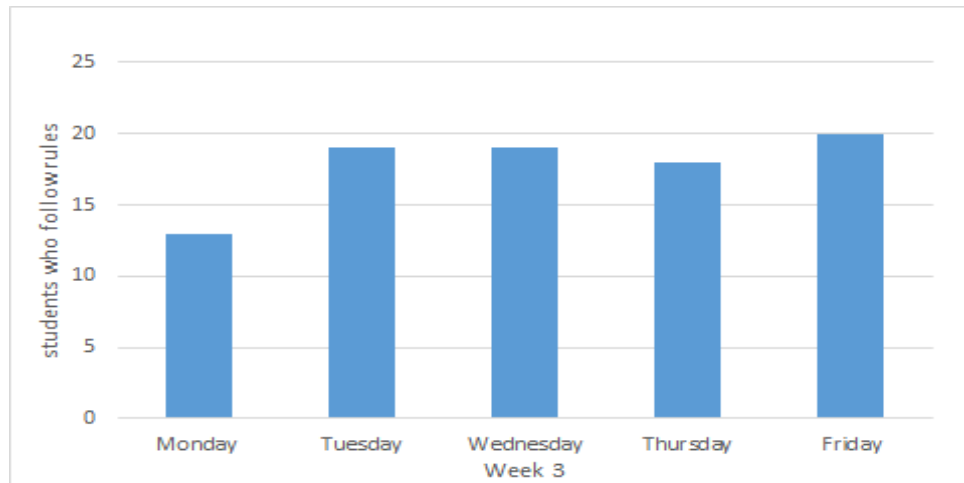
Graph 3.2 Number of students who follow the rules week 1

During the second week students kept following the rules like the previous week. On Monday, seventeen out of twenty students followed the rules, and there were two absent students, which means that just one did not follow the rules. On Tuesday the number of students who did not follow the rules increased from one to three. The last three days, there were no changes: eighteen students out of twenty followed the rules, and there were no absent students, which means that during those three days there were only two students who did not follow the rules.



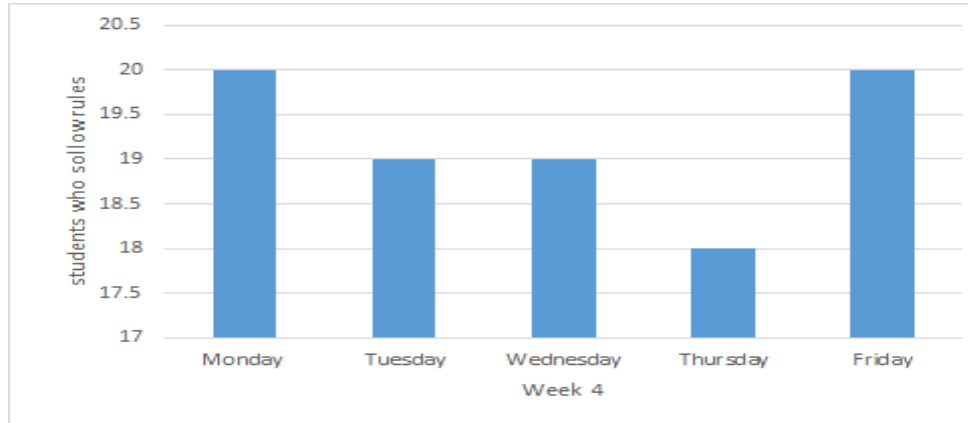
Graph 3.2 Students who follow rules week 2

In the middle of the this research process the results did not have big changes, but on Monday something happened and seven students out of twenty did not follow the rules, which means that just thirteen students followed the rules. On that day the teacher repeated to the students again what the purpose was of following rules, and what rules the students had to follow. On the rest of the week the whole group followed the rules. On Tuesday and Wednesday one student was missing, on Thursday two students were missing and on Friday there were no absences.



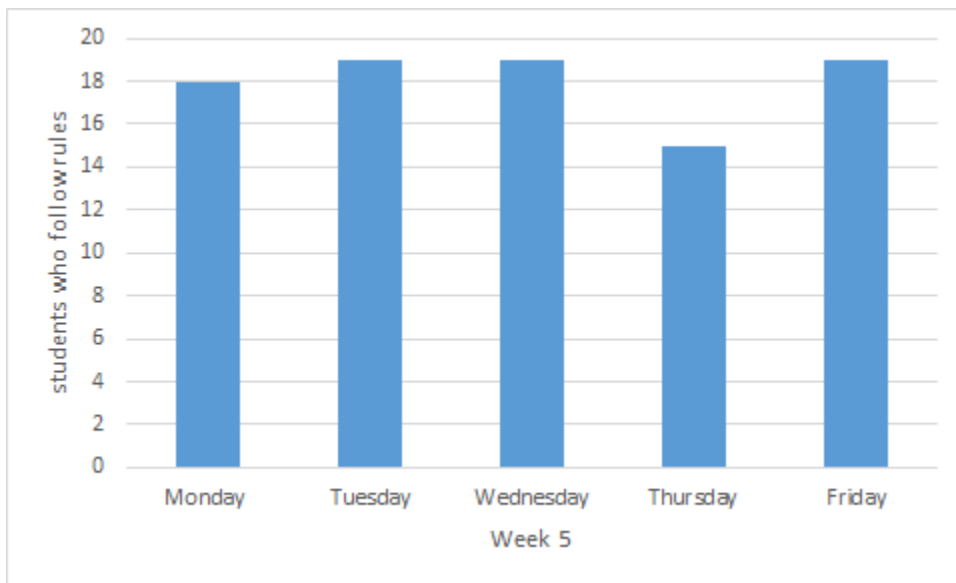
Graph 3.3 students who follow rules week 3

On the fourth week the results of the research had better results. Most of the students followed the rules and the numbers of students who did not follow the rules reduced. On Monday the whole class followed the rules, on Tuesday and Wednesday just one student did not follow the rules from the whole class, on Thursday two students did not follow the rules and on Friday again the whole class followed the rules, which means that the rules had been working as expected.



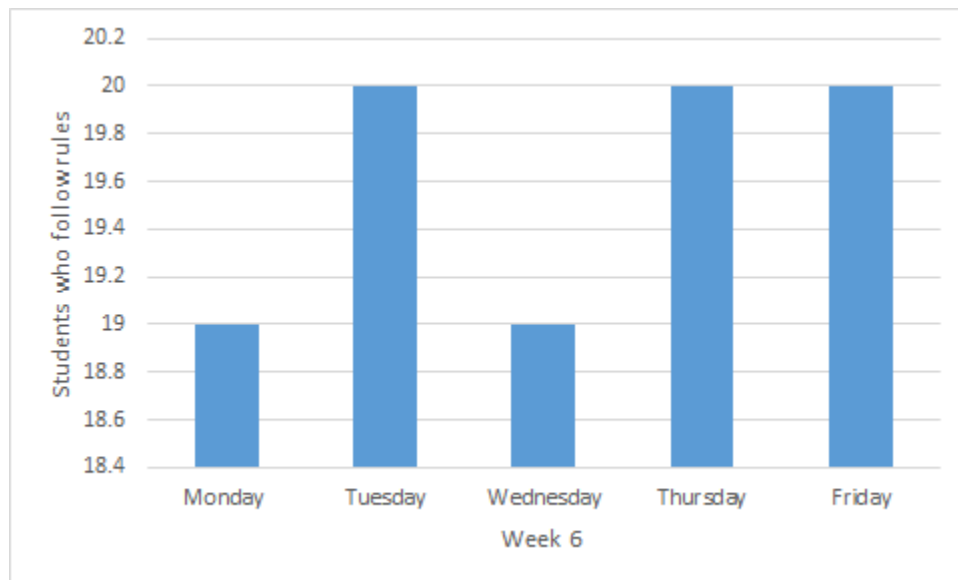
Graph 3.4 Students who follow rules week 4

On the fifth week, as it can be seen in the chart, the results were in favor of the research. Most of the students followed rules during the week, however on Thursday there was a significant reduction of students and just fifteen students out of twenty followed the rules. On that day the teacher changed the way to work with the rules, without changing the rules, and the results were in favor for the next day with nineteen students who followed the rules.



Graph 3.5 Students who follow rules week 5

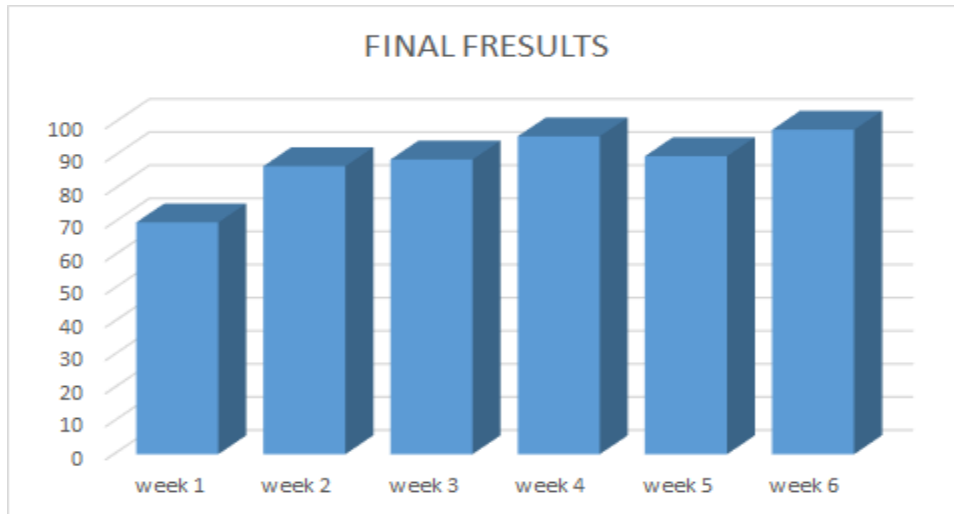
During the last week, it can be observed that the main purpose of this research was achieved. Most of the students followed the rules. On Monday eighteen students out of twenty followed the rules, Tuesday and Wednesday nineteen students followed the rules and Thursday and Friday the whole group followed the rules, which means that on the last week of the rules' application the purpose of the research was achieved, and through the rules students could change their behavior.



Graph 3.6 Students who follow rules week 6

In the last two weeks the result that was sought was obtained, achieving the following:

- 1.-The teacher no longer needed to mention the rules at the beginning of classes.
- 2.- The students carried out their activities in a timely manner.
3. - The classroom remained clean and tidy.
- 4.- The time wasted at the beginning to control students decreased greatly.
- 5.- Most importantly, the attitude and disposition of the students improved greatly.



Graph 3.7 Students who follow rules final results

3.7 Conclusion

As a conclusion, in this chapter, it was presented the type of research instrument and methodology that was needed to carry out this research. In the same way, it was shown showed evidence of the work done in order to be able to verify that the use of rules within the classroom can change the behavior of the students for the benefit of the teacher.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, there are explained the results of this investigation. It will be analyze the process and the results of the instruments to verify our theory, and be able to give an answer to the question of the research and obtain a conclusion.

4.2 Results obtained

One of the main reasons why it was decided to carry out the study of the rules, and to be able to verify if with them the attitude of the students could be changed, it was because the students with whom I worked were bad behaved, had bad habits and there was no quality of classes, since most of the time was wasted calming the students down and establishing order in the classroom.

Having the possibility to compare two groups that have the same qualities allowed me to have a better result. It is important to mention that the rules have a process that needs to be followed for them to work, and if it is not followed, it is very difficult for the teacher to achieve her goal. So it was found that when you plan the rules according to the needs of your group you can achieve much more than if you only make a list of actions that you want your students to do.

The teacher has to explain to students the use and operation of the rules, and the fewer rules in the classroom, the easier it will be for students to learn and carry them out. Rules are not designed to prohibit, they are designed so that students act in favor of a healthy and

dynamic class. It was found that the rules do not necessarily have to be taught at the beginning

of the school year, it can be done later and as long as each step is taken into account, the objective is achieved.

And finally, following what Piaget (1970, as cited in Jarvies, 2005) tells us in his theory of how children learn, it is important that the teacher also has a similar number of rules. In this way a greater acceptance of students will be achieved by knowing that their teacher also has rules to follow.

The research instrument was applied in six weeks. The first week was to present the rules established within the classroom to the students, their operation and also to mention the punishments and rewards that these rules would give them.

Taking into account what the author Garrett (2014, p.29) said about how many rules should be in the classroom and how they should be chosen for this investigation 4 rules were chosen, which were those designed to change the behavior of some children and improve the learning environment.

As the reader can see in the image below, there are rules for the teacher and rules for the student, so that they feel that everyone in the classroom has rules.





Picture 4.1 Rules wallchart


During the first week, the teacher had to repeat day by day what the purpose of the rules was and mention them to the students so that they could remember them. However, not

all students showed good disposition, especially those who needed more attention to these rules. And the rule compliance record helped to change their attitude because students not seeing stars in their name began to be interested in complying with the rules agreement.

However, if it compare with the group that had no rules, it is evident that with the class with rules there was an improvement from week one. In the following photo the same type of activity is happening with both groups and it can be seen that in the classroom where there are no rules children are messier.

Classroom with rules	Classroom without rules
	

During weeks two and three the improvement was more noticeable among the students. With rules showing disposition to work, keeping their places clean and participating correctly, the teacher reduced the number of times she had to remind them of the rules and learning time inside classrooms was more productive.

<p>1. I LISTEN TO THE TEACHER</p>	<p>2. I RAISE MY HAND TO SPEAK</p> 
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<p>3. I FINISH MYB WORK ON TIME</p> 	<p>4. I CLEAN MY WORK PLACE</p> 

Chart 4.3 Rules in the classroom

In week four, students began to show little interest in following the rules and the number of students who did not follow rules increased a bit, so dynamics had to be changed. What it was carried out was the use of cards that represented their fulfillment in their work. In this way the students resumed the agreement and the classes continued to have good results in time and learning (see appendix A week 4).

4.3 Answer to Research Questions

The beginning of this investigation was based on answering a question, which is why the results obtained will be given below, so we will begin by knowing what was the question that this research project had: *How can rules modify students' attitude during the class?*

Before working with rules in the classroom, the students had bad behavior and had no cleaning and order habits, and according to Dörnyei and Murphey (2003), the rules help

us prevent future chaos and help teachers gain effective control of the group. This is the reason why the rules were established

Vonsniadou (1986) tells us that for students to learn something, teachers must create meaningful activities for them. That is why the rules were presented to students so that they would feel involved and their attention would be attracted.

The following images show how the rules changed the attitude of the students, making a comparison with the group that had the same characteristics but did not work with these rules.

In these images the students of different groups are doing the same activity, and as can be seen in the image on the left side that is the group where the rules were implemented. The students are working in an orderly way. The group on the right side are doing the same activity but not all students are working.



Students with rules	Students without rules
	

Chart 4.4 Students working

In the following images the moment is shown where students are asked to participate and we can also observe on the left side that students raise their hands to participate in order. The students on the other side have nothing to do and do not ask for permission to speak.



Students with rules	Students without rules
	

Chart 4.5 Students participating

In the next moment the teacher is explaining a topic, so the students with rules had to be paying attention to the explanation, and as you can see in the picture the students are doing so, while on the other side, in the group that is not working with rules, not everyone is paying attention to the teacher's explanation.



Students with rules	Students without rules
	

Chart 4.6 Students Listening to the teacher

And finally, comparing the students on the left and on the right, we can observe that those on the left maintain proper order and cleanliness, while those on the right are more disorderly.



Students with rules	Students without rules
	

Chart 4.7 Order and clean classroom

Since we can see the comparison of two groups, we can answer our question, as the attitude of the students changes the use of rules.

- 1.-The rules have to be reduced to a smaller number, so it will be easier for the student to remember them.
2. The rules have to be designed and presented to students in a way that they know they are important to them and the reason why it is important to follow them.
3. The teacher must constantly remind students that there are rules and that they must follow them.
4. The teacher must design rules for herself, so students will know that everyone in the classroom has rules and must comply with them.

In this way, when the rules become part of the classes and the daily routine, the students will adopt them and little by little they will act as the rules ask without having to wait for a prize or recognition for carrying them out.

4.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, we can say that, as long as what is wanted of the students in the classroom is well planned, it is achieved through the use of rules. On this occasion the purpose was for the students to change their behavior and their habits, to achieve a better

attitude to classes, which was achieved by following all the steps that were needed to use them. Their functionality has nothing to do with whether they are applied at the beginning of the school year or in the middle of the year, as long as it is done in a planned way and with a goal.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is the conclusion of this thesis which reports on a qualitative study about how the correct introduction and use of rules can help the teacher to have better classroom management and modify children's behavior.

5.2 Research Contributions

This chapter will discuss contributions, limitations and suggestions, and there will be a brief reflection on the results obtained in this investigation.

One of the contributions that this research makes is to learn how to apply rules within the classroom. Another one is the importance of observing and analyzing what as a teacher you want to happen in your classroom. Based on that, you can design useful material that helps you and favors your teaching practice.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

It would have been possible to obtain better results or different results in this investigation, if all the teachers who taught in that group had followed the same method and worked with the rules. Perhaps in this way there could have been a total change in the students. Some teachers who taught different subjects reported that in their classes the students did not change their behavior nor cleaning habits.

Another limitation of the investigation was the time because the use of rules was already implemented at the end of the school year, this reduced the time to work with the students.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

A suggestion for future research could be to apply the correct use of the rules at the beginning of the year and work with them throughout the school year, and if possible change the old rules that have already been acquired as habits among students.

Also, the rules could be applied in higher grades in order to analyze how students react and behave with the use of rules in the classroom.

The social context would be another opportunity to analyze how to work with rules, and to compare the results of private institutions with public institutions. Finally, apply the rules for other purposes such as educating students to acquire values through the use of rules.

5.5 Reflection

Having the experience of carrying out an investigation as a professional leaves me with a lot of knowledge that I could apply at different times of my teaching practice, it makes me work with tools that I never thought existed, and finally it makes me eager to continue looking for new strategies that facilitate the teaching of a language and that makes my classes more interesting and meaningful.

On the other hand, I realized that conducting an investigation is not so easy and even less so when you already have other responsibilities as a citizen. Being able to find some free time to devote to your research and writing what you are doing was the most difficult part for me. During this time, reading, researching and seeing what other people had done helped

me a lot. Personally, I felt that I was growing a little more as a person. I was encouraged to do more reading in the consolidation of many things than I did before, which made me a better person in relation to the performance of my work.

5.6 Conclusion

As a conclusion, it could be said that proper use of rules does not have to do with what you do not want your students to do. On the contrary, the rules work when the teacher analyzes and identifies the problems of his group to be able to design these rules in favor of his teaching practice.

On the other hand, carrying out an investigation is not an easy task, since you faced many dilemmas because you do not know how to define and spell out what you want to investigate. So, it is of great importance that before starting an investigation, establish well what is your point to investigate, define it and work on what you want to find or solve.





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Appendix A

Diary

<p>Week 1</p>  <p>Teacher is explaining to students how they are going to work with rules.</p>	<p>Today was our first day working with rules, students felt motivated because they wanted to have a happy face, however teacher had to mention the use of rules more than once, because students were not following the rules.</p>
 <p>In this picture, students have to do rule four “time to clean my place”, and most of the students were not doing so.</p>	<p>During the first week students’ attitudes did not change, and they continued having the same bad attitude.</p>
<p>Week 2</p>  <p>In this picture, students have to obey the third rule “I finish my work on time”. As we can see students are working, and most of the places are clean.</p>	<p>In the second week students started changing their attitude and began using the rules. It was not necessary to repeat the complete rule, I only mentioned the number and they already identified what it was.</p>
 <p>In this picture students are listening to the</p>	<p>Students keep working in a good manner, and respecting the time for each rule. Teacher only mention at the beginning of the class the four rules and repeat again what is the function of each rule.</p>

<p>teacher and they raise their hand to participate. They are performing Rules One and Two. “I listen to the teacher when she is speaking, and I raise my hand to speak.</p>	
<p>Week 3</p>  <p>In this pictures students are listening to the teacher. Rule one “I listen to the teacher when she is speaking”.</p>	<p>In third week students continue having a good attitude, and respecting the rules. And as in the last week the teacher only mentions at the beginning of the class the use of the rules and their functions.</p>
 <p>As we see in this picture students are working, the classroom is clean and just one of them is standing. That means that the rules are really working.</p>	<p>During the class the classroom is clean and students are following the use of rules very well. The students already identify the appropriate moment for the rules.</p>
<p>Week 4</p>  <p>As we can see in this picture, many students were not on their chairs and were not doing what they had to do. The teacher gave instructions to students to clean their places and pay attention, but they took a lot of time to do what the teacher asked them.</p>	<p>In this week, on Monday something happened, students changed their behavior, and they started behaving as at the beginning. The teacher has to remember more than one time the rules and ask the students to follow them and also mention the consequences of not following them and reward if they follow them. (It was a difficult day)</p>

 <p>These are the pictures the teacher used to work with students.</p>	<p>On Tuesday, the teacher at the beginning of the class mentioned to the students the use of rules, but this time she did it using pictures that represent each rule. Students attitude changed and the use of the rules continued working as expected. The rest of the week they continued working very well.</p>
<p>Week 5</p>  <p>In this picture we can see that students are working and their places are cleaner.</p>	<p>At the beginning of this project teacher explained to students the use of rules, and the reason for using them. She also mentioned what would happen if they did not follow and if they did follow, with punishment and rewards. This week, the teacher give students their presents. Students felt motivated and on Monday they worked excellently.</p>
 <p>In this picture, students are working orderly and respecting the rules of the exercise.</p>	<p>During this week the teacher took out the students to carry out some activities on the playground. Although they were outside, their attitude and behavior were very good.</p>
<p>Week 6</p>  <p>In this picture we can see that students are paying attention and their places are clean. Also students raise their hands to speak and listen to the teacher.</p>	<p>During the last week, the students did not need to be reminded of the rules and their attitude had improved a lot. Despite the fact that the holidays were approaching they showed a good attitude to work and complied with the rules.</p>