CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Nowadays, the English Language plays an important role, not only in our country, but also around the world. In our country there are many English academies and many universities teaching this language. Universidad Francisco Gavidia is one of those universities in charge of teaching this foreign language as a complete professional career. This career has become important for the university because of the demand of learning such language.

The career embraces many important fields in order to develop a good English learning; among these fields we can mention Phonetics, Linguistics, Grammar, Reading, and Composition. Each of these fields plays an important function in the English learning process. Included in these fields the Grammar subject is the one that gets involved in the speaking and writing area; that is why it can be considered the base for a good performance. It helps students handle certain elements in the spoken and written communication in English. Everything has a relationship with Grammar, if the students want to make a composition they must know Grammar rules to write correctly, but there are some students that have problems while writing, they cannot keep parallelism; for example they start writing in present tense and at the end they finish writing in past tense without any logical transition. The same problem is faced while speaking. That is why it is important to know the Grammar rules and how to use them appropriately. Some professionals consider that the most important area of English is communication; nevertheless to communicate correctly Grammar is a must. Many of the students that are studying the English career want to learn the language for teaching it, this is one of the reasons why they have to learn the language correctly; in the future these students are going to be responsible for the English teaching. This subject is one of the most important and useful at the moment of teaching English, because it teaches the correct way of using the language. If students know about Grammar, for sure they will be able to express themselves in a correct way. For communicating correctly, we have to take into account the grammar rules already established.
Grammar also helps us analyze the structure of the language we are studying, in our particular case English. We can analyze the order that the words have to take at the moment of expressing an idea clearly and correctly in the spoken and written form. It helps us also express ourselves, using the verbs in any of the tenses to convey an idea or a situation in past, present or future and the other tenses that take place in this language too.

Nevertheless, many students have grammar problems even after taking Grammar I and II (Syntactical Structures of the English Language). They make mistakes while writing or speaking the language. It seems to be, on the one hand that the lack of a source book, and on the other hand the lack of interest of students is affecting this process. In the recent years, the teachers in charge of teaching this subject have had to face the same problem; they made a big effort at the moment of teaching it because of the lack of a source book to use. The teachers had to look for the contents of the subject in different books, on internet, and other resources; then put them in the order that the university program has established. Many of these topics are very important to teach and learn, but there are some others that do not seem to be so important or relevant. If there were a Grammar source book to teach this subject everything could be easier for teachers and students. The program contains the topics that are necessary and important for the development of this subject, avoiding the topics that are not so necessary because they are carried out in other subjects.
A Grammar source book is necessary for teaching this subject; it can help in the teaching and learning process of the foreign language, making the English language easier, clearer and more interesting.
1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

The grammatical weaknesses that teachers and students have to face nowadays are affecting in a negative way their personal and professional development, creating a barrier in English communication that can be difficult to eliminate if it is not treated on time. Students can get used to use the language in the incorrect way.

Some students that are in advanced levels of the career are presenting Grammar problems, many of them graduate with them; this affects them in their professional lives. Students with Grammar problems face many difficulties, due to the professional competition, like missing good job opportunities. These students are forced to reinforce their knowledge by a self-learning process or by taking extra classes. This situation could be avoided if a textbook were used to reinforce the teacher’s classes and if the students show interest about their learning.

Most of the students studying the English career want to be teachers of the language. Many of these teachers are looking for opportunities in bilingual schools, but the requirements that these schools ask for are very demanding for teachers they need to hire. Many of these institutions have as a graduation requirement for students to pass the TOFEL exam; so the teacher’s English level has to be as good as possible, they must know about Grammar. A teacher with Grammar problems has less opportunities and sometimes not even one to teach in a bilingual school or a university, for example.

There are some other students that would like to have an opportunity as translators, but for being a good translator the student must correctly know and use the Grammar rules. All of the preceding paragraphs lead us to state the following question.

1.2.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

At what extent would the creation of a textbook for teaching Grammar I and Grammar II (Syntactical Structures of the English Language) help English students at Universidad Francisco Gavidia improve their competence and performance in the English Language?
1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

As it was stated before, there is a problematic situation in the Grammar learning process that cannot be denied and that needs to be investigated to know the causes, effects and to find the possible solutions for it. It is impossible to determine the problem without investigating it. It was necessary to do a research to know the deficiencies of students in this subject that is essential for learning this foreign language. Knowing the deficiencies that the problem causes, helped us to establish the effects of it, it was also easier to know what to do to reduce this problem through possible solutions. It was decided to investigate this problematic situation in order to provide a solution to help teacher’s teaching process and student’s learning process.

In the statement of the problem it was established that one of the causes for this Grammar problem was the lack of a text book to support teacher’s activities. Through this investigation it is expected to help not only teachers but students to reduce these problems and increase knowledge of this important part of English. As Roberto Hernández Sampieri has established in his book “Metología de la Investigación”, the research is originated on ideas. We always need an idea to start with to lead us through the investigation of a problem that is going on in a society.

1.4 DELIMITATION

The present research was done in a period of seven months, from March 2007 to September 2007 at Universidad Francisco Gavidia with students of 5th to 7th semester of Grammar I and Reading and conversation II of the Major in English.
1.5 OBJECTIVE SYSTEM

1.5.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To explore the necessity of the creation of a textbook for teaching English Grammar I and II (Syntactical Structures of the English Language) of the English Major at Universidad Francisco Gavidia.

1.5.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To identify the effects that are produced by the lack of a Grammar textbook of the English Major at Universidad Francisco Gavidia.
- To provide a useful material to teachers and students for learning a foreign language based on Universidad Francisco Gavidia program.
1.6 RANGES AND LIMITATION

1.6.1 RANGES

The ranges for this investigation were students of Grammar I and Reading and Conversation II at Universidad Francisco Gavidia.

1.6.2 LIMITATION

Some limitations appeared during the process of this research: limitation of time due to the work because of my schedule. I didn’t have enough free time during the day to meet my advisor also I had to add that at the beginning of this project I didn’t have internet at home, the only place where I could get internet near my house was usually closed and was uncomfortable to be traveling almost everyday to go to a cyber to get the information; the lack of money for printing out the material was other big limitation.