IMPLEMENTATION OF CREATED TEACHING MATERIALS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF ENGLISH RESULTS IN SABER 11 EXAM AT A RURAL PUBLIC SCHOOL

MASTER'S REPORT

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Table of contents

Table of figures

ABSTRACT

The design of contextualized, appropriate materials for the development of the communicative competence, this study shows, is effective when trying to better the performance of high school students, in this case at Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona-Candelaria, about to take the standardized English test that comes with the Saber 11 exam in Colombia. With a battery of instruments that collect data, measure the impact of the activities proposed and the materials used, and with the results of the pre and post tests, it is shown that the intervention with the materials created by the teacher and the students raised significantly the level of the communicative competence of students. Also, questions are raised as what the best way would be to improve critical analysis competencies that were not altered by the activities designed.

1. Introduction

Every year, thousands of students in Colombia take the Saber 11 exam. This is a standardized test that measures the knowledge of students in different areas such as: Math, Reading Comprehension in Spanish, Science, Social Studies and English. The Saber 11 exam is a prerequisite for those students who want to enter the University.

The Ministry of Education, through the ICFES (Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación), is the official entity in charge of administering exams all over Colombia. Last year's results show that there is no significant improvement in terms of the English level of students in high school. One of the main reasons for not having better results in the English test in Saber 11 exam could be the lack of materials, especially in public schools, to practice the language.

Effective language teaching requires flexible and creative teachers when using methods and teaching materials in order to achieve better performance in our students. Materials play an important role in language teaching and learning, but students in public schools in Colombia do not have access to them. That's why, the creation of teaching materials has become an option to offer students some input in the classroom. This research proposal intends to promote the betterment of English results in the Saber 11 exam by developing materials that focus on communicative competence. This research project is initiated by the need to achieve a significant advance in the educational process that leads to enhance the results in the external test applied by the ICFES, since, according to the informative bulletin 2017 of the Secretary of Education from Valle del Cauca, among the areas evaluated between 2014 and 2017 English and Science are the two subjects with negative tendency in the obtained averages (see annex 5). This is a sign of the need to create strategies that strengthen the learning processes.

This research was done at the Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona-Candelaria with eleventh grade students following the quantitative approach. The study emerged from a personal interest of improving the students' level of

English by implementing some materials created by the researcher. The research question that guided this work was: *How can English results in the standardized test (Saber 11exam) be improved by using teacher- created materials that focus on the development of the communicative competence of eleventh grade students at Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona-Candelaria?*

This paper is organized in the following chapters: the first one presents the justification, problem statement, and objectives. The second chapter presents the background studies and theoretical framework. The third chapter shows the methodology used in the study, the fourth chapter shows the analysis, findings and discussion of the data collected. Finally, the conclusions and recommendations are presented.

2. Justification

According to the National Ministry of Education, the main purpose of the external tests- Saber 11 exam - is to contribute to the improvement of the quality of education through the performance of periodic measures of the development of competencies, as an indicator of the quality of the educational system. Taking into account this purpose, it becomes a duty for institutions and teachers to implement different teaching, learning and evaluation strategies, to familiarize students with the types of test questions that help them get better results and therefore making it easier for them to get access to public universities or government grants.

The particular situation at the researcher´s institution is that it is the only public institution in town that is why they have approximately 3800 students from pre-school to high school. Unfortunately, these students lack English proficiency and motivation to be involved in class, first of all, because most English teachers are not providing real opportunities for learners to become involved in the process of learning a second language; although the Ministry of Education has implemented different strategies to train teachers and students like conferences and immersion programs, among others. Another key problem is that these students lack the interest and motivation to learn English; they come to 10th grade thinking that English is something difficult, they are not aware of the importance to learn a foreign language.

In view of this situation it is urgent to strengthen, innovate and increase different strategies according to our context, students` interest and needs that contribute to the good development of students` abilities and demonstrate a continuous improvement in the results of external tests but to do this teachers must understand that it is necessary to raise students cultural awareness, because we cannot focus on teaching language just as structure to develop skills, but we need to be aware that language implies meaningful communication.

This research project is initiated by the need to achieve a significant advance in the educational process that leads to enhance the results in the external test applied by the ICFES.

Supporting the statement that motivation is the cause of learning, this research aims to provide teachers and students not only eleven graders but also from lower levels, with practical material that allows them to improve their competences, especially the communicative competence, oriented to the preparation for the Saber exam. The use of appropriate material (in this case teacher- created), will lead to reach the objective set in this proposal.

2.1 Research question

As we know, effective language teaching requires flexible and creative teachers when using methods and teaching materials in order to achieve better performance in our students. Materials play an important role in language teaching and learning, but students in public schools in Colombia rarely have access to them. That's why, the creation of teaching material has become an option to offer students some input in the classroom.

This research proposal intends to promote the betterment of English results in the Saber 11 exam. The following question guides this project: *How can English results in the standardized test (Saber 11) be improved by using teacher - created materials at Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona-Candelaria?*

2.2 Objectives

General objective

To improve the communicative competence in 11th grade students at the Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona - Candelaria in the English standardized test through the implementation of teacher- created materials.

Specific objectives

- To identify the level of communicative competence of 11th grade students at Inmaculada Concepcion school in Villagorgona- Candelaria.

- To design and implement teacher-designed materials to improve the communicative competence in the English results in Saber 11 exam in the Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona- Candelaria.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the teacher- designed materials used to improve the communicative competence in the English results in Saber 11 exam at the Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona- Candelaria.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1. Background studies

In this section, several studies that are closely related to the current research will be presented. They have been reviewed taking into account the topic of this investigation: English results in the Saber 11 exam. Each study is described taking into account its importance and the contribution they make to the current research. Some studies were done in Colombia and Cali that means there has been an interest in the Valle del Cauca region to study the results of students in the English section of the Saber 11 exam and its relationship with the goals and programs developed by the Ministry of Education to strengthen the communicative competence of learners.

The first study found was written by Ruiz, Arévalo, Morillo and Acosta (2017). The main goal of this study was to analyze the variables that influence the achievement of the curriculum standards implemented by the Ministry of Education in Colombia. The study was developed in several educational institutions in Barranquilla. It consisted of a quantitative analysis of the outcomes of the different areas tested in the exam. By using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the document shows the average and standard deviation of the school results analyzed. The authors concluded that official schools have lower results in all subject areas meanwhile, private schools show better results.

Another study consulted was written by Alonso, Díaz, Martínez, Mayora, Moreno, Ochoa and Roldán (2016). This is a document that presents a comparison between the results of Saber 11 exam in private and public schools in order to understand the evolution of English learning. This study shows interesting results such as: one public school in Cali has reached B1 in the Saber 11 exam, two private schools have the same result in Barranquilla and Bogotá has three official schools with the same results. The authors highlight that between 2009 and 2012, the English results in the Saber 11 exam in Cali were better than the results between 2013 and 2014. In 2014, the highest level

achieved by students in Cali was B+ (566.447 students got B+ in the Saber 11 exam). The authors concluded that only 6.6 % of students in Cali reached B1 by 2014. One of the main reasons not to achieve a higher level is due to the lack of preparation and proficiency of elementary teachers who teach English.

The third document reviewed was written by Giraldo and Muñoz (2014) from Universidad Católica de Manizales. This study aimed at creating a fun strategy to prepare third grade students before taking the Saber exam. The authors used a simulator software to engage and motivate students in order to obtain better results in the Spanish section of the exam. The results show that students prefer to work with technology the same type of questions and exercises rather than using the traditional reading activities on paper.

The fourth research project reviewed was done by Yepes (2015) from Universidad del Tolima. This study presents a number of causes for the low performance of ninth grade students in English. It was a qualitative study that used a survey to collect data. The outcomes of this study show that students lack of motivation, grammar-based exercises, limited spaces and possibilities to practice the language are the most common reasons why students do not make any progress in the English class.

The research project written by Sánchez-Jabba in 2012 presents an analysis of the results of Saber 11 exam in the English component. The document shows that the best results in the Saber 11 exam are placed in Barranquilla (compared to the results of the rest of the country). One of the possible factors that make these results positive is the historical tradition of immigrants in the Caribbean Coast. According to Viloria (2013) Barranquilla has the highest number of immigrants in Colombia during the last century. Also, the arrival of more business people, multinational companies and the trade agreements made it possible for Barranquilla to become an open door to different commercial agencies.

Another research project reviewed was the study done by López at Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira in 2015 with 5th grade students. The document shows that the use of adapted materials is beneficial for the development of the sociolinguistic and intercultural competences. One of the author`s conclusions

is that materials play a crucial role in language learning. They engage students since the topics and the variety of them increased their motivation.

In an international research, Yu's paper explains how the sociolinguistic competence was neglected by language teachers over decades. He states that the teaching of sociolinguistic competence can never be treated lightly if foreign language teachers intend to assist learners not only in employing grammatically correct forms but also in knowing when to use these forms and under what circumstances (Yu, 2018).

The article by Núñez and Téllez (2009), addresses the issue of the role of teachers as textbook developers, and how they can be materials creators by integrating their knowledge and creativity and bearing in mind the objective to reach.

The implementation of effective materials make learners feel comfortable, motivated and confident in an English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom, but to design materials it is totally necessary to take into account students' needs and interests. Textbooks are usually written for global students, so publishers tend to design them by standardizing scenarios for learning.

The articles and research projects previously presented show that there is a growing interest in investigating about the results of standardized tests in Colombia. Also offer some appreciations regarding the little effectiveness in the methodology used in the teaching of English, where translation and grammar predominate and the communicative aspects are relegated (especially the communicative competence). Also, they represent a solid foundation for the current study since the analysis of the results of Saber 11 exam can be improved by using different materials (created by the teacher).

As a conclusion, teachers should pay more attention to the development of the sociolinguistic competence which is tested in the Standard English tests (Saber 11 and Saber Pro) in Colombia.

3.2 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, the concept of communicative competence is defined following different authors. Then, this concept is described as it is tested in the Saber 11 exam. A definition of materials development is also presented along with some important features for materials design and, finally, the components of the Saber 11 exam are described.

Communicative competence

The concept of competence refers to the abilities or skills a person has in order to solve problems. Competences are learned through practice and experience. The first notion of competence in the linguistic area was defined by Chomsky (1965) referring to the linguistic competence as the knowledge of the ideal speaker and hearer to use the language in a homogeneous context and without any constraints from fatigue, distractions or memory limitations. In contrast, Hymes (1982) considered that Chomsky's notion of competence failed to account for the socio-cultural dimension of the language.

Communicative competence was defined by Canale and Swain in 1980 as the underlying systems of knowledge and skill required for communication. But, communicative competence includes not only the mastery of grammar and lexicon, but also the rules of speaking according to Canale and Swain (1983). Canale (1983) considers that communicative competence is composed of the grammatical competence (which includes knowledge about vocabulary, rules of syntax, semantics, spelling and pronunciation), the sociolinguistic competence (which includes rules of appropriateness of meaning and form), discourse competence (which includes the knowledge to combine forms and meanings to create a coherent text) and the strategic competence (which includes knowledge of verbal and non-verbal strategies to compensate for limitations).

In 1990, Bachman presented his communicative competence model taking Canale and Swain's proposal. Bachman proposed the term communicative language ability to replace the concept of communicative competence.

Bachman's communicative language ability refers to communicative competence and language proficiency. Bachman's model includes the following components of the communicative competence: language competence, strategic competence, and psychophysiological mechanisms. The first component: language competence includes organizational competence (grammatical competence: vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology), textual competence (cohesion and rhetorical organization), and pragmatic competence which includes the illocutionary competence (a framework for understanding speech acts and language functions) and the sociolinguistic competence (sensitivity to different aspects of the language such as register, naturalness, cultural references, dialects or varieties). The last component is the psychophysiological mechanisms in which the neurological and psychological processes are involved in actual communication.

In 1995, Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell proposed a communicative competence model that incorporated the previous models. Celce-Murcia et al (1995) consider that all the components of the communicative competence should interact in order to build discourse.

The difference between this model and the former ones is that Celce-Murcia et al (1995) model gives more emphasis on the discourse competence than the prior ones. Another difference is that the authors consider that it is insufficient to list the components instead, they present a more dynamic model based on interrelations and interactions among them and their potential use in the classroom by addressing the students' needs. This model proposes five components: discourse competence, linguistic competence, actional competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence.

On the other hand, Savignon (2002) defines communicative competence as the ability of language learners to make interactions with other speakers. It does not refer to the knowledge of grammatical rules, but the skill the learner has to perform in authentic situations. She considers that the communicative competence requires learners to participate in the interpretation, expression and negotiation of meaning (Savignon, 2015). This idea is related to the development of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method to teach

languages. Teaching to communicate presents a set of elements such as: understanding and using the rules of grammar, discourse and appropriateness in each context.

The concept of communicative competence has evolved in the last decade, Hall and Pekarek Doehler (2011), present an extension of the communicative competence notion to a new term: Interactive competence, defined as the ability to accomplish meaningful interactions by demonstrating an appropriate use of the language. The author's definition of interactive competence implies that the speaker should be able to interact with others taking into account the expectations drawn from the context in which communication takes place. The notion of interactive competence will not be used in this research since the Ministry of Education of Colombia has adopted the concept of communicative competence in its documents and tests. The definition was presented as a way to show the evolution of the concept.

Components of the communicative competence

As stated before, the communicative competence has the following components: linguistic competence or grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence. Each component will be described in detail in order to relate the skills or knowledge each user needs to acquire in the process of language learning. The components of the communicative competence are tested in the Saber 11 exam as it will be shown in the following section of this document.

Grammatical or linguistic competence

Fauziati (2015) explains that the linguistic competence is the ability that a speaker has to use the language in a correct way in terms of the application of grammar rules, vocabulary, pronunciation and sentence formation. Canale and Swain (1980) consider that this competence is evidenced through the mastery

of the linguistic code which refers to the correct use of vocabulary, spelling, syntax, morphology and phonology in interactions. This competence allows speakers to use the knowledge of the language to understand and express literal meanings.

Sociolinguistic competence

The sociolinguistic competence defined by Canale and Swain (1980) includes the sociocultural rules of use that allow utterances to be appropriate (in form and meaning) in a context. Appropriateness in form refers to the verbal and non-verbal forms of interaction that makes an utterance being suitable in a specific situation (polite vs. impolite forms of language). In addition, appropriateness in meaning refers to the functions of communication to be considered suitable in a situation. The sociolinguistic competence consists on the learner's ability to use the language in specific social interactions, that is to say, using the correct selection of language according to the context in which the interaction takes place. Also, the sociolinguistic competence includes other features related to the participants and the objectives of communication (the status of the participants, and the purpose of the interaction). For instance, learners need to understand that the selection of the language forms they use in communication depends on how appropriate they are according to the setting in which communication takes place and the role of participants.

The sociolinguistic competence has also been defined as sociocultural competence. Richards (2001) explains the term sociocultural competence as the understanding of the relationships between participants, purpose and setting in which communication takes place.

Discourse competence

Canale (1983) defines the discourse competence as the mastery of rules that allow a speaker to combine forms and meanings in oral or written texts. It means, oral or written texts should have cohesion and coherence. Cohesion is achieved by a correct use of conjunctions, synonyms, and other elements that make a text as a well-structured unit. Coherence is the feature of a text in which a logical organization of ideas is presented. It avoids repetition and stablishes a hierarchical order of sentences in a text. Fauziati (2015) defines the discourse competence as the ability that a speaker has to use the new language in both spoken and written forms of communication.

Strategic competence

Fauziati (2015) explains that the strategic competence refers to the different actions that a speaker uses to achieve successful communication as a way to remedy a lack of vocabulary. Some of the strategies used by speakers to compensate the lack of vocabulary are by describing the word they need, use paraphrasing, verbal and non-verbal forms (gestures), repetition, circumlocution, among other strategies.

Pragmatic competence

According to Bachman (1990), the pragmatic competence is part of the language competence. It refers to the use and interpretation of speech acts. This competence includes the understanding of communication in terms of the following functions: heuristic, manipulative, imaginative and ideational.

Communicative competence in the SABER 11 exam

The ICFES and the Ministry of Education in Colombia, test the communicative competence in the standardized test Saber 11 to all students in high school

before they graduate in order to assess-in the English exam- the level of the students in the foreign language. The Ministry of Education has stipulated that 11th grade students should reach B1 level (according to the Common European Framework of Reference). The Saber 11 exam in its English section assesses the communicative competence and its components (linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and pragmatic competence).

The communicative competence and its components are tested in the Saber 11 exam in the following sections:

Part 1 tests the pragmatic knowledge of the student. In this part, students should recognize the communicative purpose of messages in the form of signs.

Part 2 tests the lexical knowledge of students through matching a description and its corresponding term.

Part 3 tests the sociolinguistic and the discourse competence of the student by selecting the correct answer in a conversation.

Part 4 and **Part 7** test the students' linguistic and discourse competence through a cloze reading exercise test.

Part 5 tests the students' literal reading comprehension.

Part 6 tests the students' inferential reading comprehension.

Issues about communicative competence when learning a language

In Colombia, the different national plans and public policies promoting bilingualism have failed to achieve better results in the development of communicative competence of students in the educational institutions. Efforts in terms of teacher development, curriculum changes and infrastructure investment have been made in order to reach the objectives established in the Bilingualism Program Colombia Very Well, 2015-2025. The results in the Saber 11 exam at the national level in the last years do not reflect an improvement in the communicative competence of students-especially in the public schools.

The aim of this study is to improve the communicative competence of 11th grade students at a public institution by using teacher-created materials. There are several difficulties regarding the development of each component of the communicative competence in language learners. Some studies were consulted in order to show not only the deficiencies but some alternatives to be taken into account to solve the problem.

Osorio and Insuasty (2015) explain that one of the biggest problems in the process of developing the communicative competence of students relies on the teaching practices. In their study they found out that teachers think they are using communicative tasks to develop the communicative competence in their students, but they are only developing one of the various components of the communicative competence, especially the grammatical or linguistic one "English classroom is not being exploited enough as a real and alternative social context where more authentic communication tasks can be developed" (p. 60). In addition, the authors highlighted the recurrent use of repetition drills and grammar exercises in the classroom, leaving aside the possibility to enrich language learning with other types of activities such as information gap, role play or listening comprehension exercises in order to make learners active participants in the process.

Savignon (2015), also points out the challenges of teaching and developing communicative competence in schools. She proposes some strategies for reaching a better way to integrate communication experiences in the classroom through teacher collaboration, institutional support and innovation. In addition, Farooq (2015) explains that classroom activities should encourage students to interact in the target language, this is where language teachers play the most important role: they should be a bridge between students and activities that allow communication to happen by providing meaningful activities, an organizer of resources and guide to the students.

In addition, the sociolinguistic competence is one of the most difficult skills to develop when learning a language since cultures are different, so what is appropriate in one may not be appropriate in another. One of the most common difficulties when learning a language is that the sociocultural aspect of the

language is not always taught in the classroom. According to Yu (2006) learning a language is a holistic process that requires the mastery of structural, discourse, strategic and sociolinguistic rules that give the learner the necessary tools to be appropriate in a particular situation.

Another issue to be tackled is how to teach sociolinguistic competence in the classroom. Omaggio (2001) says that language teachers usually report that they do not have time to teach sociocultural aspects of the language, other teachers do not feel confident about teaching sociocultural aspects of the language and other teachers find it difficult to explain sociocultural aspects of the language.

Materials development

Materials play a crucial role in language teaching and learning. These processes can be either fostered or discouraged by the use of appropriate materials. Also, materials development or design should be taken as serious as the selection of the methodology the teacher will use in a class. Materials development has increasingly been considered as a field of research in the last decades since the use of commercially designed course books has become very popular worldwide.

Tomlinson (1998) explains the importance of materials development through a series of principles and procedures for this task. Some of these principles include: the impact or effect of materials in language learning by facilitating students' learning of the language, developing confidence, activate language awareness, exposure to authentic use of the language. Also, materials should be developed taking into account the students' level, learning styles, interests and other conditions in which language learning is taking place.

In addition, Nuñez, Pineda and Téllez (2004) present the advantages for teachers to create their own materials. One of the main reasons for this is that, commercial books do not always match the students' needs and reality. The teacher in the classroom is the person who best knows the students because he/ she is in constant contact with them. Although, developing or creating

materials for the particular group of students may benefit both teachers and learners, it can be a complicated task. Also, the authors consider that materials design should be embedded in the course content and objectives.

Recent studies on materials development highlight the importance of innovation in methodology since teachers and textbook writers have been using materials that only respond to commercial demands, and follow the traditional Presentation, Practice, Production principle. According to Barrot (2014), materials must engage learners in real communication situations in which they can interact and negotiate meaning, develop critical thinking skills, and develop opportunities for reflecting on cultural aspects of the language.

Features for materials design

Well-designed materials also require the balance between the theory that supports language learning and the teacher's experience. In addition, materials should be challenging, enjoyable and relevant. Small (1997), presents four features for designing materials:

1. Attention: Materials should be interesting enough to catch the students' attention. Besides that, a sense of curiosity needs to be awaken in the students when presenting a new topic.

2. Relevance: Materials should be selected and designed according to the learning objectives. Also, the content of the materials should be chosen regarding the students' needs.

3. Confidence: The students' abilities and the learning process should be linked in the materials design.

4. Satisfaction: When the objectives are reached, students feel gratification.

Other important elements in materials design is the contextualization of content and the visual layout.

In language teaching, materials design has evolved in the last decades. Dat Bao (2015) highlights the importance of flexibility in materials design. The

concept of flexibility according to Dat gives the teacher a possibility to make changes in the materials regarding the students' needs, levels and learning styles. The author also states that any material should be used in a flexible way so that it can be adapted to any time constraint. In addition, flexibility refers to the possibility of introducing a new choice allowing teachers to use the materials in a different way. Materials also need to develop skills and strategies to be applied in other texts.

Moreover, Tomlinson (1998) considers that materials should engage learners. He also presents the following principles for materials design in which he highlights some aspects like the authenticity of language and input, achieving communicative goals by giving learners opportunities to use the target language and for giving feedback, and stimulates learners' curiosity and engagement.

Also, Tomlinson explains that materials need to be developed in a framework in which the language is presented in a variety of texts and genres. Materials should be designed so that the language students will produce has a form of the way the language is used in real situations. Tomlinson states that "materials need to be written in such a way that the teacher can make use of them as a resource and not have to follow them as a script" (1998: 8).

Features of the SABER 11 exam

The Ministry of Education through the ICFES (Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación) designs, makes and applies the standardized tests for the different grades in the Colombian educational system (3rd,5th,9th, and 11th exams for elementary and high school, and Saber Pro for higher education). In this study, only the Saber 11 exam in its foreign language competence will be described since it is the test that students will take before they graduate from high school.

According to the ICFES (2017), the Saber 11 exam in its foreign language competence has been designed under the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, and takes a similar format as other international standardized test with multiple choice, cloze, and matching questions. Also, the

Saber 11 exam, as all the exams designed by the ICFES, have a direct relationship with the Basic Competence Standards established in the Guide 22 in which it is stated that eleventh grade students should reach B1 level in English.

The Saber 11 exam is intended to test the communicative competence of students as stated by the ICFES En el caso del inglés se espera desarrollar la competencia comunicativa (Ministry of Education, 2006). The ICFES defines the communicative competence through the following components: linguistic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences. The test is organized around two activities: reading comprehension and use of language. The Saber 11 exam in its foreign language test has forty-five questions and seven parts in which the students are asked to complete conversations, answer questions, match definitions, and read articles. The exam covers different proficiency levels from A1 to B2.

4. Research methodology

Approach

This study follows the quantitative paradigm. According to Creswell (2014), quantitative methods include the collection, analysis and interpretation of data results through statistics. These methods include survey and experimental research that focus on identifying a sample and population, with a specific design for collecting and analyzing data.

Design

According to Creswel (2014), the quasi-experimental design consists on having two groups with similar characteristics: the experimental group and the control group. In quasi-experimental designs the researcher does not have total control of the variables, therefore it is necessary to have two groups (experimental and control), this allows the process of contrasting hypotheses. The participants of both groups are selected without random assignment. Both groups take a pretest and posttest, but only the experimental group receives the treatment. In this case, the experimental group will use the created materials for the development of the communicative competence.

Stages

Since the main objective of this investigation is to improve the communicative competence in 11th grade students at the Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona - Candelaria in the English standardized test Saber 11 through the implementation of teacher- created materials, the following stages will be used:

1. A diagnose of the student's communicative competence (grammatical, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and discourse competences) through the use of a pre-test, an actual Saber 11 exam offered by the ICFES.
2. Materials design according to the students' level and needs in order to develop the communicative competence.
3. Implementation of activities using the teacher-created material.
4. An identification of the effectiveness of the material created through the use of a post test, an actual Saber 11 exam offered by the ICFES.

Instruments

The following instruments will be used in this research project:

1. A pretest: to diagnose the students' level of communicative competence (grammatical, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and discourse competences). The test that will be used corresponds to the Saber 11 exam free samples offered by the ICFES available online.
2. A survey to collect the students' perceptions about the material created by the researcher.
3. A post test to determine the effectiveness of the material created by the researcher. The test that will be used corresponds to the Saber 11 exam free samples offered by the ICFES available online.

Chronogram

I just have 2 classes per week with this group on Mondays and on Tuesdays

Table 1. Chronogram

STAGES	DATE
1. Diagnose of the student's communicative competence through the use of a pre-test.	JULY 2nd

2. Implementation of activities using the created material	AUGUST 6th, 12th ,13th ,20th, 26th and 27th SEPTEMBER 2nd, 3rd, 9th, 10th ,16th , 17th 23rd and 24th
3. Survey to collect the students' perceptions about the material used.	OCTOBER 15th
4. Identification of the effectiveness of the material created through the use of a post-test.	OCTOBER 15th

Participants

This study will be conducted at the Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona – Candelaria. The students who are going to participate in the study belong to the 11th grade of the school (11-1 and 11-2). In the first group (11-1), there is a total of thirty-three students eight of them are men and twenty-five are women and this will be the control group. In 11-2 there is a total of thirty-four students, twelve of them are women and twenty-two men and they are the experimental group. Their age range is between 15 to 18 years old in both groups.

Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona-Candelaria is a public and rural institution with an inclusion philosophy in which indigenous people, different ethnical groups such as African descendants and displaced families can send their children for high school education. Most parents at the school belong to 1 and 2 social strata and just a few of them belong to stratum 3. Also, families face several difficulties like: violence, drug use and early pregnancies. There is a predominance of single parents as well. Lots of these families do not have regular employment and some of them work in the sugar cane crops. Others work independently as construction workers. Also, there are some big companies around the small town of Villagorgona, such as: Pollos Bucanero, Café Águila Roja, Cavasa and Ingenio Mayagüez.

Ethical considerations

This research project was performed with the informed consent of the participants (see annex 6). No names are mentioned in this report. The research project did not put the participants in any kind of danger and they were treated respectfully. The collected information was used for academic purposes only.

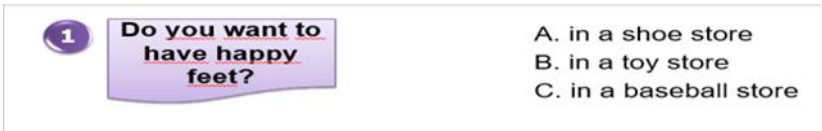
5. Findings and discussion

In this chapter the researcher will analyze and compare the information and collected data through both pretest and post test, at the same time the seven activities will be described and how the created-teaching materials were developed and taking into account the students` direct comments about each session and finally the researcher will analyze the survey applied to the students who received the material implementation in the English classes.

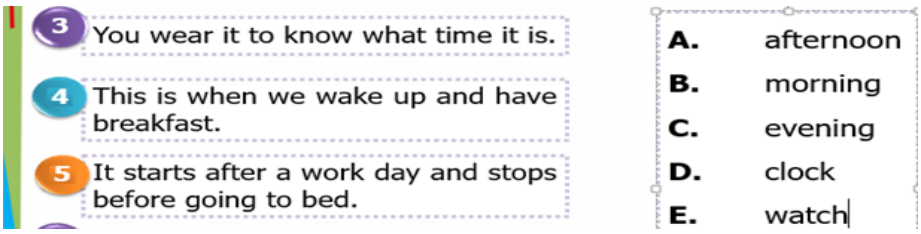
5.1 Pretest results

In the pretest, an actual Saber 11 exam offered by the ICFES, the data reveal that both the control group and the experimental group have similar English proficiency, in other words they were in similar level and conditions to take the same pretest. The test has a total of twenty questions. There are five parts in the test: part one (questions 1 & 2), part 2 (questions 3, 4 & 5), part 3 (questions 6 & 7), part 4 &7 (questions 8 to 15), and part 5&6 (questions 16 to 20).

As it was mentioned before in part 1 of the test, students are asked to identify where some signs are used. Knowledge of vocabulary and expressions are necessary to complete this part successfully. There are 2 questions like:

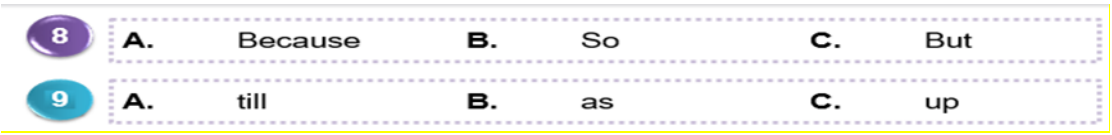


Part 2 of the test includes a list of words and a description. Each student should match the definition with the correct word. There are three questions

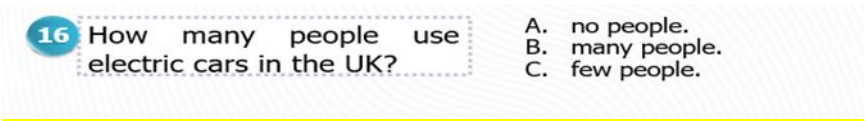


Part 3 of the test consists on the selection of the appropriate answer to a specific question in a conversation. Students are expected to choose the correct option for each question, so the sociolinguistic and the discourse competences are involved. There are two questions like

In parts 4/7 of the test, the grammatical knowledge of the students is tested, the linguistic competence, as well as the discourse competence in order to give coherence to the text. Through the use of a text, students should complete it with the appropriate word. There are eight questions like:



In parts 5/6 of the exam, students should demonstrate their ability to understand texts. There are five questions like.



Now, In order to show the results of the pretest in both groups, the following graphs will present the findings. The first graph shows the total of correct and incorrect answers of the pretest of the 11-1 class (total of students who took the test 30) and 11-2 class (total of students who took the test 32), being 11-1 the control group and 11-2 the experimental group.

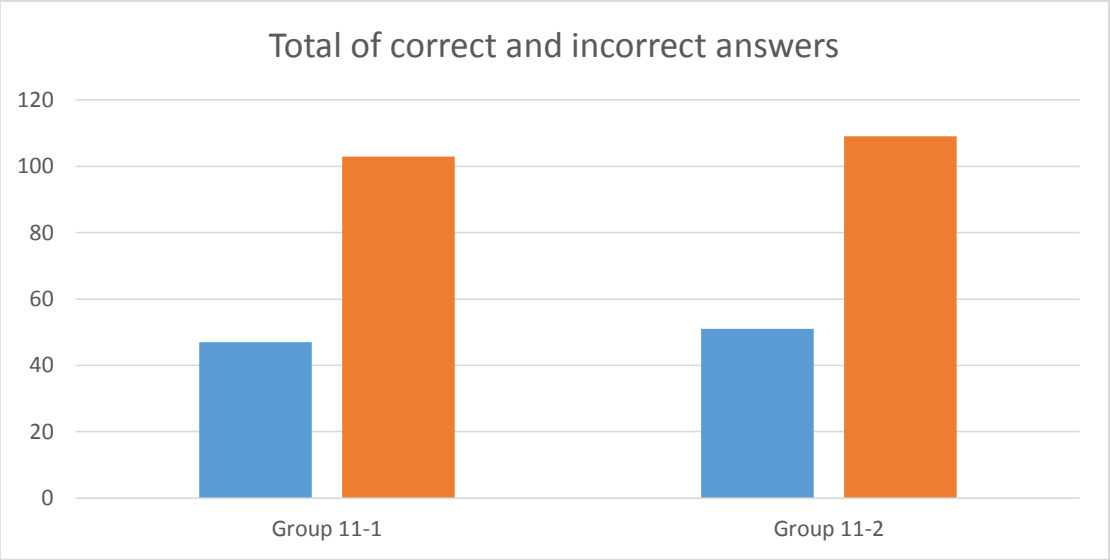


Figure 1. Pre test. Correct and Incorrect answers

It can be seen that in the pretest both the control and experimental groups have a similar results. In the 11-1 group, there was a total of forty-seven correct answers in blue and one hundred three incorrect answers the ones in orange. In the 11-2 group, there was a total of fifty one correct answers the ones in blue and one hundred nine incorrect ones represented in orange color.

Each part of the test will be presented in graphs as follows.

Part 1. Control group

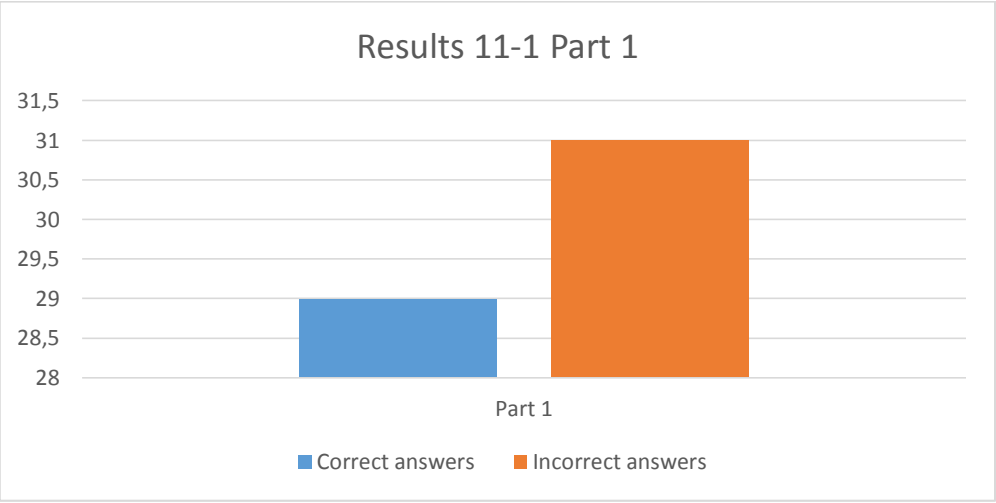


Figure 2. Control group's correct and incorrect answers in part 1

The total of correct answers in 11-1 was twenty-nine contrasting with thirty-one incorrect answers in part 1.

Part 1. Experimental group

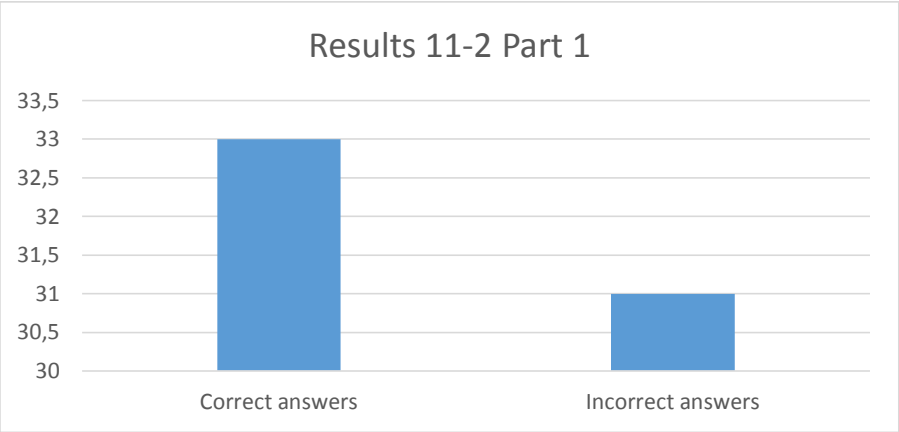


Figure 3. Experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in part 1

In part 1, the experimental group 11-2 answered thirty-three correct answers and had thirty-one incorrect ones.

Part 2. Control group

The control group 11-1 had a total of thirty-four correct answers and fifty-six incorrect answers.

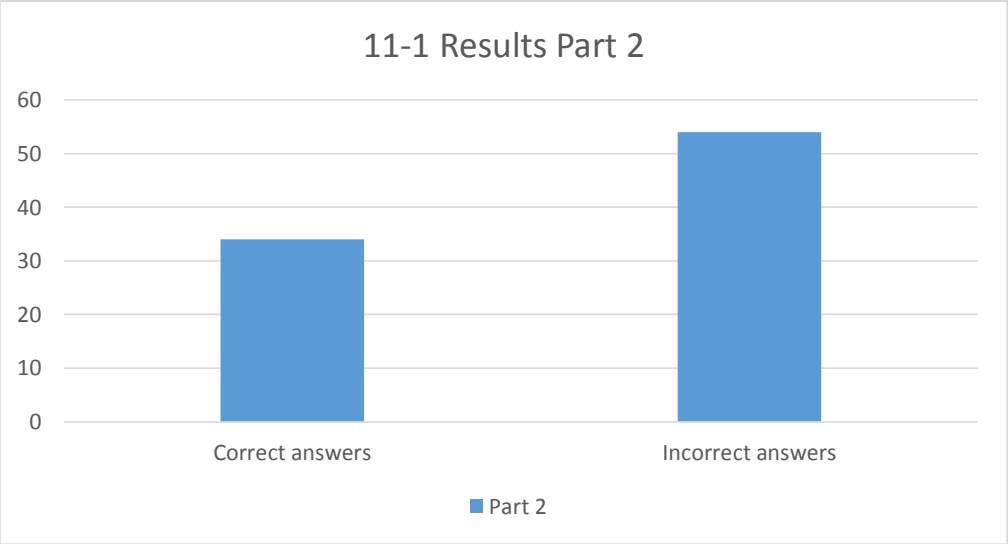


Figure 4. Control group's correct and incorrect answers in part 2

It is evident that, this type of question is more difficult for the students. Unknown vocabulary and grammar cause students to make more errors. As a result of that, the number of incorrect answers is almost doubled.

Part 2. Experimental group

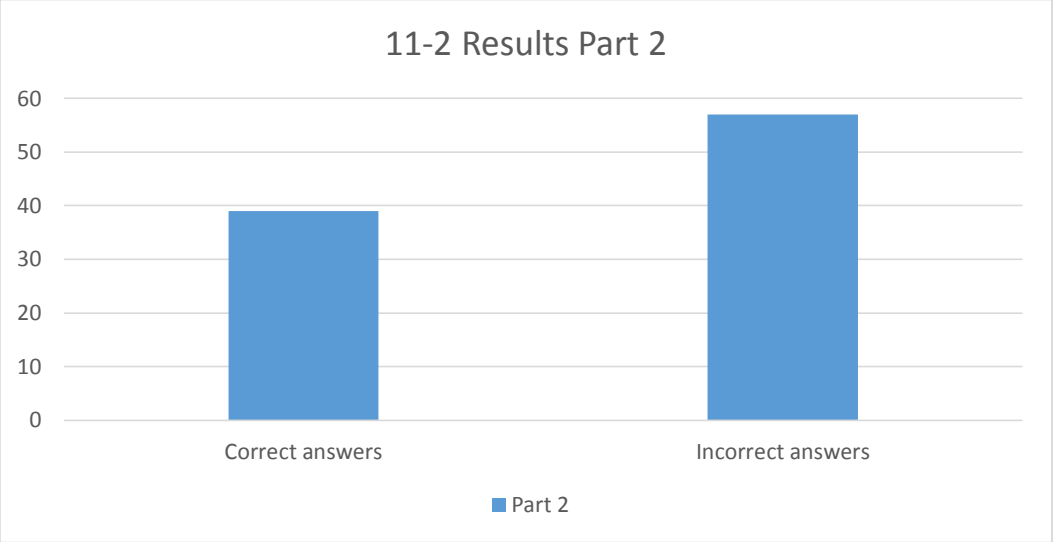


Figure 5. Experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in part 2

A similar situation occurs in the experimental group where the number of incorrect answers is higher. In this group, students had thirty-nine correct answers.

Part 3 Control group

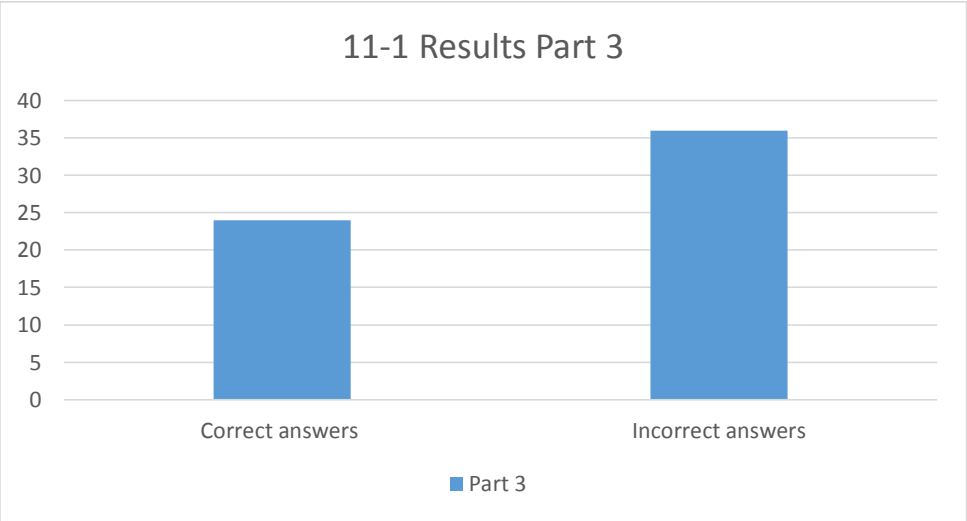


Figure 6. Control's group's correct and incorrect answers in part 3

The difference between the number of correct and incorrect answers is not as high as it is in other sections of the test. Probably, the reason for this result is the exposure of students to this type of activities in the English class where the communicative competence is developed through the use of conversations.

Part 3. Experimental group

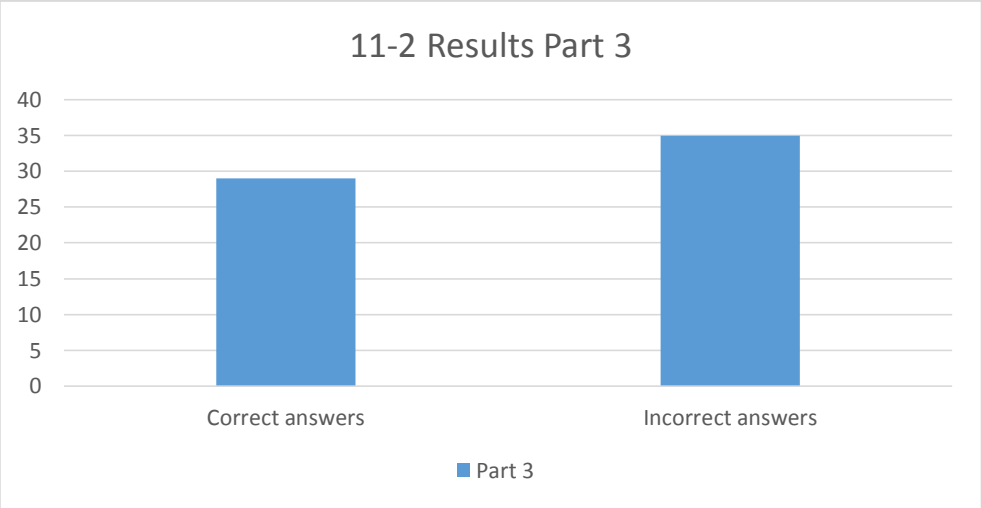


Figure 7. Experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in part 3

The results of the experimental group are similar to the control group where the number of correct and incorrect answers is pretty close.

Part 4 & 7. Control group

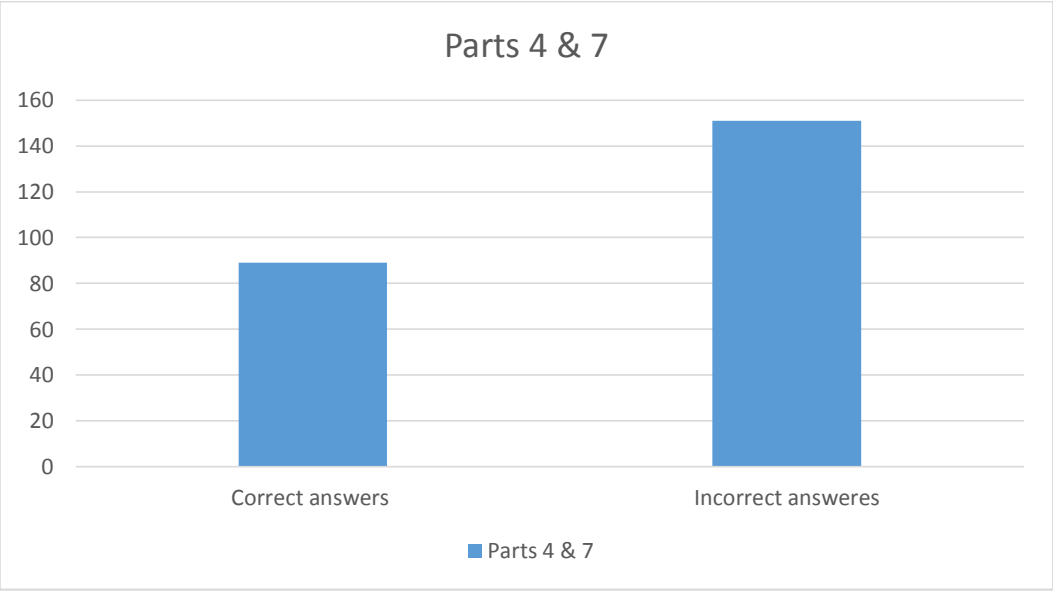


Figure 8. Control group's correct and incorrect answers in parts 4 & 5

The control group had a total of 89 correct answers and 151 incorrect answers. This section of the exam requires students to use their knowledge of the communicative competence when reading a text.

Parts 4 & 7. Experimental group

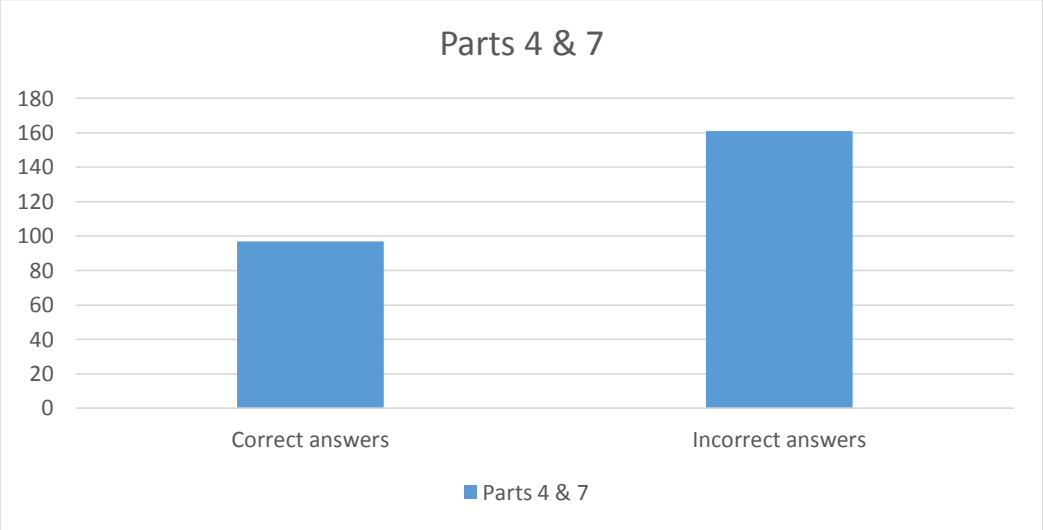


Figure 9. Experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in parts 4 & 5

The experimental group has similar results: 97 correct answers and 151 incorrect answers. This result may be explained due to the knowledge the students should demonstrate in this type of question.

Part 5 & 6. Control group

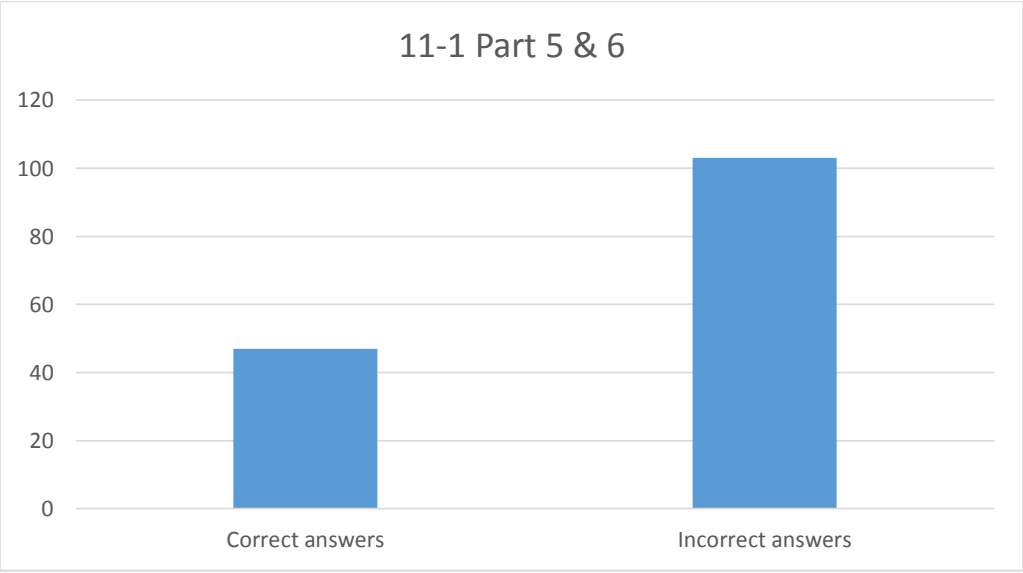


Figure 10. Control group's correct and incorrect answers in parts 5 & 6

The control group had a total of 47 correct answers and 103 incorrect answers. Reading comprehension is one of the most difficult abilities to develop when learning a foreign language. The communicative competence is also evidenced in this type of activities.

Parts 5 & 6. Experimental group

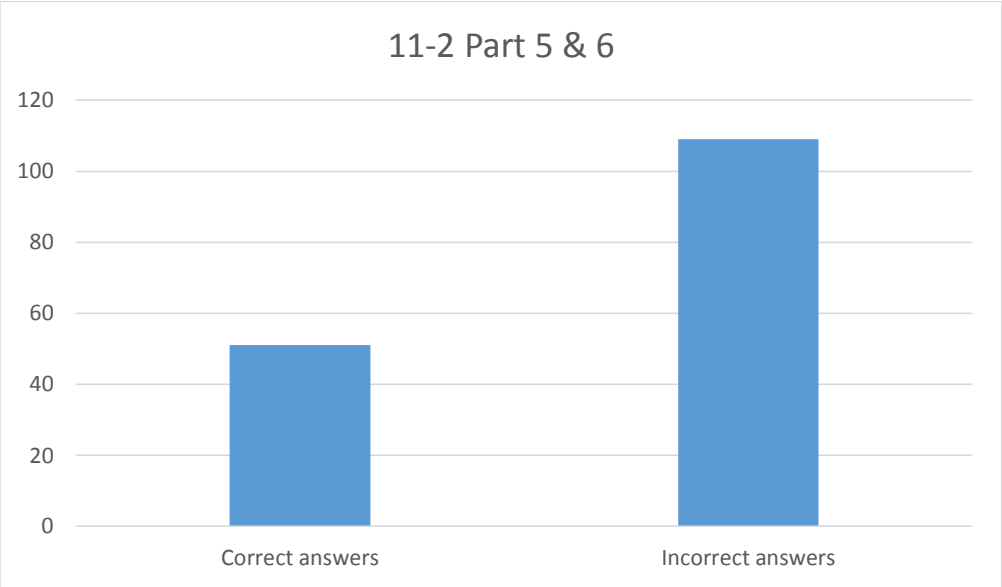


Figure 11. Experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in parts 5 & 6

Similar results were obtained in the experimental group with a total of 51 correct answers and 109 incorrect answers.

The following figure shows the total of correct and incorrect answers in the control group 11-1.

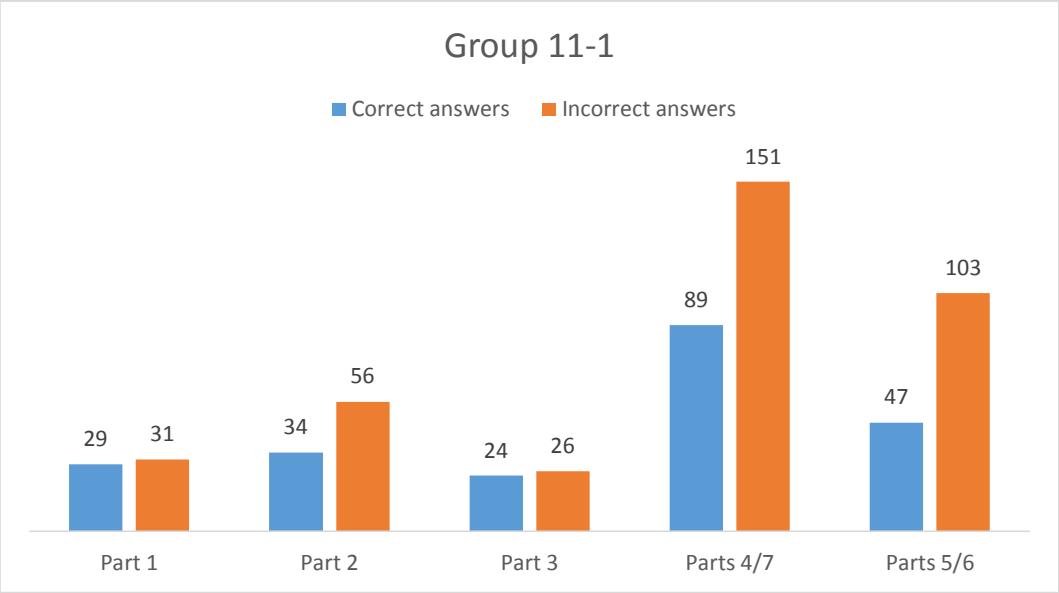


Figure 12. Total of correct and incorrect answers in the control group

The following figure shows the total of correct and incorrect answers in the experimental group

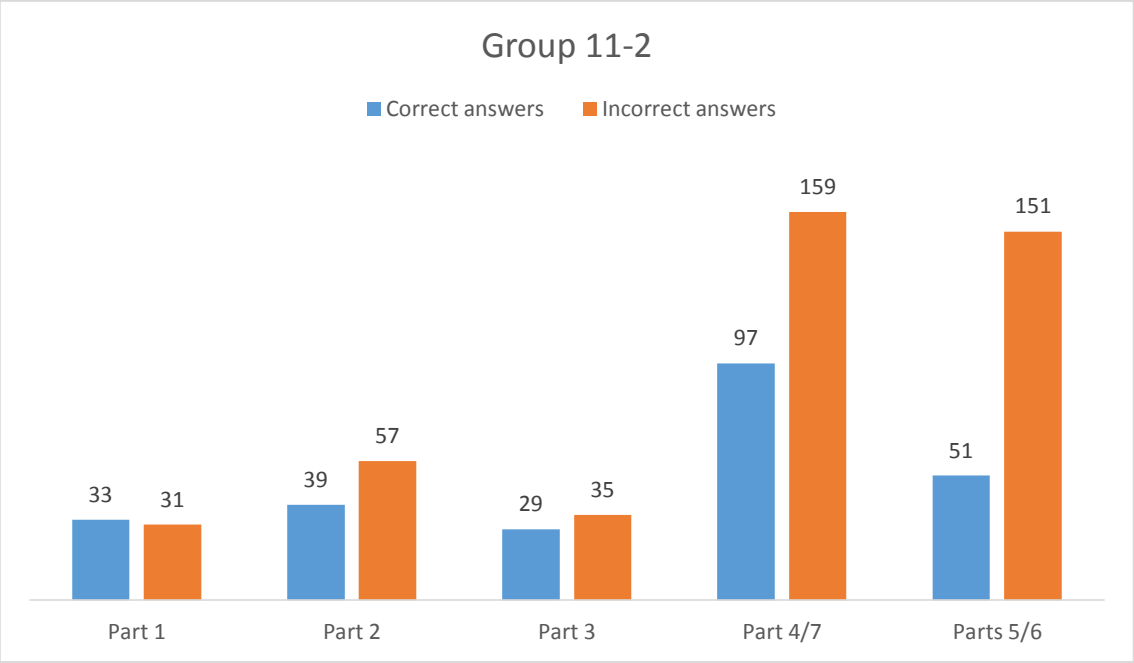


Figure 13. Total of correct and incorrect answers in the experimental group

In the following figure we can compare the total of correct answers in terms of percentages both for the control and the experimental groups.

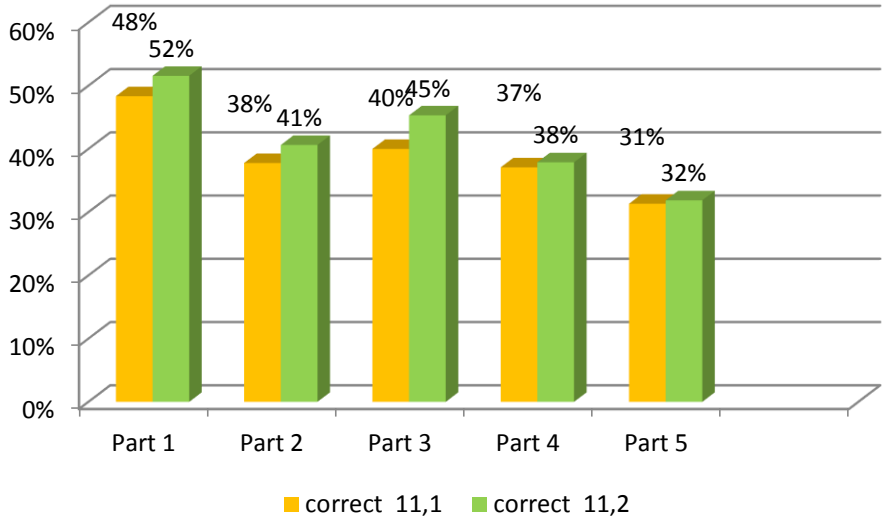


Figure 14. Control and Experimental group's comparative chart of correct answers

Comparing the results of the pretest in both the control and test groups of this study, it is evident that the test group had only a little difference in the results in all parts of the exam. Part of this possible result is that the test group had 32 students taking the test while the control group had 30 students. In part 1, the test group presents a little higher percentage of correct answers (52 %) compared to 48 % of the control group. In part 2, there is also a difference of 3 % between the control and test group. In part 3, there is a difference reaching 5 % between the groups studied and in parts 4 and 5 there is a slightly difference between the control and test group that represents only 1 %.

5.2 Teacher- created materials

In the following section, a description of the activities and materials created for improving the communicative competence of eleventh grade students at Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona is presented.

A total of seven (7) activities were planned, designed and used in 14 English classes of 55 minutes each one, taking into account the components of the Saber 11 exam regarding the assessment of the communicative competence. The researcher used a variety of activities such as: a giant map elaborated with

the students' drawings and descriptions of places in the city, a memory game, short conversations and even texts written and adapted by the teacher from the students' own real stories. The materials used for this research were not the commercial ones, they were 100 % created by the teacher researcher with the cooperation of the students.

A detailed description of each activity and the teacher researcher and students' perceptions of each activity is presented below.

5.3. Implementation of activities using teacher-created material

Activity 1

Part # 1 - Advertisements

MY CITY

Objective: To ask and answer questions about directions

Teacher-designed material

Students elaborate in an eighth of straw cardboard two different places in a city (distributed in advanced), this material should be well written and represented with images related to the name of the place; a total of 60 pieces are collected to work.

Procedure

Each student is assigned two places in the city to bring them written and drawn each in an eighth of straw cardboard, then in class each student must present it to their classmates making a brief description (it can be a single sentence or phrase) , EXAMPLE: the *butcher shop* is the place to buy meat. The rest of the classmates should copy the list of the places taught.

Then the activity consists on distributing the places on the floor or the court forming a kind of city so that they can move between them.

Then as a couple, they ask each other and answer how to get to a place.

Example: Excuse-me, can you tell me where the bank is?

Sure, turn right and go straight two blocks… At the end of the indication the student must be specific about the exact location site using the prepositions, example: the bank is between the drugstore and the bakery.

This activity, as all the activities planned here, was worked during two English classes. This activity reinforces the students' ability to perform in a real social situation, it works the student's pragmatic knowledge, which allows him/her to recognize the communicative purpose of a situation and the place where it can appear, at the same time the activity allows them to remember vocabulary about places in a city, which Saber 11 exam assesses in the three options in part 1.

Students' comments about the activity

1. Lejos de estar en la monotonía de otras clases de inglés que he experimentado en mi vida, las actividades generan conocimiento interactivo, en especial esta actividad de identificar la ruta de camino hacia un lugar específico de una ciudad imaginaria. Siempre es positivo que salgamos de las clases rutinarias con estas actividades, que son de excelente calidad.
2. I think that the teacher`s activities son muy innovadoras e impulsan la capacidad del estudiante de una manera creativa en el área de inglés. Por ejemplo la actividad sobre recorrer la ciudad mediante una serie de indicaciones de forma didáctica fomenta el desarrollo intelectual del educando de una manera activa y creativa, además de hacerlo en comunidad, socializando con los compañeros. Is wonderful.
3. Me parece una excelente manera de aprender, así aumentamos nuestro conocimiento con base a estas actividades, dinámicamente puede que se aprenda mejor. Para mí la actividad más divertida fue "My city" esta nos ayuda a aumentar el léxico y el conocimiento en inglés; además nos permite interactuar con los compañeros en inglés.

Activity 2

Part # 2 - Matching descriptions

MEMORY GAME

Objective: To remember specific vocabulary such us: clothes, animals, sports, fruits, etc. to match the description with the object.

Teacher-designed material

Students elaborate some cards in cardboard (three pairs) of 10 by 10 centimeters, in one the name and in the other the drawing of the assigned vocabulary (clothes, animals, sports, fruits, etc.). They also design a kind of poster with supports to put inside the cards.

Procedure

The class is divided into subgroups of 4-5 students, each group is identified with letters, and then the poster is posted on the board. Each group will have turns asking for two numbers and thus trying to find the couple (name - drawing), several rounds are made during the 55 minutes of the class, so that they remember and expand different specific vocabulary such us: clothes, animals, human body, sports, means of transportation, fruits / vegetables and occupations.

The group that gets the right couple gets a point, if they pronounce it correctly two points and if they form a sentence in English putting that word in a context, they get three points. This activity is mainly worked in a cooperative way.

This type of activity activates students' memory and reinforces the lexical knowledge of the student which is necessary for the external test in part 2, matching a description with its corresponding term.

Students' comments about the activity

1. It`s cool because we play and at the same time we are educated with this activity and is so fun and we expanded the vocabulary. Excellent, chévere, innovador.
2. The activities are very funny and I think that are dynamics. Pienso que las actividades de la profesora ayudan a mejorar el vocabulario del

estudiante, además de mejorar la concentración y la memoria que le pueden ayudar a obtener mejores resultados en la Prueba Saber.

3. La actividad de hacer memoria se hace importante para nuestro aprendizaje ya que los dibujos nos ayudan a visualizar y a memorizar mucho más rápido y de hecho nos ayuda con el vocabulario, además es muy bueno trabajar en grupo.

Activity 3

Part # 2 - Matching descriptions

It is about…

Objective: To identify specific vocabulary related to clothes, animals, sports, fruits, etc.

Teacher-designed material

For this activity the students do not elaborate a designed material as such, I just take to the class 25 pieces of papers with the same characteristics (color and size).

Procedure

The students form the same subgroups, I assign to each group 3 vocabulary categories and I give them 3 pieces of paper where they should write the assigned vocabulary that we worked in the previous class (memory game) and they have to add 5 new words to each list, I gather and mix them all on my desk, then in turns a member of each group takes out randomly a piece and at the same time, when the student observes it, the first one to identify the category saying *it is about*… and then he / she has to write a phrase involving one of the words, he/she gets a point for his/her group (this time the responsibility to get a point for the group is individual).

The purpose of this activity, like activity # 2, is to reinforce the lexical part in the students in order to improve the communicative competence specifically the linguistic part, trying to encourage them using this practical activity.

Students' comments about the activity

1. Pues me parece una buena forma de ayudarnos a repasar para el ICFES, pues es una forma muy dinámica.
2. Es interesante trabajar en grupo porque todos nos colaboramos, pero esta actividad nos hace esforzarnos de manera individual para beneficiar al grupo entero; además reforzamos lo trabajado y aprendemos nuevo vocabulario.

Activity 4

Part 3- Conversations

Objective: To become familiar with different oral expressions and cultural references used in conversations.

Teacher-designed material

On sheet of papers the students form short conversations to be performed by their classmates.

Procedure

Students take notes from the board of the main oral and everyday expressions. Then they watch a pair of videos and from there they must identify and take notes on these familiar expressions and the ones they recognize. Then, some of them write them on the board and read them aloud.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NV3HFugHGHg

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx3JntqOxd0

Then, in small groups, students form ICFES questions about conversations using the expressions worked and I walk around them and answer any possible questions.

The sociolinguistic and the discourse competences are involved in this type of activity; it is useful to develop in the students the ability to use the language in

specific social interactions, that is required by the Saber 11 exam in part 3, which consists of the selection of the appropriate answer to a specific question in a conversation.

Students' comments about the activity

1. Me parece muy productiva a la hora de trabajar esta clase de actividades para reforzar nuestro conocimiento y vocabulario, las expresiones nos ayudan también a la hora de conocer la cultura extranjera.
2. Con las actividades nos sentimos muy seguros, la profesora hace unas actividades muy buenas y además de eso las explica muy bien, nos aclara todas nuestras dudas. Participamos mucho, nos apoyó mucho con los simulacros para poder obtener buenos resultados y cada día nos enseña algo innovador.

Activity 5

Part # 3 - Conversations

My own dialogues

Objective: To create short conversations in different situations in the target language.

Teacher-designed material

I take to class the oral expressions written on small colorful pieces of paper

Procedure

The students are organized in pairs, each pair chooses two pieces of paper I take to class, they all have a maximum of 5 minutes to complete and form a logic short oral intervention (conversation) similar to that of the Saber 11 exam

and to the last activity worked, they have to write it and then read it in front of their classmates.

When everyone has had their turn to come to the front, each pair must take out randomly a piece of paper with an oral expression and must create a short dialogue in an improvised way.

This activity is related to the relevance of the oral expressions and language cultural meaning used in particular recreated situations in small conversations, which involve the sociocultural and discourse competencies.

Students' comments about the activity

1. Me gustó la actividad por la interacción de todos los estudiantes en la actividad, nos ayuda a mejorar y ampliar el vocabulario y las expresiones. It was wonderful.
2. Me encantan las actividades de los diálogos porque reforzamos nuevo vocabulario y puedo comprender lo que dicen mis compañeros.

Activity 6

Part # 4/7 – Incomplete texts
Completing and comparing sentences

Objective: To reinforce grammar categories

Teacher-designed material

I present to the students some worksheets with some incomplete sentences in a different category, which talk about their context.

Procedure

The students must sit in pairs, I give them two photocopies with the same 15 incomplete sentences and they have to fill them out in the most appropriate

way, taking into account the grammatical categories and rules of the English language.

They give me one of the photocopies and then I exchange the work in three or four opportunities so that the students compare, analyze and evaluate the possible options and / or correct the possible mistakes made by their classmates.

At the end, some of the students read their sentences aloud in order to socialize their proposals.

This type of activity is useful because as I said before in parts 4/7 of the test, the students must complete a text with the appropriate word, so the grammatical knowledge (linguistic competence) of the students is tested, as well as the discourse competence in order to give coherence to the text.

Students' comments about the activity

1. Gracias a todas las actividades y dinámicas que ha realizado la profesora, me siento en capacidad de sacar un buen puntaje en las pruebas ICFES, ya que he aprendido nuevo vocabulario y hemos realizado muchos simulacros de años anteriores de manera intensiva. Todas sus actividades han sido muy divertidas y bastante participativas. La gran mayoría de los estudiantes hemos mejorado nuestra pronunciación. I love it.

Activity 7

Part # 5/6 – Reading comprehension (literal- inferential)

Stories around my context

Objective: students will create their own stories, underlining linking words.

Teacher-designed material

Authentic creation of student stories

Procedure

I ask the students to write individually a story in Spanish using as many connectors as possible.

After reading the stories we choose the best three ones. Later I translate them into English and in the next class they sit in pairs and I give them one of the stories randomly but with the empty connector spaces. The idea is that the students read and discuss about the story and fill in the spaces with the appropriate connectors.

In the second activity I give them the complete story (a different one from the one worked by them in the previous activity) but cut into small paragraphs, the idea is that the students look for the logical and coherent order of the story using the connectors and the sequence of the events.

The purpose of this activity is to encourage students to develop their ability to understand texts**.**

Students' comments about the activity

1. Very interesting, adquirimos vocabulario para cuando tengamos que enfrentarnos a un texto en inglés.
2. I think it`s positive since it helps me to learn to better learn, to improve my vocabulary and the understanding of texts.

My personal assessment

This kind of activities is very appropriate not only for the teaching and learning process but because the students feel motivated and self-confident to participate and to take risks. All the activities were enjoyable for the students because while reinforcing and learning specific vocabulary, expressions, grammar and strategies for reading comprehension. The implementation of the activities was very attractive for the students, since they allowed students to communicate in English with each other, they all had active participation and they had fun playing and working as a team and individually.

From my point of view, parts 5/6 are the most difficult in the Saber 11 exam, since they involve all the competences (linguistic, sociolinguistic, strategic and discourse) because the students need not only language knowledge but they required strategies and abilities to decode meaning to make a literal or

inferential reading. It is necessary to create much more activities during a long period time.

5.4 Post-test results

The results of the post test applied to both groups participating in this research (11-1 being the control group and 11-2 being the test group) are presented in this section.

Both groups took the same test in order to compare the results of this exam after having used the teacher-created material in the experimental group.

The post test, an actual Saber 11 exam offered by the ICFES, has the same structure used in the pretest. (See Attachments)

The test has a total of twenty questions. There are six parts in the test: part one (questions 101, 102 & 103), part 2 (questions 104,105 & 106), part 3 (questions 107,108 & 109), part 4 &7 (questions 110 to 114), and part 5 (questions 115 to 118) and part 6 (questions 119 &120).

Part 1: Control group

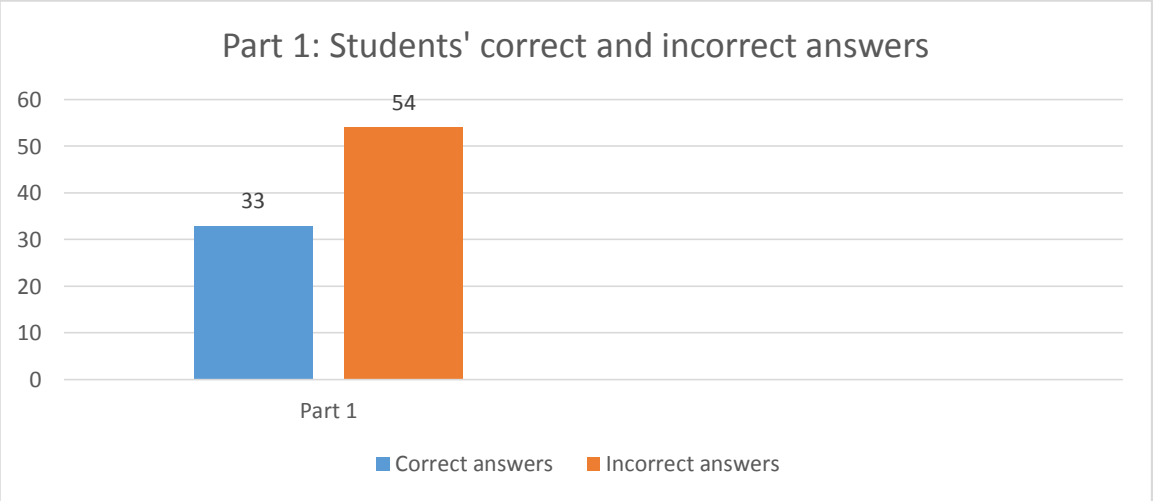


Figure 15. Post test control group's correct and incorrect answers in part 1

In this graph, it can be observed that the number of incorrect answers is almost double with respect to the number of correct answers, this implies that students

need to keep working on vocabulary building activities in order to achieve the expected performance in this section of the exam.

Part 1 Experimental group

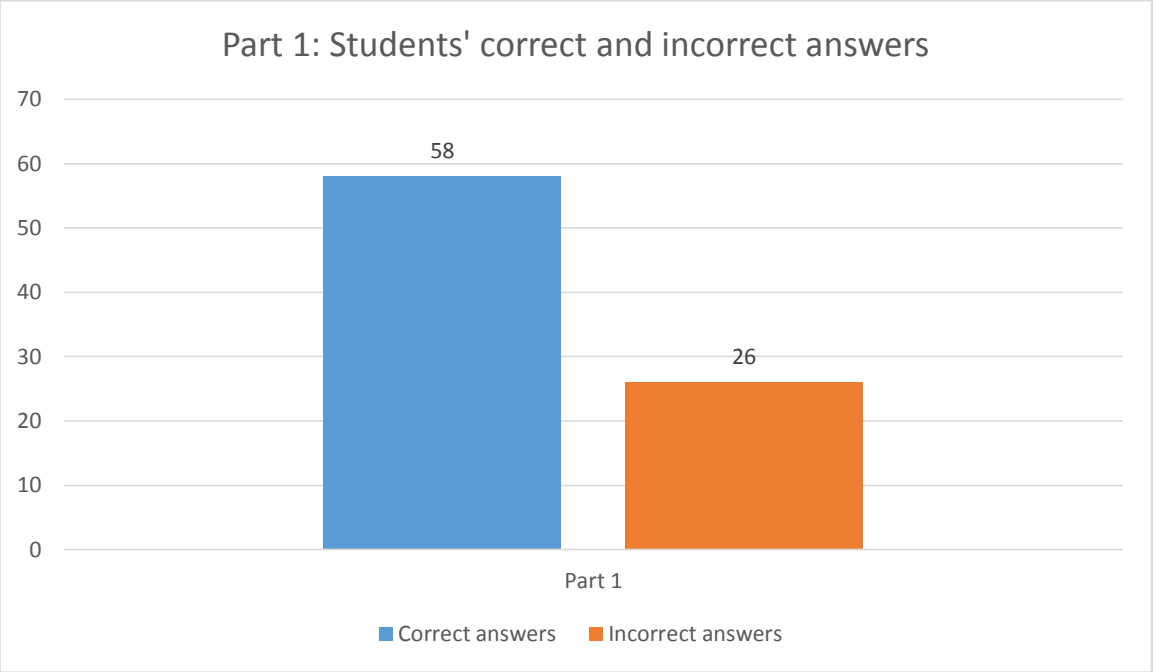


Figure 16. Post test experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in part 1

The graph shows the students' performance in part 1 of the exam after having used the teacher created materials. The results of this part show that the number of correct answers is almost three times the number of incorrect ones.

Part 2 Control group

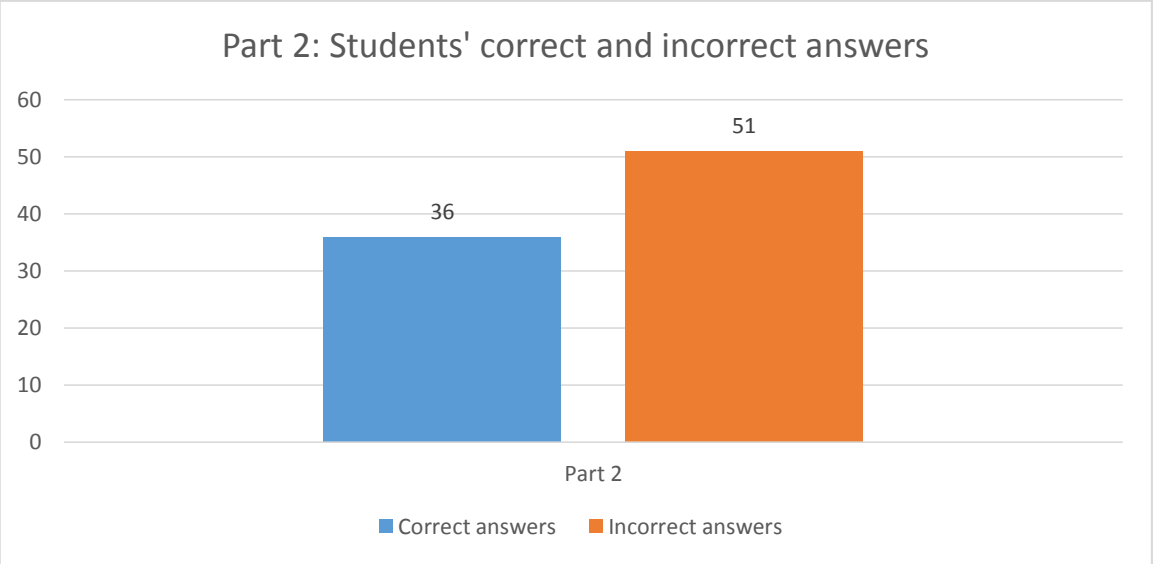


Figure 17. Post test control group's correct and incorrect answers in part 2

The graph shows that in the control group, the number of incorrect answers in part 2 is very high. This could be explained by the fact that the control group did not receive any treatment to improve their language competences in the exam.

Part 2 Experimental group

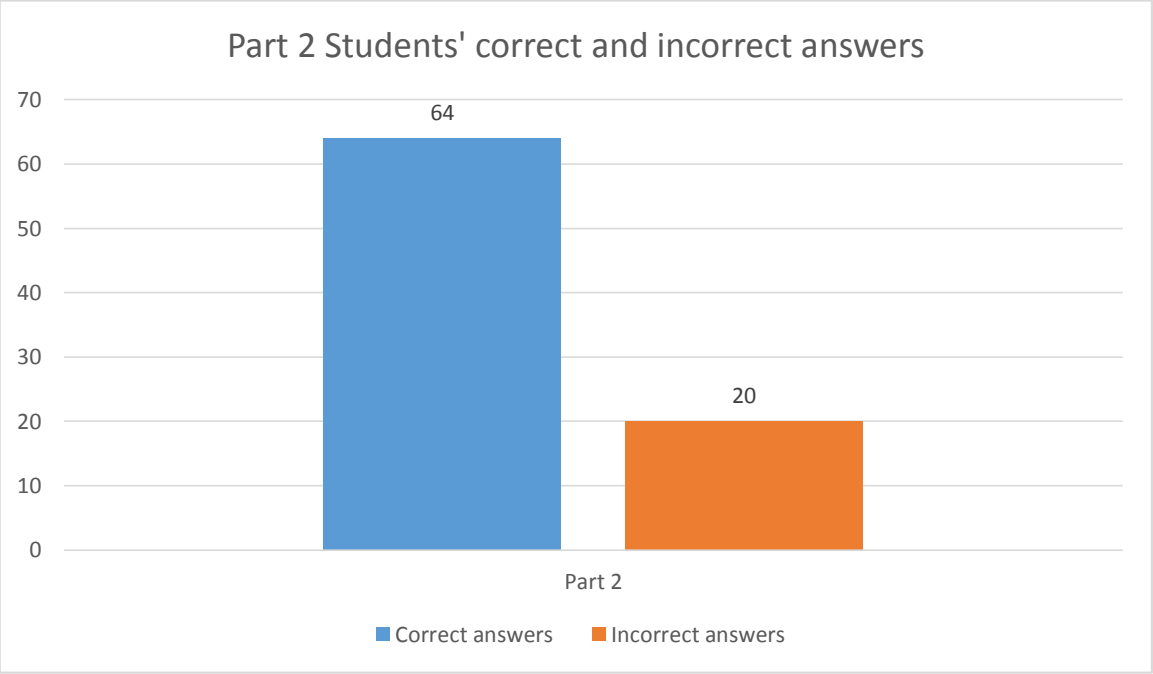


Figure 18. Post test experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in part 2

It can be evidenced that the use of teacher- created materials had a positive impact on the communicative competence of the test group students. The

number of correct answers is three times higher than the number of incorrect answers.

Part 3 Control group

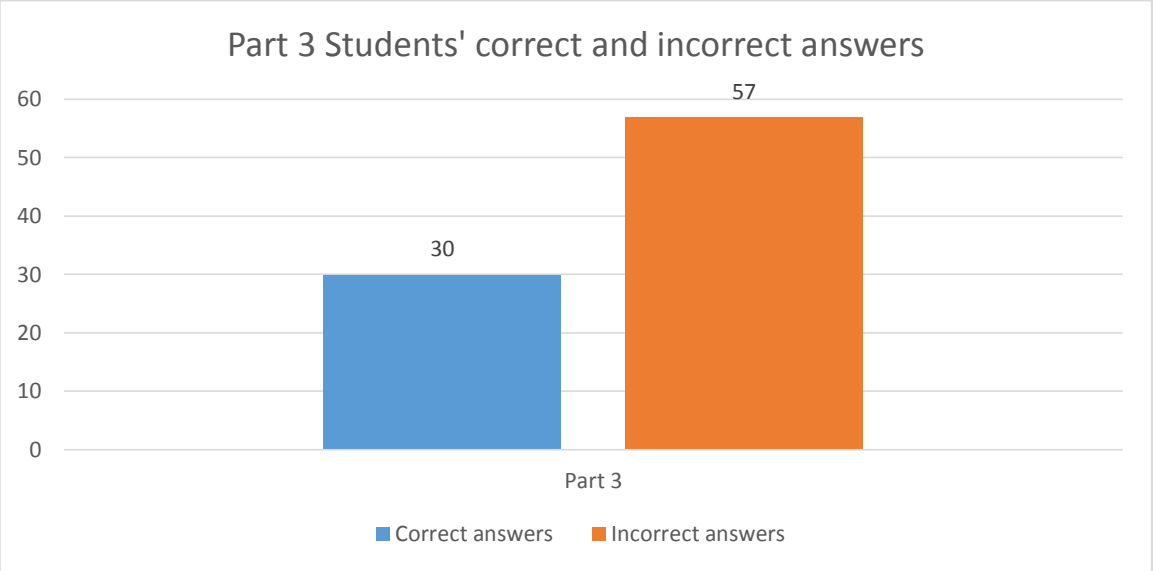


Figure 19. Post test control group's correct and incorrect answers in part 3

Once again, the results of the control group show a higher number of incorrect answers. Students' performance in this part of the test shows that it is necessary to help them to improve their communicative competence with usual oral expressions through strategies and materials in order to achieve better results.

Part 3 Experimental group

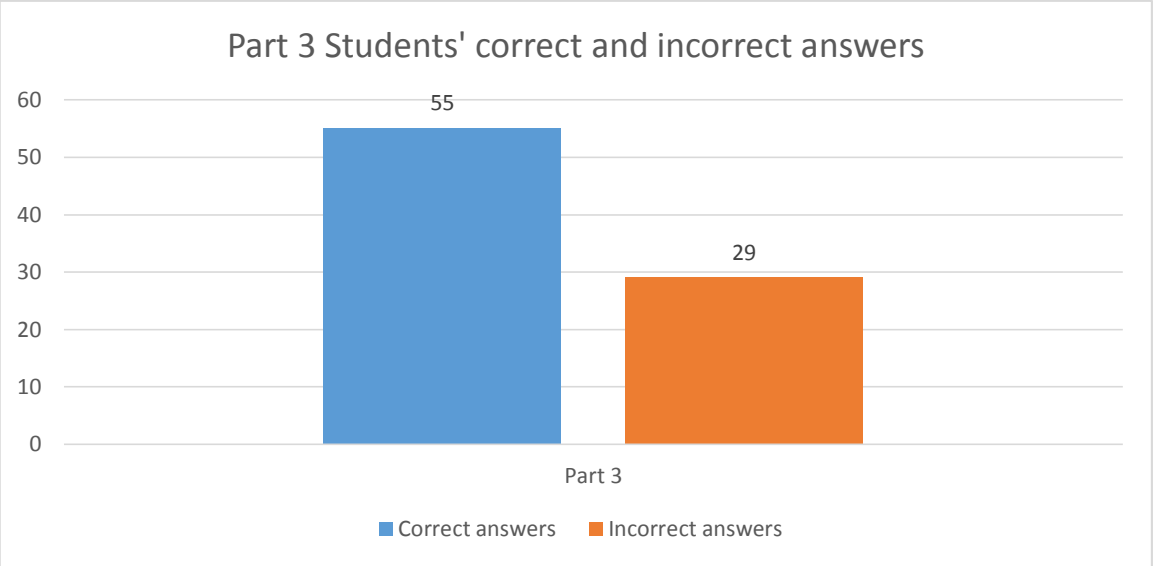


Figure 20. Post test experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in part 3

The results of part 3 of the exam in the experimental group confirm the positive impact of the use of teacher-created materials in the improvement of the students' communicative competence.

Parts 4 & 7 Control Group

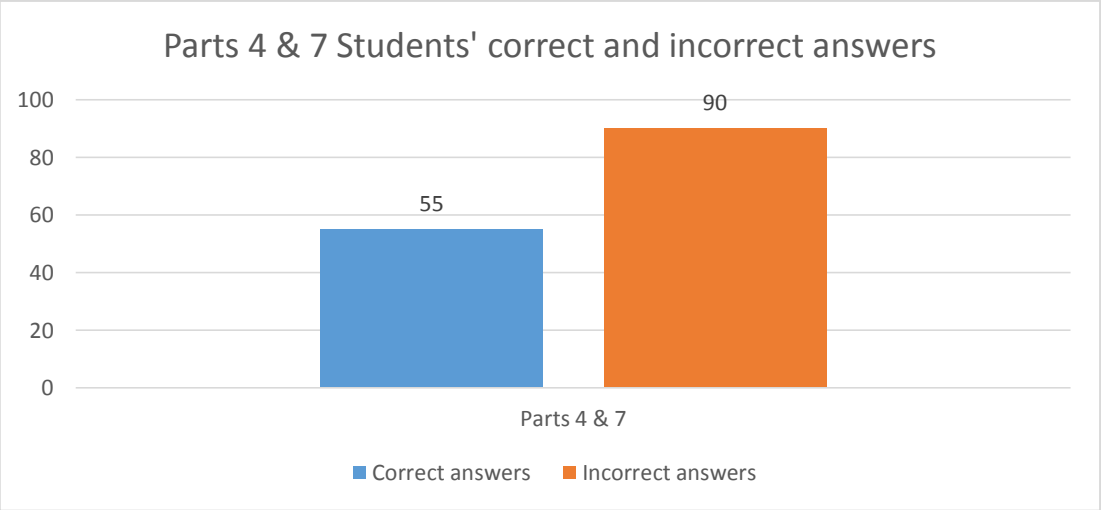


Figure 21. Post test control group's correct and incorrect answers in part 4 & 7

The graph shows that, in the control group, the number of incorrect answers for parts 4 and 7 of the test is higher than the number of correct answers. In the Saber 11 exam parts 4 & 7 require students to complete a text with the correct word. Both the linguistic competence and knowledge of vocabulary are necessary to get good results in these sections.

Parts 4 & 7 Experimental group

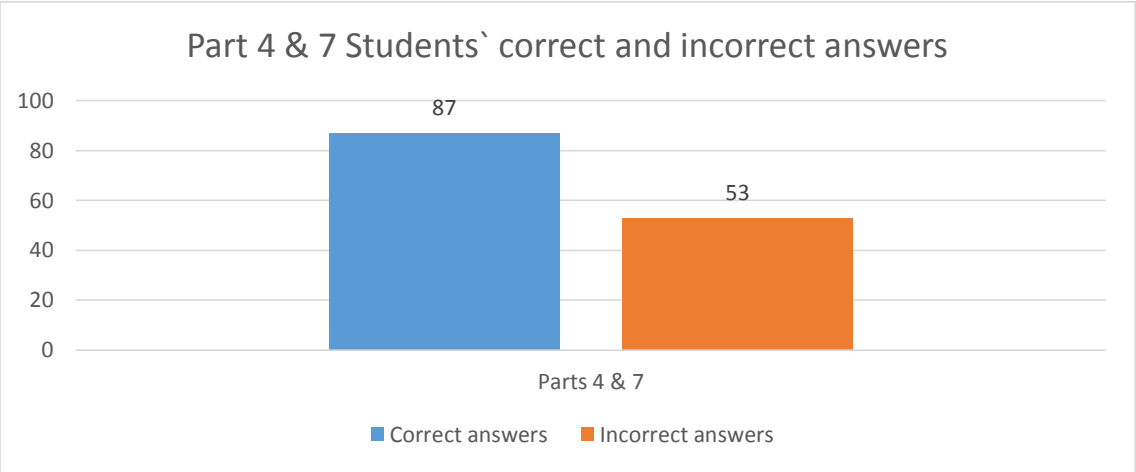


Figure 22. Post test experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in part 4 & 7

In these sections, the results of the test group in the exam show that there is a better performance of the students in the linguistic competence (grammar and vocabulary), due to the use of teacher- created materials in the English class.

Part 5 Control group

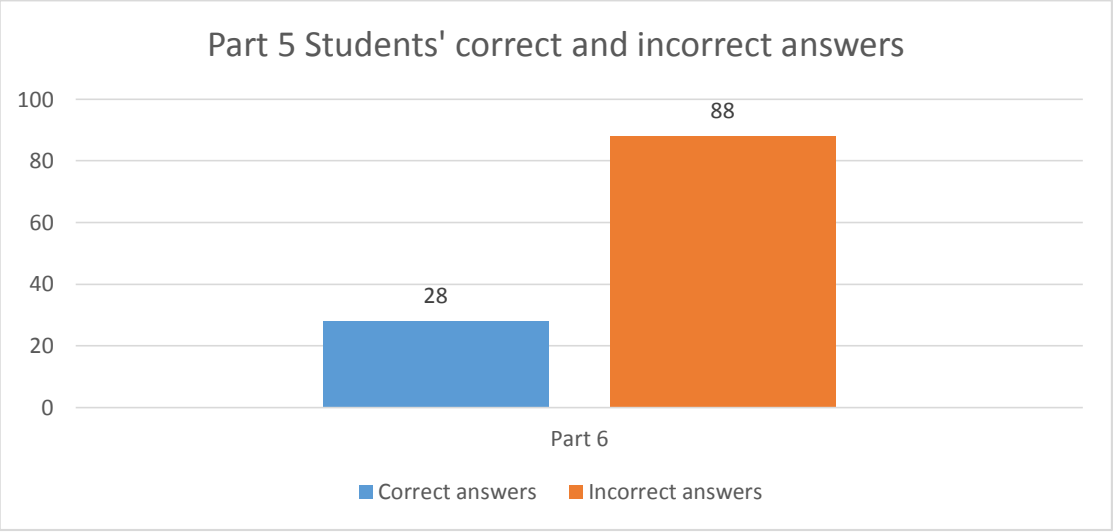


Figure 23. Post test control group's correct and incorrect answers in part 5

In this section of the test, the control group presents a high number of incorrect answers, it is evident that reading comprehension is causing difficulties in the students and it shows that students require some treatment in order to improve their linguistic and discourse competences specifically.

Part 5 Test group

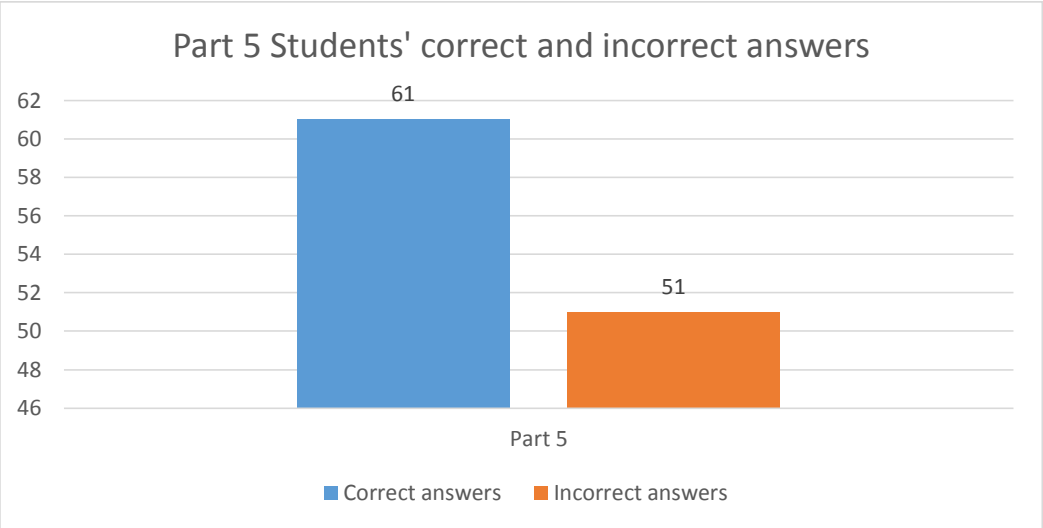


Figure 24. Post test experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in part 5

The results of part 5 in the test group show a greater number of correct answers in spite of the difficulty of the exam section. The use of texts with familiar topics and the activities designed by the researcher resulted in an improvement of the reading comprehension skills of the students as reflected in these outcomes.

Part 6 Control group

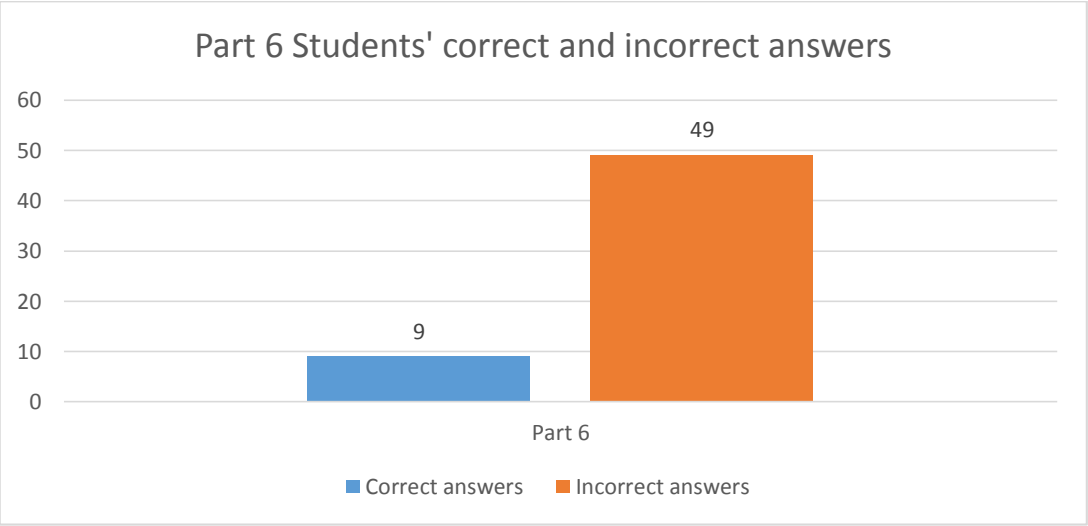


Figure 25. Post test control group's correct and incorrect answers in part 6

In part 6 of the Saber 11 exam, the control group had nine correct answers and 49 incorrect ones. This could be related to the difficulty of the questions (inferential reading comprehension).

Part 6 Experimental group

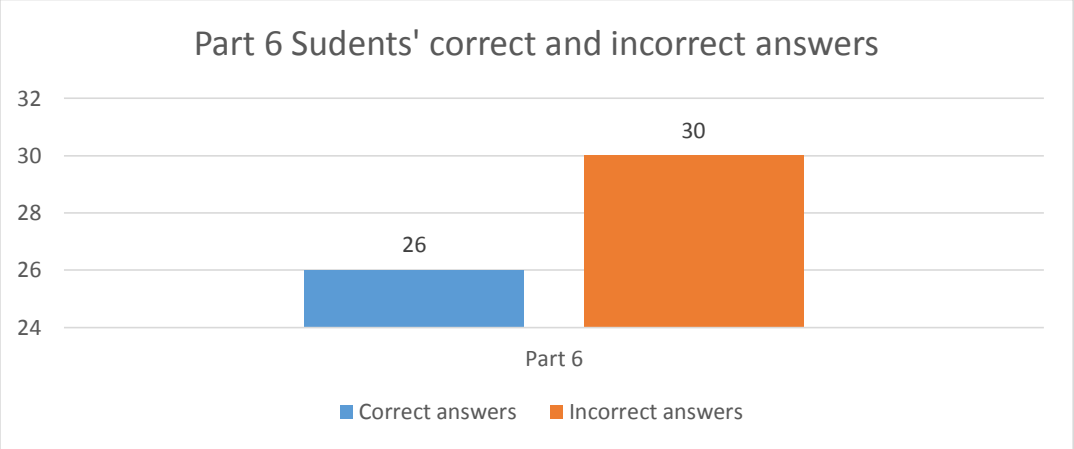


Figure 26. Post test experimental group's correct and incorrect answers in part 6

In the test group, the results in part 6 of the exam are better compared to the ones in the control group. One of the main reasons for this result is that the researcher created and used materials to tackle reading comprehension in the target language.

The following graphs show the total of correct and incorrect answers in each group.

Control group 11-1

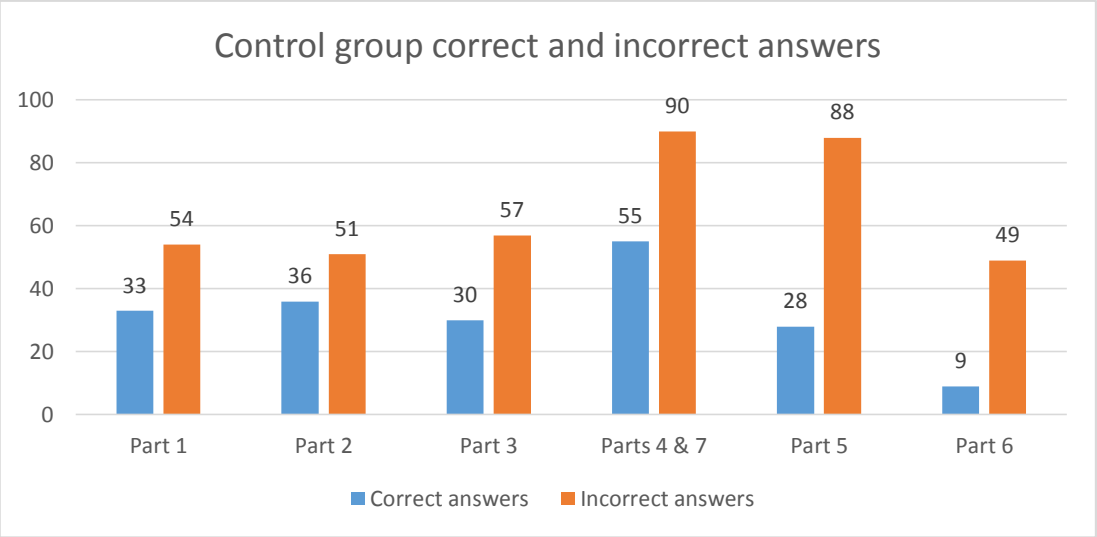


Figure 27. Control group's total correct and incorrect answers

Experimental group 11-2

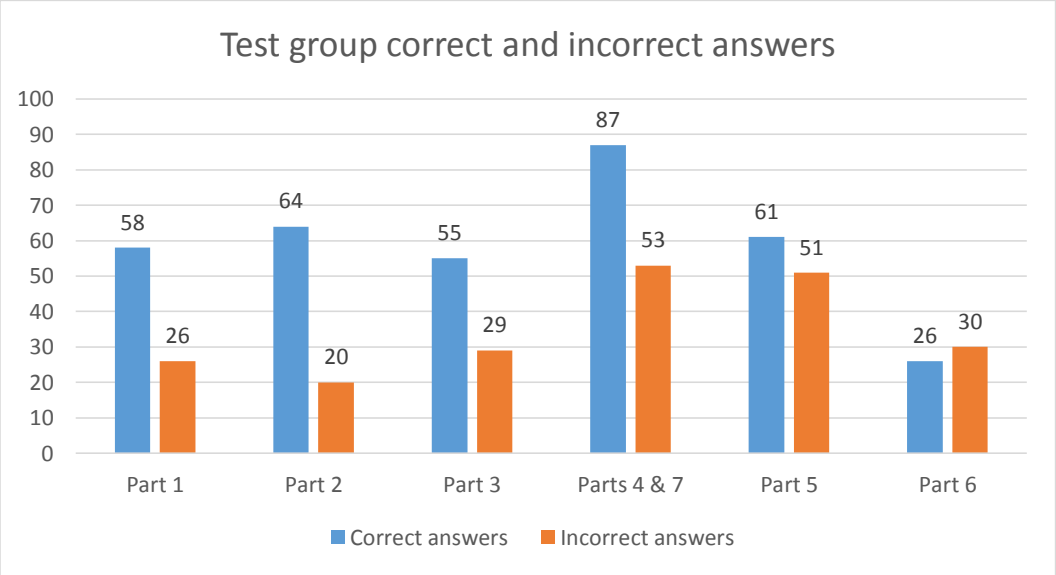


Figure 28. Experimental group's total correct and incorrect answers

Post test comparative chart- control and test groups of correct answers

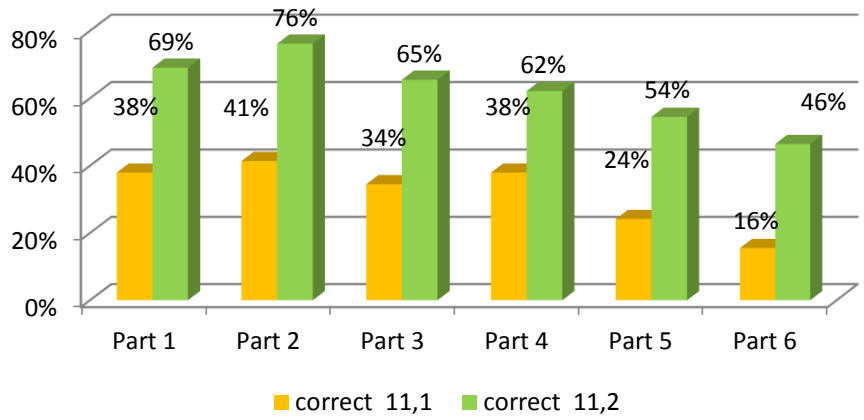


Figure 29. Control and experimental groups' comparative chart of correct answers

This chart illustrates a general comparison of the percentages in the performance obtained in the post test to affirm that there was improvement in the participants who received the intervention with the created-teaching material in relation to those who only took a normal English class.

It can be observed that the number of correct answers in the test group is higher than the number of correct answers in the control group. The main reason for this outcome is the use of teacher-created materials to develop communicative competence in eleventh grade students at the Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona; it means to develop the linguistic competence where students know how to use grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and the language structure, the sociolinguistic competence to know social rules of language, the strategic competence to know how to repair or overcome language gaps and the discourse competence to know patterns of organizations to create and interpret cohesive texts, phrases or conversations.

By revealing the importance of created materials, teachers should pay careful attention to the educational aids, and implement strategies according to our context, students` interest and needs that contribute to the good development of students` abilities. That way, the results in the external tests (Saber 11 for example) can be improved. The creation of materials that focus on specific aspects of the language is an important aspect that can change the students' results in the standardized tests.

5.5 Survey analysis

A survey was designed and applied to the experimental group to find out learners' perceptions towards the implementation of created-teaching materials for the improvement of English results in Saber 11 exam. The survey was administered at the end of the implementation of the created-teaching materials to 28 students from 11-2.

The survey questions were written in Spanish to facilitate and elicit students' real thoughts and to make them feel calm and sure when responding; consequently, the graphs below show the original questions in Spanish. In the survey, the data reveal that they were really willing and motivated in practicing and improving their performance in the results of the Saber 11 exam through the application of the material taken to the English class.

Question 1

¿Cómo califica usted los contenidos trabajados durante la implementación del material?

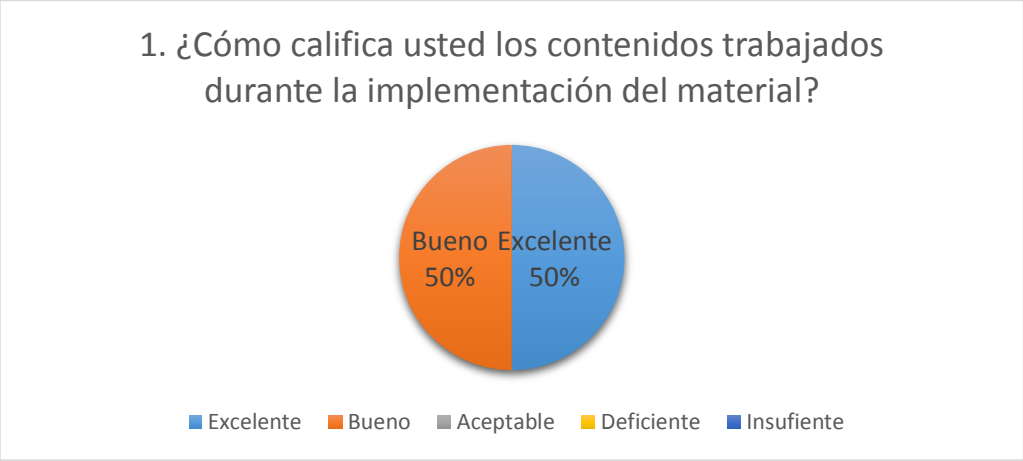


Figure 30. Content quality

It can be observed that 14 students argue that the contents worked during the implementation activities are excellent and the other 14 said they are good. All answers are positive; there were not even acceptable answers.

Question 2

¿Cómo califica usted la metodología utilizada durante la implementación del material?

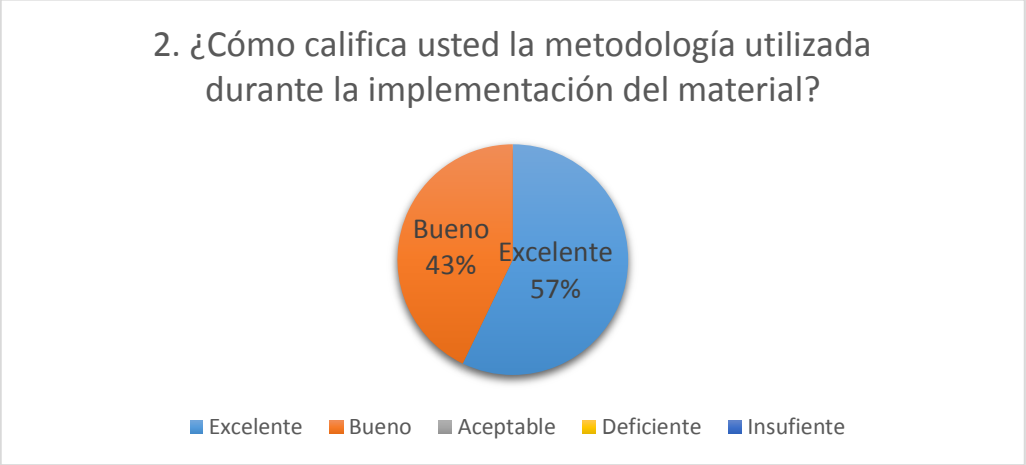


Figure 31. Methodology assessment

The results show that 16 students consider that the methodology used to implement the material is excellent and 12 students consider it is good. That is, the response is fundamentally positive.

Question 3

¿Cómo califica usted la creatividad e innovación de los materiales creados por la docente?

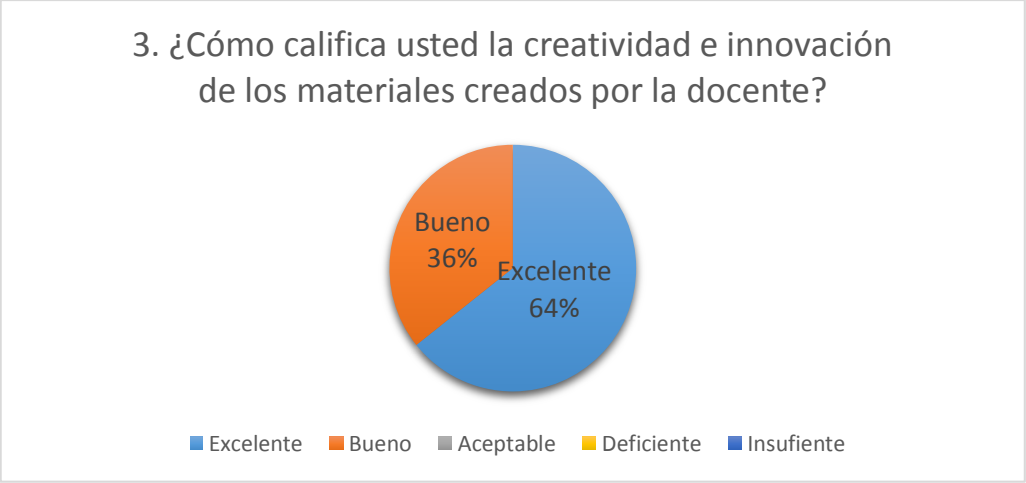


Figure 32. Creativity and innovation assessment

Figure 32 portrays the learners' answers about the creativity and innovation on the teaching material worked in class, it can be observed that 18 students consider it is excellent and 10 consider it is good.

Question 4

¿Cómo califica usted el ambiente del aula y el trabajo en equipo durante la implementación del material?

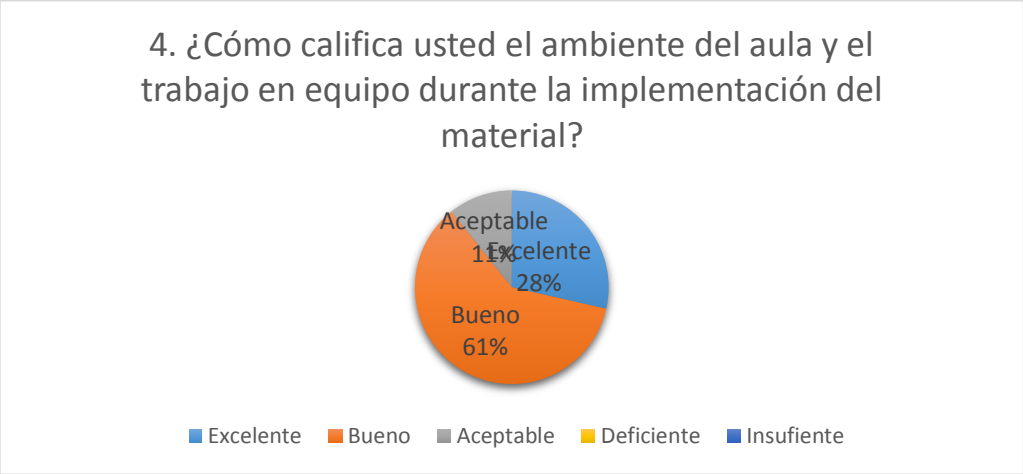


Figure 33. Class environment and team work assessment

Figure 33 illustrates the different students' answers about the classroom environment and the cooperative work during the implementation of the created materials in class, 17 students think the classroom environment was excellent and 8 more say it was good; meanwhile, only 3 students marked acceptable in this question.

Question 5

¿Cómo califica usted la preparación y calidad del material trabajado en clase?

Figure 34. Preparation and quality of materials assessment

Figure 34 shows that 15 students consider excellent and 13 students good the preparation and the materials` quality worked in class.

Question 6

¿Cómo califica usted las oportunidades para participar en las actividades durante la aplicación del material?

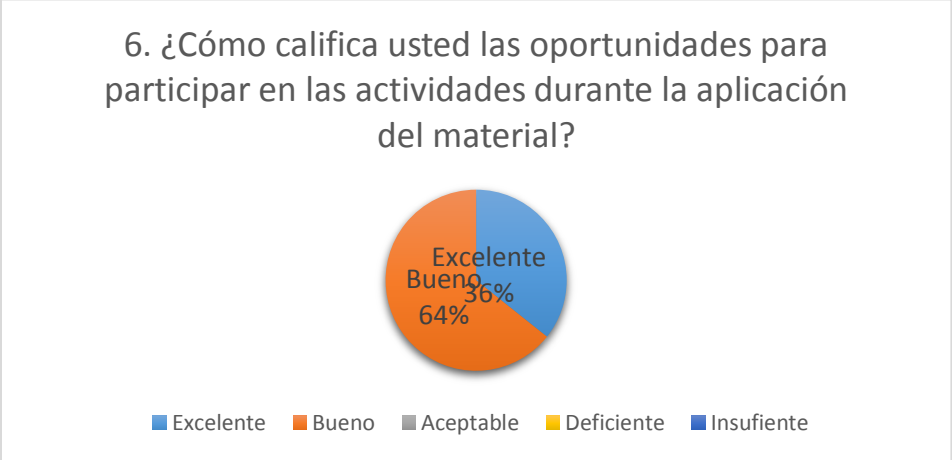


Figure 35. Participation opportunities assessment

In figure 35 it can be observed that 10 students rate excellent the opportunities to participate in the activities during the material implementation and 18 students rate good.

Question 7

¿Cómo califica usted su disposición para trabajar con el material llevado a clase?

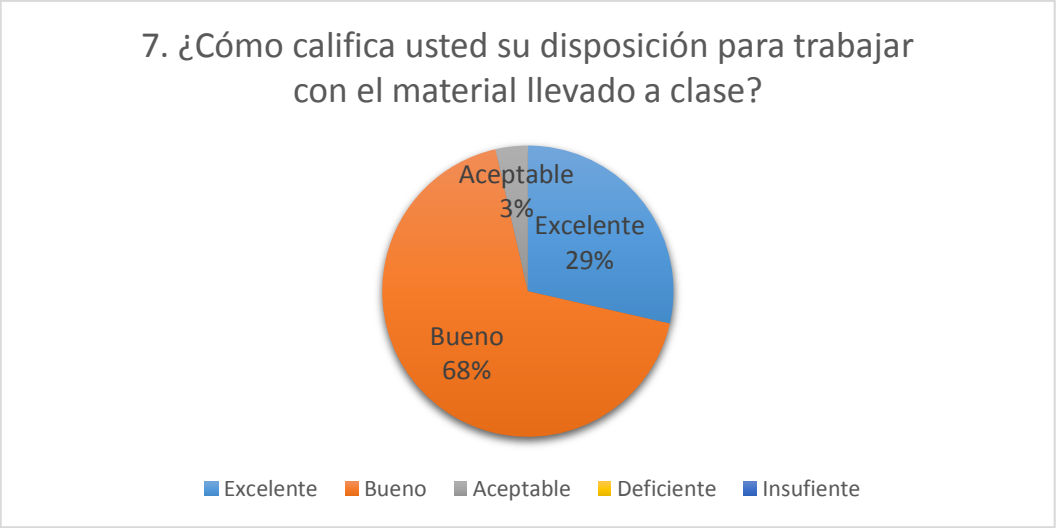


Figure 36. Willingness to work with the material

In figure 36 the majority of respondents (19 students) stated that the willingness to work with the material taken to class was good, eight more considered it was excellent and at the same time one student said it was acceptable.

Question 8

¿Cómo califica usted el tiempo dedicado a trabajar con el material creado por la docente?

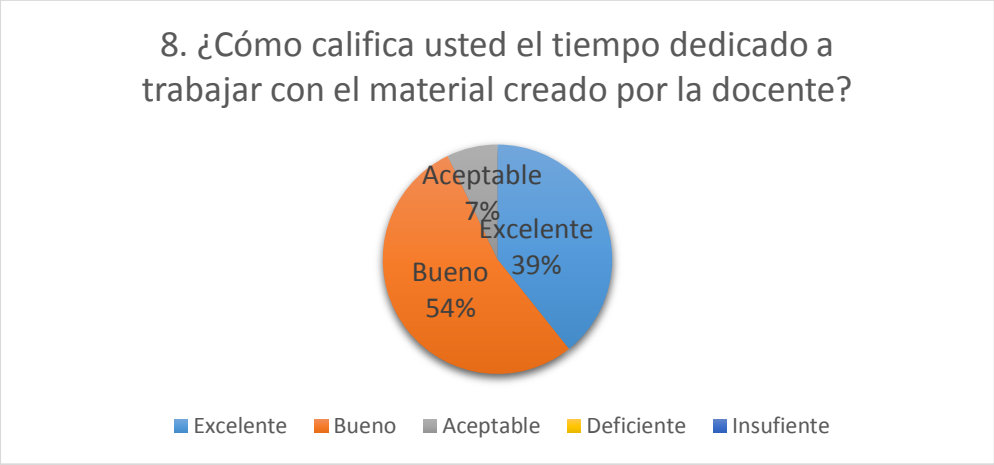


Figure 37. Time dedicated to work with the material

Figure 37 shows how students consider the time dedicated to implement these activities, 15 responders say the time is ok, while 11 estimate it is excellent, nevertheless 2 students consider it is acceptable and they clarify that this kind of interventions should be done from lower levels.

Question 9

¿Cómo califica usted las instrucciones ofrecidas por la docente durante la implementación de las actividades?

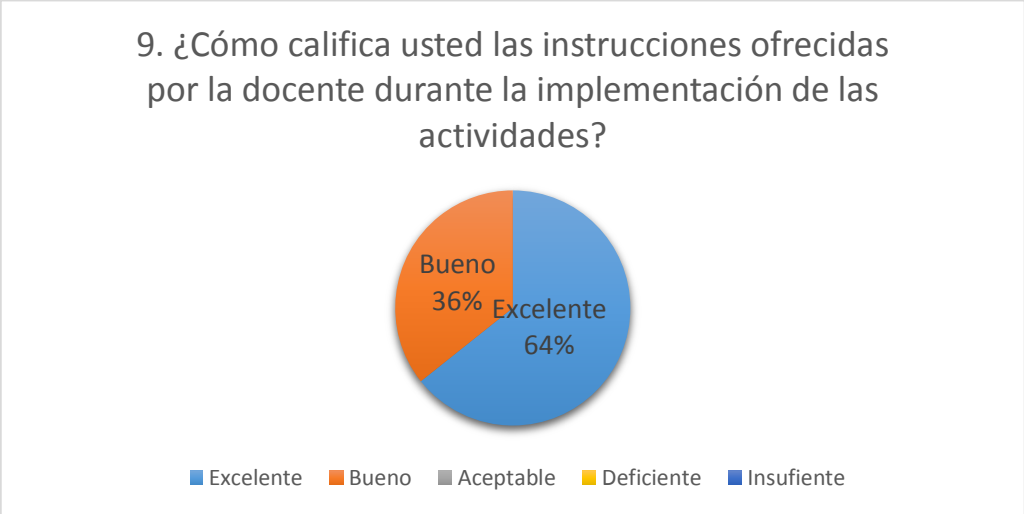


Figure 38. Instructions assessment

As can be seen in figure 38 the majority of students 18, consider that the instructions given by the teacher during the activities implementation were excellent and 10 students think the instructions were good.

Question 10

¿Cómo califica usted la experiencia adquirida durante el trabajo con el material para mejorar los resultados de la prueba Saber 11?

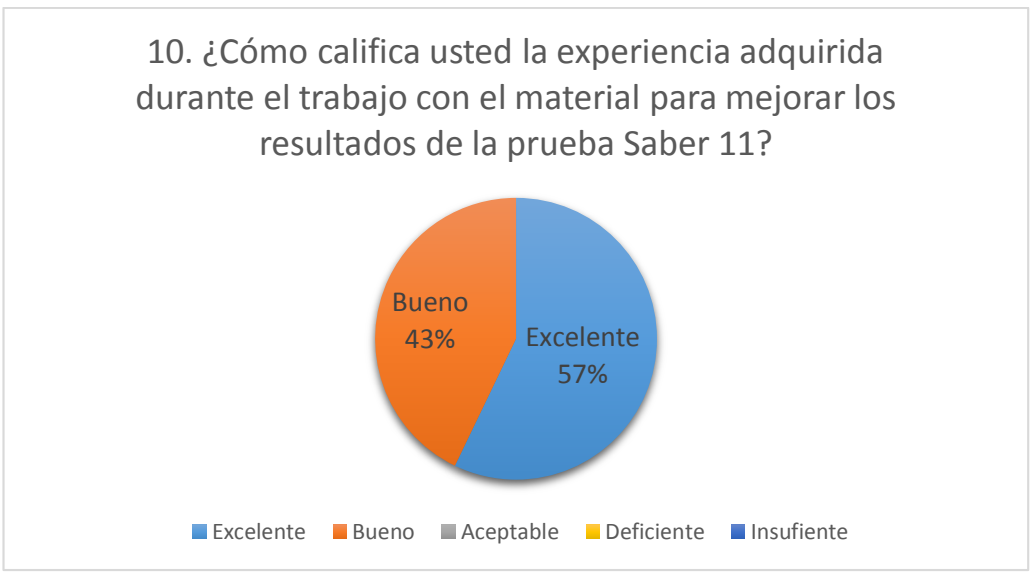


Figure 39. Overall experience assessment

As shown in figure 39 most of the students rate satisfactory the experience acquired during the implementation of the created material, 16 students rate excellent and 12 rate as good.

Taking into account the students' survey answers about different aspects in the implementation of the activities in the English classes, it is evident that the students had the willingness and interest to work, most of them point out as positive the content and methodology used in those activities, they believe that the material is very useful to develop their communicative competence to take the external tests, while some of them point out the need to work these activities for a much longer period.

5.6 Discussion

In order to establish a relationship between the findings of the current study, previous studies done in Colombia and other countries and the theory about the development of the communicative competence and the creation of teaching materials, a process of triangulation is used.

Triangulation is defined as the use of various theories, data or methods that allow the understanding of a phenomenon (Bryman, n.d). The following figure will be used to show the sources of data that will be used for the process of triangulation in the current study.

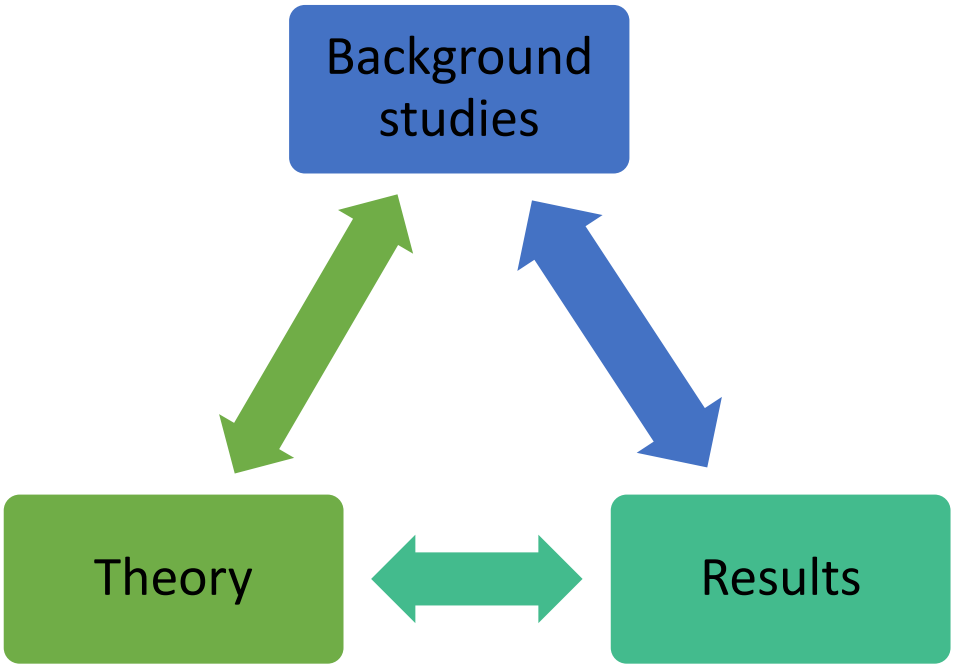


Figure 40. Triangulation data sources

As presented in the previous chapter, the use of teacher-created materials showed positive results for the improvement of the communicative competence of eleventh grade students at Inmacuada Concepcion School in Villagorgona.

The study done by Alonso, Díaz, Martínez, Mayora, Moreno, Ochoa and Roldán (2016) shows the deficiencies of students who take the Saber 11 exam from schools in Cali, stating that the low results in this test compared to the national established goal (students taking the Saber 11 exam should reach B1). The authors of this study consider that the government has developed different projects since 2004 with the National Bilingualism Program, but the results have not been positive especially in the public schools, just the same context in which this research project was carried out. Although the results presented by Alonso et al (2016) differ from the results obtained in the current research, efforts should be made to keep improving the students' level of English and their communicative competence.

> Visto de esta manera, puede inferirse que en los últimos 5 años se han venido desarrollando acciones para impulsar el bilingüismo en la ciudad de Cali y que gracias a estas acciones, la ciudad avanzó de un porcentaje de apenas 5,4 %

> de estudiantes en los niveles B1 y B+ en el 2009 a un total de 10,3 % en el 2014. (Alonso et al, 2016:54)

In the current research project, the students' communicative competence was improved through the implementation of teacher created materials. Results show that the test group improved 30 % in average. This results obtained at Inmaculada Concepcion School may be taken as a reference to other institutions in Valle del Cauca at the public level where the results compared to the private institutions are better. Alonso et al (2016) show that private schools have better results in the Saber 11 exam due to different factors such as: more teaching hours of the target language, more materials and other resources including electronic devices and access to internet and better opportunities to use the language outside the classroom. At the school where the research project was conducted, students have just two hours of English a week, but there are not enough materials and teaching resources to be used in the EFL class. In addition, students belong to a low social class with few opportunities to practice the language outside the classroom. This is also reported by Alonso et al (2016).

Por otro lado, las IEO se ven enfrentadas a trabajar en condiciones limitadas, tanto por que no cuentan con materiales suficientes para todos los alumnos, como porque los estudiantes no cuentan con los recursos para adquirirlos ellos mismos (opuesto a lo que sucede en los colegios privados) (p. 59).

Another study presents an additional factor that affects the students' results in the Saber exam: Motivation. Although the current research did not consider the influence of motivation in the students' performance in the standardized test. Other authors state in their study the influence of motivation in the results.

> Unas de las grandes problemáticas que se observan en gran parte de la población son el poco interés y motivación frente a las labores escolares derivando una escasa comprensión lectora en las diferentes áreas del conocimiento y la poca interpretación, lo que hace que no existan los resultados esperados en las pruebas saber para la Institución. (Sánchez & Muñoz, 2014: 79)

Sánchez and Muñoz (2014) in their study also consider of a greater help the use of different methodologies and didactic resources to help students reach better results in the Saber exams. This is one of the main reasons why the researcher of the current study decided to create her own materials to improve the communicative competence of students at Inmaculada Concepcion School. The results obtained in the present paper demonstrate that the use of teacher-created materials improved the level of different competences regarding the foreign language, especially those related to vocabulary (linguistic and sociolinguistic competence). More needs to be done in terms of the reading comprehension skills in the institution since this competence had positive results but not in the same percentage as the rest of the components of the communicative competence.

Finally, the research done by Lopez (2015) presents similar results compared to the current study in the students' opinions and perceptions on the use of materials. Lopez showed that students were engaged in the EFL class as reported in his paper that students were motivated and focused in class. In the current research project, students reacted positively to the activities and materials used as reported in the survey and their comments on each class. Some of the students' comments on this issue were:

Student X: I think that the teacher`s activities son muy innovadoras e impulsan la capacidad del estudiante de una manera creativa en el área de inglés. Por ejemplo la actividad sobre recorrer la ciudad mediante una serie de indicaciones de forma didáctica fomenta el desarrollo intelectual del educando de una manera activa y creativa, además de hacerlo en comunidad, socializando con los compañeros. Is wonderful.

Student Y: Pues me parece una buena forma de ayudarnos a repasar para el ICFES, pues es una forma muy dinámica.

At the same time, students remark the usefulness of the activities for their preparation for the Saber 11 exam.

Student Z: Un proceso gratificante al poder tener una manera didáctica de lo trabajado con la teacher in class. Hago inferencia en que mis conocimientos actuales en comparación a los llevados antes de iniciar el proceso son más

amplios y concretos, los conocimientos otorgados por las diferentes actividades en especial la del camino hacia un lugar específico nos fortalecen mucho para la prueba saber.

In fact, the actual 2019 results of the SABER 11 exam show that the intervention did have an impact on the performance of the students, as can be seen in the following figure.

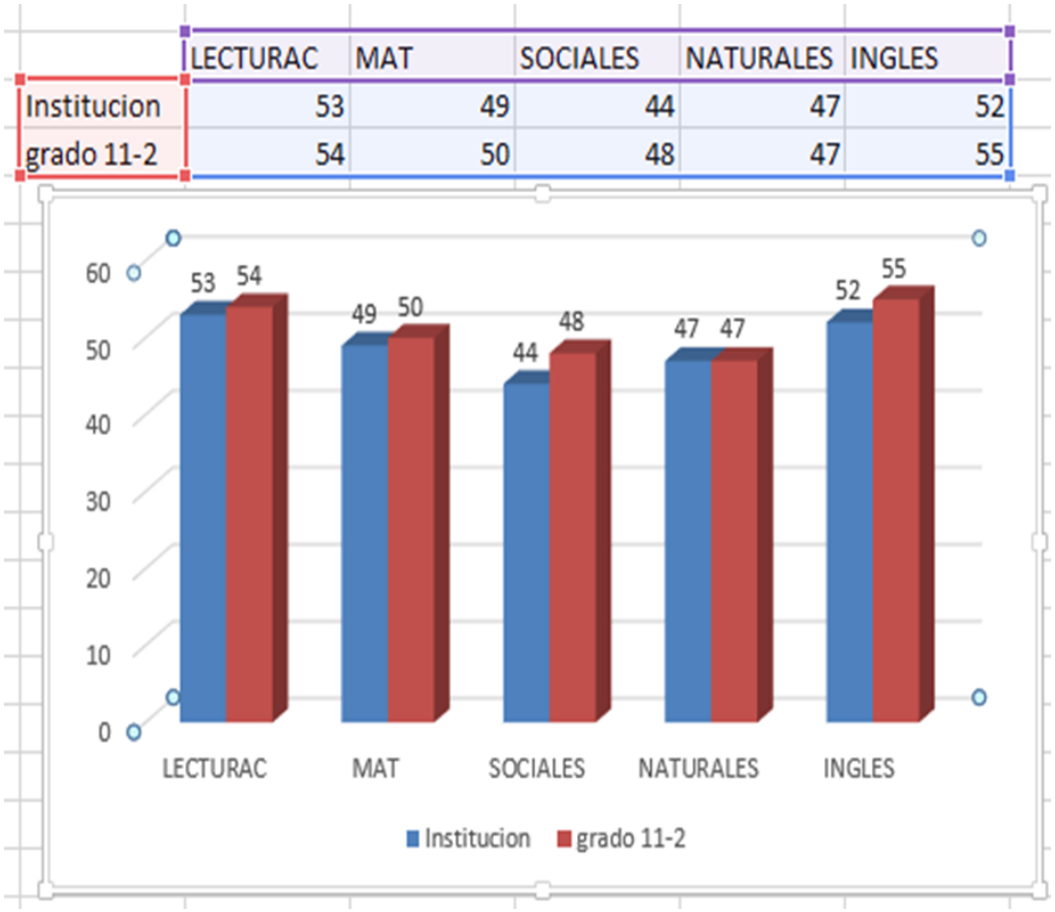


Figure 41. SABER 11 test results

Although the results shown are positive, it might be expected that with the systematic implementation of activities as the ones proposed here, students will be able to better their results significantly. The effort to raise the performance level of students must be steady and should be assessed in diverse points during its implementation to pick and choose the factors, activities and approaches that fit best this particular community. Also, the coordination with

other teacher from the area is crucial to design a common strategy that benefits all.

5. Conclusions

With the purpose of responding to the general objective set out in this study: to improve the communicative competence in 11th grade students at the Inmaculada Concepcion School in Villagorgona - Candelaria in the English standardized test through the implementation of teacher-created materials. It can be said that the use of this kind of teaching material during these fourteen sessions had a positive impact for the improvement of English results in Saber 11 exam. Evidence in support of this position can be found in the analysis and comparison between the pretest and the post test; this is observed when the students from the experimental group showed gradual and greater improvements in their communicative competence performance. That is to say, they got better input about linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competences.

Taking everything into consideration I can say that teaching English requires changes in the methodological strategies, so that students are motivated to participate in the learning process, and although this study showed how the use of the created material contributed to the improvement of communicative competence in general, it is also necessary to show that part 6, the inferential part, was not improved in the same proportion as in the other parts of the test, a reason behind this, is that it is a skill that requires more systematic work over a longer period, however, the experimental group got greater improvement over the control group.

In light of this evidence, it is imperative to increase the English class hours in public institutions, because, in my case for example, I just have two hours a week; but we, ESL teachers need to be aware that more teaching does not equal more learning, so we must invest significant hours in the teaching learning process. So, what I would suggest is that we should dedicate to significantly increase learning time, planning and performing classes from different approaches to take into account the students' learning styles, offering them the opportunity to cultivate intercultural communication.

It can be deduced from the results of the control group in the post test that it is not enough a normal English class without the direct intervention and training if the idea is to focus on getting better results in the Saber 11 exam, because on the contrary they will only obtain the normal learning outcomes derived from a traditional class.

I would like to finish by emphasizing that teachers should create materials to make learning more meaningful and effective, because it is easier just to photocopy a book or download a worksheet and use them as a resource in the English class, and although this may be done, we need to have in mind that the commercial materials that are available in the market do not take into account our students' characteristics and context; nonetheless, we can use this kind of material but trying to adapt it to our context.

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Annexes

Annex 1 - PRE TEST

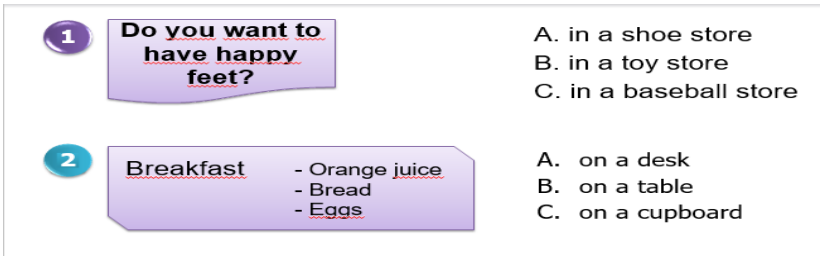
STUDENT`S NAME:

_____ 11-

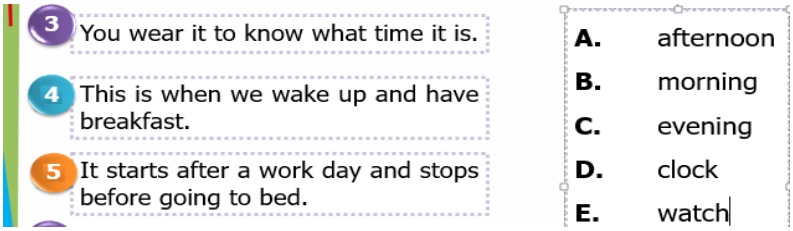
DATE: _____

TEACHER`S NAME: **Marly Carvajal Payan**

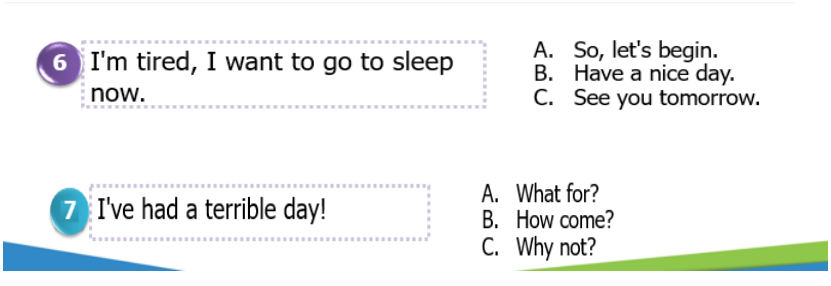
PART 1- Where can we see these advertisements



PART 2- Match the description with the definition



PART 3- Complete the conversations



PART 4/7 Choose the correct word to complete the text

The Apple

An apple is good for one's health, has important vitamins and minerals, and also (0) _____to clean one´s teeth after a meal. No other fruit has such good things for your body. (8)_____, it is not surprising that the apple is known (9) _____ the "king" of all fruits.

The Romans helped greatly in (10) _____the apple trees in European lands. Each time the Romans traveled around a country, they always (11) _____ apple seeds and planted (12) _____. They also carried the apple to England. The apple was brought to America (13) _____ the first explorers from Europe.

The Americans eat (14) _____ apples and apple cakes than any other people and (15) _____ two things have become American National foods.

8	A.	Because	B.	So	C.	But
9	A.	till	B.	as	C.	up
10	A.	growing	B.	grew	C.	grown
11	A.	takes	B.	taking	C.	took
12	A.	theirs	B.	them	C.	themselves
13	A.	on	B.	of	C.	by
14	A.	many	B.	most	C.	more
15	A.	these	B.	this	C.	those

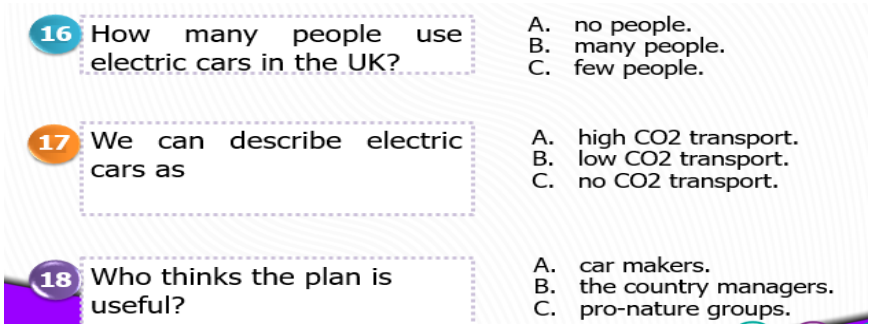
PART 5- Choose the correct answer according to the text

Tomorrow's cars

CO_2 a gas that is part of the atmosphere, is important for many parts of nature like plants, as it helps them make their own food. We make CO_2 when we use petrol cars. This is now dangerous for our world because these cars have sent a lot of CO_2 into the air. Then, using electric cars instead of petrol cars is one excellent way to stop problems like changes in the weather. In the United Kingdom not many cars are electric; so the government; those who are the managers of the country, believes there is a lot to do to make electric cars a good change and nave a better world to live in. They also believe that it will help the UK become the first country in the world to make cars that send much less CO_2 into the air.

Some pro-nature groups that work to make the world better believe this plan will not work and say that it is too late to stop CO_2 from petrol cars.

In the past two years, the British government has spent billions of pounds studying how to make electric cars and how to make the British use them. Now they are ready to help companies make more electric cars and less petrol ones and hybrid cars, which work with both petrol and electricity.



Annex 2 - POST TEST

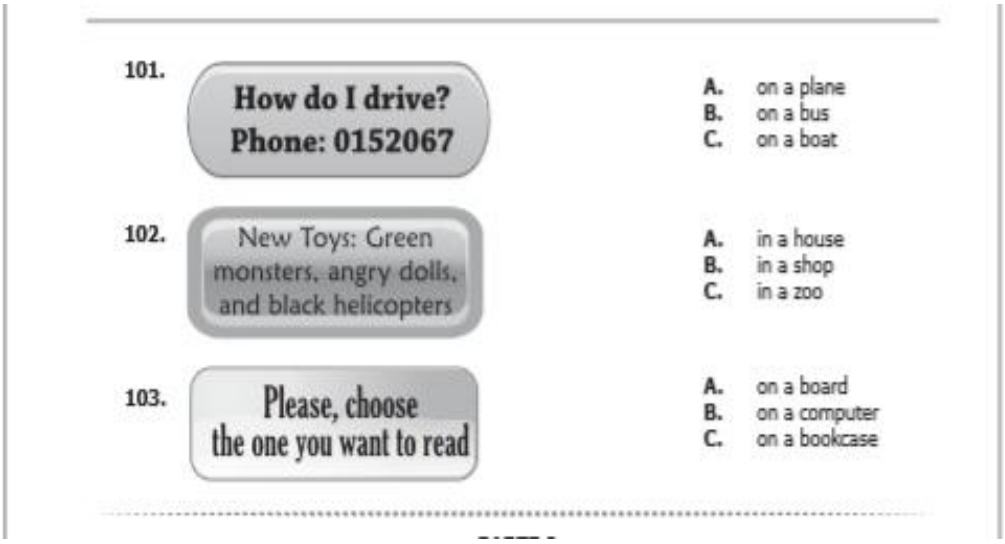
STUDENT`S

NAME:_____ 11-

DATE:_____

TEACHER: MARLY CARVAJAL PAYAN

PART 1- Where can you find these advertisements



PART 2 – Match the description to the definition

104. People drive it on a road and it carries big things.

105. This is for only one or two people to go by road.

106. Many people fly on it to go to a place.

A. bike
B. boat
C. bus
D. helicopter
E. motorbike
F. plane
G. truck
H. train

PART 3- Complete the conversations

107. I can't eat a cold sandwich. It is horrible!

A. I hope so.
B. I agree.
C. I am not.

108. I am going on vacation to Vancouver!

A. That's great!
B. I like swimming!
C. You are first!

109. It rained a lot last night!

A. Did you accept?
B. Did you understand?
C. Did you sleep?

PART 4/7- Choose the correct word to complete the text

The Ethiopian Wolf

It is an African animal, **(0)**_____ is called the Simien Jackal. Some scientists have **(110)**_____ it is not a real wolf. But studies show that **(111)**_____ close relationship to grey wolves and coyotes is evident. **(112)**_____ Ethiopian wolves are more similar to grey wolves and coyotes than any other African canines. Scientists also believe there are about 450 of them living in wild conditions. The **(113)**_____ group of Ethiopian wolves exists **(114)**_____ the Bale Mountains National Park.

The Ethiopian wolf has a special red coat with a white part in the front of the body. It is in size from 1,1 to 1,4 meters. By nature, the Ethiopian wolf looks for food by day, but it is sometimes nocturnal in areas where other animals follow it.

Ejemplo:

0. **A.** which **B.** where **C.** who

Respuesta: **0.** (A) B C

110.	**A.**	saying	**B.**	said	**C.** say
111.	**A.**	its	**B.**	his	**C.** your
112.	**A.**	This	**B.**	That	**C.** These
113.	**A.**	larger	**B.**	largest	**C.** large
114.	**A.**	in	**B.**	at	**C.** on

PART 5- Choose the correct answer according to the text (literal part)

My Artistic Adventure

When I was a child in Ireland, I went to bed late, and I could not sleep past six. One morning, I found a Spanish television show with a French man who was painting a beautiful countryside with oil paints.

Right then, I began watching this show. With his quiet voice he explained his natural way of painting, and he quickly made trees and rivers, simply by moving his hand across the paper. He made it look simple and easy, so I thought I could do it by myself.

Every Sunday morning, I would try to paint what he was painting on the screen, but I needed oil paints to make my paintings as beautiful as his. I could not buy oil paints; I was only seven, and my parents would not buy them for me. Then I decided to use my mother's cosmetics and paper for my painting. I was ready to paint my first picture.

After my mum saw what I did with her things, I was told I could not paint again. This put an end to my idea of using food the next time to make a picture. After a while, I stopped watching the French painter. It was difficult for me to simply watch him when I was unable to paint my own pictures.

Ejemplo:

0. When she was seven, she slept

A. for some hours.
B. very well.
C. a lot.

Respuesta: 0. (A) B C

115. Where was the painter from?

A. Ireland
B. Spain
C. France

116. She was mostly excited by the

A. painter's ability.
B. painter's voice.
C. painter's show.

117. How often did she watch the show?

A. three times a week
B. once a week
C. twice a week

118. She could not get oil paints because she

A. didn't speak Spanish.
B. was too young.
C. always watched TV.

PART 6- Choose the correct answer according to the text (inferential part)

Jonathan's Trip to Colombia

I went to Colombia last summer. My journey began on the Caribbean coast and ended on the border with Ecuador. Colombia is a splendid country, extremely diverse and full of wonderful people. I wil tell you why.

In South Colombia there is a city called Pereira; just outside you can find a track where you will see the farm Villa Maria - a hidden paradise that takes a long time to get to-. It is a working coffee farm located in the middle of a valley. Coffee and plantain grow as far as the eye can see. The farm is made up of the house and the processing plant. The family business has guests at the house for just $45.000 a night. This includes 3 home cooked meals a day, a swimming pool, and as much coffee as you can drink. The scene is quite unbelievable. Bamboo chairs rest on the corners of the Villa, mangos hang from the trees, parrots and birds fly wild.

120. What is the writer trying to do in this article?

A. describe a tourism-leading Colombian coffee farm
B. tell readers to run a coffee business in Colombia
C. invite tourists to write about places they visit in Colombia
D. encourage tourists to visit Colombia

121. What can a reader find out from this text?

A. which activities tourists prefer to do at the farm
B. when the best time is to visit the farm
C. what the accommodation price includes
D. how to grow coffee on the farm

Annex 3 – SURVEY

INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA INMACULADA CONCEPCIÓN

ENCUESTA APLICADA A ESTUDIANTES

Nombre: _____

Fecha: _____

Licenciada: MARLY CARVAJAL PAYAN- Docente de inglés

La siguiente encuesta hace parte del proyecto de investigación titulado **IMPLEMENTATION OF CREATED TEACHING MATERIALS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF ENGLISH RESULTS IN SABER 11 EXAM AT A RURAL PUBLIC SCHOOL,** el cual tiene como objetivo valorar la implementación de material creado por la docente de inglés para mejorar los resultados de la prueba SABER 11. **Sus respuestas serán usadas solo para este fin.**

	Excelente	**Bueno**	**Aceptable**	**Deficiente**	**Insuficiente**
1. ¿Cómo califica usted los contenidos trabajados durante la implementación del material?					
2. ¿Cómo califica usted la metodología utilizada durante la implementación del material?					
3. ¿Cómo califica usted la creatividad e innovación de los materiales creados por la					

docente?					
4. ¿Cómo califica usted el ambiente del aula y el trabajo en equipo durante la implementación del material?					
5. ¿Cómo califica usted la preparación y calidad del material trabajado en clase?					
6. ¿Cómo califica usted las oportunidades para participar en las actividades durante la aplicación del material?					
7. ¿Cómo califica usted su disposición para trabajar con el material llevado a clase?					
8. ¿Cómo califica usted el tiempo dedicado a trabajar con el material creado por la docente?					
9. ¿Cómo califica usted las instrucciones ofrecidas por la docente durante la implementación de las actividades?					
10. ¿Cómo califica usted la experiencia adquirida durante el trabajo con el material para mejorar los resultados de la prueba Saber 11?					

Observaciones_____

_____

_____

GRACIAS POR SU COOPERACIÒN

Annex 4 - Graphic evidence of classroom activities

Photograph 1

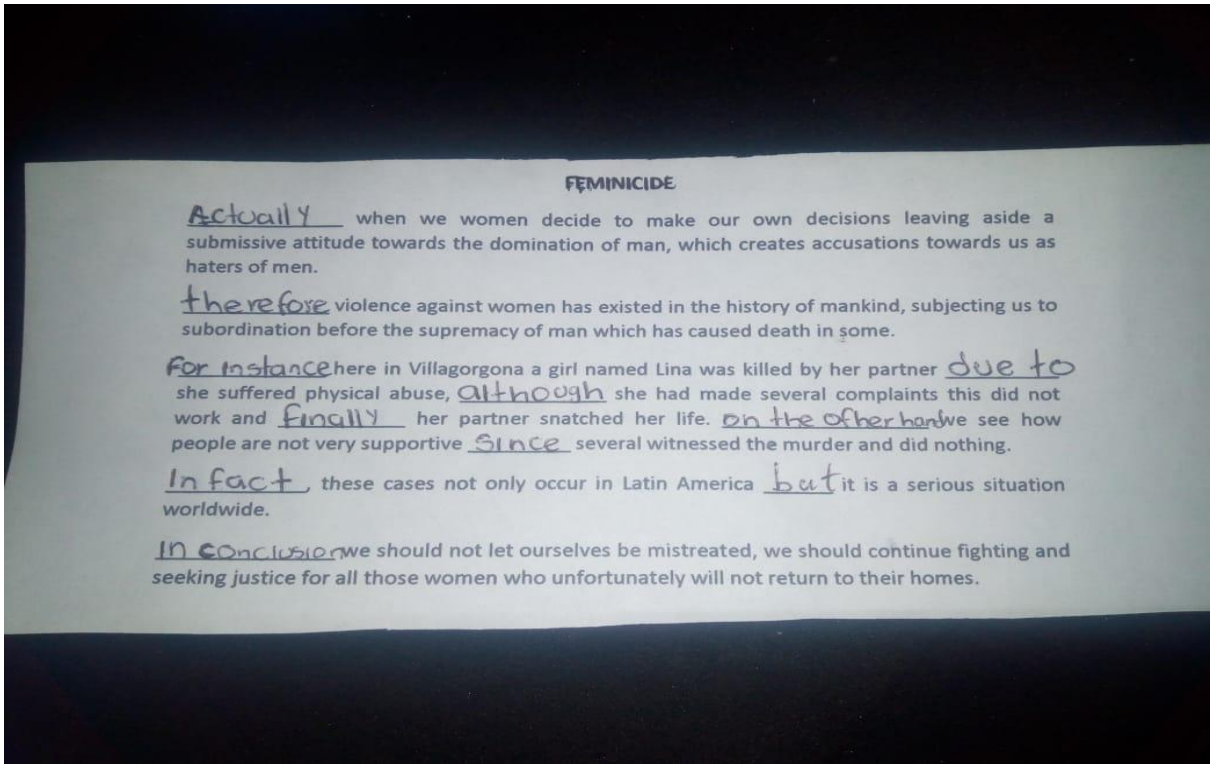
These are the 11.2 class students carrying out activity 1 part 1

Photograph 2

Here the students are working on activity 2 part 2

Photograph 3

These are the 11.2 class students carrying out activity 6 parts 4 / 7



FEMINICIDE

Actually when we women decide to make our own decisions leaving aside a submissive attitude towards the domination of man, which creates accusations towards us as haters of men.

therefore violence against women has existed in the history of mankind, subjecting us to subordination before the supremacy of man which has caused death in some.

For instance here in Villagorgona a girl named Lina was killed by her partner due to she suffered physical abuse, although she had made several complaints this did not work and finally her partner snatched her life. on the other hand we see how people are not very supportive since several witnessed the murder and did nothing.

In fact, these cases not only occur in Latin America but it is a serious situation worldwide.

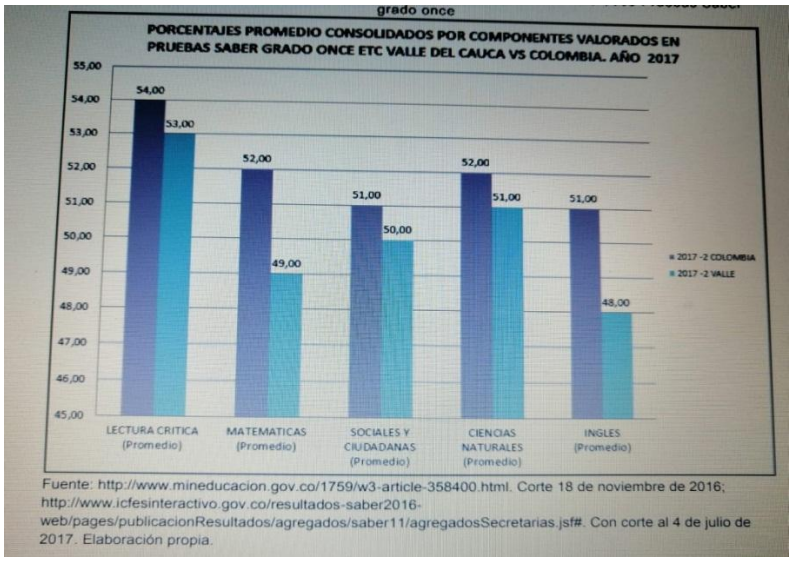
In conclusion we should not let ourselves be mistreated, we should continue fighting and seeking justice for all those women who unfortunately will not return to their homes.

Annex 5. SABER 11 results 2014- 2017

Tabla No. 33. Porcentajes promedio consolidados por componentes valorados en pruebas Saber grado once. ETC Valle del Cauca vs Colombia

AÑO	ENTIDAD	LECTURA CRITICA (Prom)	MATEMAT (Prom)	SOCIALES Y CIUDADANAS (Prom)	CIENCIAS NAT (Prom)	INGLES (Prom)
2014 -2	COLOMBIA	51,10	51,20	51,00	51,20	50,90
	VALLE	49,30	48,50	49,10	48,70	47,80
	DIF VALLE - NACION	-1,80	-2,70	-1,90	-2,50	-3,10
2014 -2	COLOMBIA	51,10	51,20	51,00	51,20	50,90
	VALLE	49,30	48,50	49,10	48,70	47,80
	DIF VALLE - NACION	-1,80	-2,70	-1,90	-2,50	-3,10
2015 -2	COLOMBIA	50,00	51,00	51,00	51,00	51,00
	VALLE	49,00	48,00	49,00	49,00	48,00
	DIF VALLE - NACION	-1,00	-3,00	-2,00	-2,00	-3,00
2016 -2	COLOMBIA	52,60	50,80	50,50	52,60	51,90
	VALLE	51,00	49,00	49,00	52,00	49,00
	DIF VALLE - NACION	-1,60	-1,80	-1,50	-0,60	-2,90
2017 -2	COLOMBIA	54,00	52,00	51,00	52,00	51,00
	VALLE	53,00	49,00	50,00	51,00	48,00
	DIFERENCIA VALLE - NACION	-1,00	-3,00	-1,00	-1,00	-3,00

Fuente: Subsecretaría de Calidad. http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/w3-article-358400.html. Corte 18 de noviembre de 2016; http://www.icfesinteractivo.gov.co/resultados-saber2016-web/pages/publicacionResultados/agregados/saber11/agregadosSecretarias.jsf#. Con corte al 4 de julio de 2017.



Fuente: http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/1759/w3-article-358400.html. Corte 18 de noviembre de 2016; http://www.icfesinteractivo.gov.co/resultados-saber2016-web/pages/publicacionResultados/agregados/saber11/agregadosSecretarias.jsf#. Con corte al 4 de julio de 2017. Elaboración propia.

Taken from: GOBERNACION DEL VALLE DEL CAUCA-SECRETARIA DE EDUCACION DEPARTAMENTAL

BOLETIN ESTADISTICO 2017

https://www.valledelcauca.gov.co/loader.php?lServicio=Tools2&lTipo=viewpdf&id=24907

Annex 6. Informed consent.

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PADRES O ACUDIENTES

(Para estudios con participantes menores de edad)

Institución Educativa: **INMACULADA CONCEPCION** Código DANE: **176130000461**

Municipio: **VILLAGORGONA - CANDELARIA**

Docente investigador: **MARLY CARVAJAL PAYAN** CC/CE: **66835948**

Cargo: **DOCENTE DE INGLES**

Titulo del trabajo de grado: **IMPLEMENTACIÓN DE MATERIAL CREADO PARA EL MEJORAMIENTO DE LOS RESULTADOS DE INGLÉS EN LA PRUEBA SABER 11 EN UNA INSTITUCIÓN PÚBLICA RURAL.**

Yo,_____ , mayor de edad, padre, madre o acudiente del estudiante _____, del grado 11-2, he sido informado acerca del procedimiento general del presente estudio, los objetivos, duración, finalidad, criterios de inclusión y exclusión; además de que toda la información obtenida y los resultados de la investigación serán tratados confidencialmente; también entiendo que las respuestas no afectarán ningún aspecto, ni académico, ni personal de mi hijo (a); al contrario, después de participar en la investigación, se podrán tener herramientas para llegar a reflexiones enriquecedoras acerca del quehacer pedagógico de los docentes.

La docente garantiza la protección de las imágenes y el uso de las mismas, durante y posteriormente al proceso de la investigación.

Atendiendo a la normatividad vigente sobre consentimientos informados (Ley 1581 de 2012 y Decreto 1377 de 2012), hago constar que el presente documento ha sido leído y entendido por mi en su integridad de manera libre y espontánea; por lo cual

[ ] DOY EL CONSENTIMIENTO [ ] NO DOY EL CONSENTIMIENTO para que mi hijo(a) participe en esta práctica educativa, para que sea grabado(a) y fotografiado(a) en las instalaciones de la Institución Educativa donde estudia mi hijo (a) o el estudiante del que soy acudiente.

Lugar y Fecha: _____

_____

FIRMA

CC: