

**Providing Instruction through Online Learning for Better Performance in Saber 11 Test  
in Regard to the English Area in a Public Institution from Bucaramanga**

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**Table of Contents**

	<b>Pag.</b>
Introduction	12
1. Referential Framework	17
1.1 Theoretical Basis	17
1.1.1 English section of Saber 11 test	17
1.1.2 Online Learning	24
1.1.3 ICT Tools	25
1.1.4 Reading and test-taking strategies	26
1.2 Legal Reference	27
1.3 Ethical Aspects	27
2.1 Type of Study	28
2.1.1 Stages of methodology	29
2.2 Resources and Instruments	31
2.2.1 Data Collection instruments	31
2.3 Stages and Operational Phases	32
2.3.1 Action Plan	32
3. Intervention Proposal	32
3.1 Diagnosis of the Problematic Situation	32
3.1.1 Consent form	33
3.1.2 Socioeconomic questionnaire	34
3.2 Implemented Activities	43
3.2.1 Pre-test	43
3.2.2 Google Classroom and Google Meet	45
3.2.3 Materials and activities	46
3.2.4 Lessons	46
3.2.5 Post-test	59
3.2.6 Course evaluation	59
3.3 Activities Assessment	59
3.3.1 Types of Assessment	59
3.3.2 Pre-test and post-test analysis	61
3.3.3 Self-assessment rubrics	67

INTERVENTION FOR SCORES IMPROVEMENT IN SABER 11	4
3.3.4 Teachers' diaries	69
3.3.5 Course evaluation	71
3.4 General Assessment of the intervention	73
4. Conclusions and Recommendations	74
References	79
Annexes	83

**List of Tables**

Table 1. Saber 11 results for the English section from calendar A last three years	15
Table 2. Language abilities and question percentage	19
Table 3. Changes in Teaching-Learning Environment	26
Table 4. Interventional Steps	33
Table 5. Pre-test sections	45
Table 6. Cambridge PET score table	45
Table 7. Score equivalency of Pre-test and post-test compared with Cambridge PET	46
Table 8. Action plan - Week 1	49
Table 9. Action plan - Week 2	50
Table 10. Action plan - Week 3	52
Table 11. Action plan - Week 4	53
Table 12. Action plan - Week 5	54
Table 13. Action plan - Week 6	56
Table 14. Action plan - Week 7	57
Table 15. Action plan - Week 8	59
Table 16. Pragmatic knowledge section scores in pre and post-test	62
Table 17. Reading comprehension section scores in pre and post-test	63
Table 18. Grammatical knowledge section scores in pre and post-test	63
Table 19. Lexical knowledge section scores in pre and post-test	64
Table 20. Connectors section scores in pre and post-test	65
Table 21. Prepositions section scores in pre and post-test	66
Table 22. Verbs section scores in pre and post-test	66
Table 23. Comparison of the minimum and maximum results in the pre-test and post-test	67
Table 24. Increase in the students' improvement in each English section	68
Table 25. Student attendance	69
Table 26. Weekly positive results of the pedagogical intervention	69
Table 27. Perceptions of the pedagogical intervention in the course evaluation	72

**List of Figures**

Figure 1. Emblem of the institution	14
Figure 2. Lexical knowledge assessment	20
Figure 3. Pragmatic knowledge assessment	21
Figure 4. Communicative knowledge assessment	21
Figure 5. Grammatical knowledge assessment	22
Figure 6. Reading comprehension assessment	23
Figure 7. Inferential reading process assessment	24
Figure 8. Grammatical knowledge based on a text assessment	25
Figure 9. Action research spiral	30
Figure 10. Students' housing stratum	36
Figure 11. Students' residence area	36
Figure 12. Students' housing type	37
Figure 13. Number of family members with whom the students live	37
Figure 14. Students who previously took a simulation of the Saber 11 test	38
Figure 15. Students' perception regarding preparing for the Saber 11 test	39
Figure 16. Training for the Saber 11 test by the institution	39
Figure 17. Students' perception of the institution's duty to prepare them for the Saber 11 test	40
Figure 18. Students who have taken extracurricular instruction in the area of English	40
Figure 19. Main reasons for not enrolling in a Pre-Icfes course	41
Figure 20. Internet access at students' homes	41
Figure 21. Availability of personal computers for academic use	42
Figure 22. Availability of personal tablets for academic use	42
Figure 23. Availability of personal phones for academic use	43
Figure 24. Familiarization with the virtual environment and technological tools	43

**List of Annexes**

<b>Annex A. Inter-institutional support agreement for the realization of social internships as a degree work modality</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Annex B. Consent form</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Annex C. Socioeconomic questionnaire</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Annex D. Pre-test</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Annex E. Lesson plan Week 1</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Annex F. Lesson plan Week 2</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Annex G. Lesson plan Week 3</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Annex H. Lesson plan Week 4</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Annex I. Lesson plan Week 5</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Annex J. Lesson plan Week 6</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Annex K. Lesson plan Week 7</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Annex L. Lesson plan Week 8</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Annex M. Post-test</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Annex N. Course evaluation</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Annex O. Self-assessment rubric</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Annex P. Teachers' diaries</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Annex Q. Slides &amp; Materials</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Annex R. Classroom</b>	<b>91</b>

### **Abstract**

**Title:** Providing Instruction through Online Learning for Better Performance in Saber 11 Test in Regard to the English Area in a Public Institution from Bucaramanga.

**Authors:** Jam Carlos Centeno Ayala, Crístian Camilo Valbuena Salinas, and Mauricio Alberto Ortiz Maldonado.

**Key Words:** Online learning, Reading strategies, Saber 11 test, Language abilities, English improvement, Action research

#### **Description:**

This pedagogical intervention was designed and implemented for 11th-grade students of the Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata to improve their performance in the English section of the Saber 11 test. For this, pre-service teachers focused on the action research spiral to set an action plan based on constant feedback and further improvement. Additionally, since the English section of the Saber 11 test only evaluates reading skills, this project was designed and framed under reading strategies implemented in other standardized tests such as IELTS and TOEFL. Furthermore, this project fosters the use of online instruction, activities, materials, and assessments. The outcomes of the pedagogical intervention showed that students significantly improved their performance in reading skills, knowledge, and strategies appropriate for the language abilities evaluated by the Saber 11 test. The inclusion of extra-curricular training for the test in the 11th-grade curriculum seems more and more a need and a request from students who want to obtain better results in the exam and tools that can help them to access higher education institutions and in their future university life.

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## Resumen

**Título:** Impartición de Instrucción a través del Aprendizaje en Línea para un Mejor Desempeño en la Prueba Saber 11 en lo que respecta al Área de Inglés en una Institución Pública de Bucaramanga.

**Autores:** Jam Carlos Centeno Ayala, Cristian Camilo Valbuena Salinas, y Mauricio Alberto Ortiz Maldonado.

**Palabras clave:** Aprendizaje en línea, Estrategias de lectura, Prueba Saber 11, Habilidades del lenguaje, Mejoramiento del inglés, Investigación de acción

**Descripción:** Esta intervención pedagógica fue diseñada e implementada para estudiantes de grado 11 de la Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata para mejorar su desempeño en la sección de inglés de la prueba Saber 11. Para ello, los futuros docentes se centraron en la espiral de investigación-acción para establecer un plan de acción basado en la retroalimentación constante y la mejora adicional. Además, dado que la sección de inglés de la prueba Saber 11 solo evalúa las habilidades de lectura, este proyecto fue diseñado y enmarcado en las estrategias de lectura implementadas en otras pruebas estandarizadas como IELTS y TOEFL. Además, este proyecto fomenta el uso de instrucción, actividades, materiales y evaluaciones en línea. Los resultados de la intervención pedagógica mostraron que los estudiantes mejoraron significativamente su desempeño en habilidades lectoras, conocimientos y estrategias adecuadas a las habilidades lingüísticas evaluadas por la prueba Saber 11. La inclusión de la formación extracurricular para la prueba en el plan de estudios de 11° grado parece cada vez más una necesidad y una demanda de los estudiantes que quieren obtener mejores resultados en el examen y herramientas que les pueden ayudar a acceder a las instituciones de educación superior y en su futura vida universitaria.

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\*Trabajo de Grado

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## Introduction

Every year, undergraduate students around the world have to take exams utilized to determine their qualifications for higher education. On an international ground, exams such as the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), the PSU (Prueba de Selección Universitaria), and the ENEM (Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio) are standardized exams required for admission to colleges in the United States, Chile and, Brazil respectively. In Colombia, access to higher education is mostly determined by a high score on the Saber 11 exam, a standardized test carried out by Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación (ICFES) to 11-graders in the national territory. In 2021, more than 500.000 students took the standardized national test known as Saber 11; this corresponds to around 94% of the 11<sup>o</sup> grade students enrolled in Middle Education institutions (MEN, 2022). Using the fundamental competence criteria and quality benchmarks set out by the Ministry of National Education (MEN), the exam keeps track of the educational quality in the nation's educational institutions. It also gives higher-education institutions pertinent data about candidates' qualifications for higher education programs (ICFES, 2022). However, this is only sometimes a fair process, as schools around the country have different curriculums and scholar hours. In addition, most students in 11th grade enroll in different tuition companies that provide extracurricular classes to reinforce the subjects and topics considered part of the exam. This behavior becomes a problem considering that not all students can afford an extracurricular program.

In addition, the COVID-19 outbreak forced students to move to a virtual environment where not only students, but teachers were not prepared to continue their learning process (Alarcón, 2020). Consequently, students were guided by a constant flow of different

methodologies and sudden changes. Likewise, considering our local context, this modality needed to be adequately adjusted and adapted as specific communities have been left with fewer resources, resulting in low-quality education. With this in mind, this strategy aimed to help students perform better in the Saber 11 test in the English area. For this purpose, we took students of 11th grade from Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata, which, using online learning and ICT tools, provided training in the specific aspects assessed by ICFES.

### **Characterization**

Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata was founded on January 20th, 1888, under Escuela de Artes y Oficios in Bucaramanga, Santander. The same year, the school started providing specialized instruction. It was only in 1951 that the school flourished with its characteristic name, Instituto Industrial Damaso Zapata (Prensa BGA, 2018).

During the following years, the institution offered specializations in information technologies, electronics, and automotive repair, among others. The institution was boys-only until early 2003 when it opened its doors to around 152 girls becoming this way a mixed-sex school. The school currently instructs over 5000 students in its main institution and two additional campuses that provide education from preschool to high school at technical levels such as electricity, electronics, technical drawing, information technologies, metal mechanics, and industrial mechanics, among others (Entorno Damaso Zapata, 2017). Its emblem is a 24 tooth gear that represents the hours of the day and the hard work (Figure 1).

### **Figure 1**

*Emblem of the institution*

The school's primary aim is to educate its students on life, respect, and coexistence, and build a society with more strong ideals of justice and knowledge (Entorno Damaso Zapata, 2016). Also, as a technical institution, it gives complementary technical education that creates leaders who can fulfill the requirements of their current labor market. Along these lines, the institution leads a series of actions to strengthen middle education through alliances with Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA) allowing students to elongate their academic preparation and eventual job placement (SENA, 2008).

**Contextualization**

The Saber 11 test can be taken twice a year depending on the academic calendar by which the institution is aligned. In Colombia, there are two calendars "A" and "B" and according to MEN (2018), "The "A" calendar starts in February and ends in November, while the "B" calendar starts in September and ends in June". This study focuses on the Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata which follows calendar A.

In relation to Saber 11 results for the English section, calendar A students have remained primarily on the lowest levels in the last three years. In 2019, 58% of students were ranked between A- and A1, later in 2020 and 2021, 71% and 62% respectively at the same level. In contrast, in the highest levels, B1 and B+, the students' percentages remained very low being 10%, 13%, and 14% in 2019, 2020, and 2021 respectively (ICFES, 2021).

**Table 1**

*Saber 11 results for the English section from calendar A last three years*

	<b>A-</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>B1</b>	<b>B+</b>
<b>2019</b>	24%	34%	31%	9%	1%
<b>2020</b>	31%	40%	16%	12%	1%
<b>2021</b>	26%	36%	25%	13%	1%

*Note:* Adapted from ICFES (2021). Informe Nacional de Resultados del examen Saber 11° 2020 (Vol. I).

The results depicted above show goals for English competence established by MEN were not accomplished. The reasons behind this low performance can be due to underlying factors such as students' learning being hampered by the educational community's lack of enthusiasm for creating environments that encourage motivation in pupils (Cifuentes et al., 2016). Likewise, the student's socio-economical status is strongly linked to their academic efficiency, as students with higher strata perform better and vice versa (Pereira et al., 2020).

According to ICFES in the Historical Results Report of the Saber 11 Test, there is an increase in the number of students taking the exam in the institution and the country (2021). Additionally, the institution got noticeably lower scores than most private schools, however, the overall score from the students presented a decrease compared with the previous two years (ICFES, 2021). Although students' performance in this area was better than in previous years, according to the levels of performance stated in the report, only 14% of the public education students obtained the corresponding B1 or B+ English class (ICFES, 2021). Contrasting with the Ministry of Education on his latest document, "Colombia Very Well," states that around 50% of the students that take the exit exam should be as proficient as B1 or more, based on the Common European Framework (MEN, 2014). Regarding the institution's branches, none of them obtained results within B+.

**Justification**

The great repercussion that the Saber 11 test has for many students in Colombia requires adequate preparation as the exam could determine their access to higher education. For this, students enroll in different paid extracurricular courses however only some students can afford the costs or have time availability.

The health situation that emerged from COVID-19 represented a change in the educational paradigm, among many others, and required modifications at the level of personnel training, technological adaptations, and infrastructure. The confinement due to quarantine brought classes to the students' homes, but not all of them had the technological resources and internet access for this purpose. Compared with previous years' situation of the Covid-19 pandemic, the performance of the students who took the Saber 11 exit exam was lower than the years before the pandemic, indeed, it has recorded lower grades for plenty of public institutions all over the country (ICFES, 2021). In addition, lack of engagement, limited resources, and the impact of the covid-19 quarantine that transformed the standard classes into virtual ones have affected students of public institutions. At a global level, many students need access to learning resources to adapt their learning processes, which usually ends at an enormous risk of falling behind (Schleicher, 2020). On the local ground, the nation's educational system was unprepared for the shift to more technologically advanced schooling necessary for the Covid-19 breakthrough mitigation (Alarcón, 2020). Thereby, students' performance in the Saber 11 test while and after the Covid-19 breakout has decreased their chances of entering public universities. Without proper preparation for the exam, students do not obtain the required scores to access public institutions and therefore acquire debts to pay for their higher education in private institutions (Márquez Ortiz, 2020).

Although the students have already returned to face-to-face classes, it is clear the gap in students' performance after the pandemic, however, online learning and ICT tools provided an innovative horizon for teaching and learning in difficult times. As it is necessary to

provide instruction, material and constant feedback focused on strategies to understand the methodology and the test questions, it is also advisable to use technological tools that the students had been using in the virtual environment and that represent, in many cases, an economic relief in relation to costs of preparation courses for the test and/or mobility to the institution. This intervention looks to boost their efficiency in the Saber 11 test in the English area using ICT tools and online learning. Likewise, by hitting higher scores, students could access scholarships like "Generacion E". This program includes a fully forgiven credit for tuition that covers the cost of tuition and financial maintenance support (Gomez, 2020). Furthermore, this intervention expects to share information with future teachers and researchers about the possible strategies that could improve students' performance in the Saber 11 test regarding the English area. Lastly, this project promotes broadening the students' and educators' educational digital tools and ICT literacy for their future learning challenges.

## Objectives

### General Objective

To assist 11th-grade students to improve their performance in the Saber 11 test in the English area through online learning from Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata in Bucaramanga.

### Specific Objectives

To measure 11-graders' English performance from Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata with a pre-test and post-test.

To design a pedagogical English intervention with reading strategies focussed on Saber 11 test requirements through online learning and ICT tools.

Provide students with lessons and material focused on the English section of the Saber 11 test and its assessment criteria.

## 1. Referential Framework

### 1.1 Theoretical Basis

#### *1.1.1 English section of Saber 11 test*

Regarding its content, Saber 11 aims to evaluate the students' competencies which ICFES defines as the abilities learners should have at that stage to apply their knowledge in different contexts (Ruiz et al., 2018). The exam tests English communicative skills and measures the effectiveness of teaching English in public schools. This section contains 55 questions evaluating seven specific language abilities aligned with the basic standards of foreign languages established by MEN (See Table 2).

### Table 2

*Language abilities and question percentage*

<b>Language ability</b>	<b>Questions percentage</b>
Lexical knowledge	11 %
Pragmatic knowledge	11%
Communicative knowledge	11%
Grammatical knowledge	18%
Reading comprehension	16%
Inferential reading process	11%
Grammatical knowledge based on a text	22%

*Note:* Adapted from Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2021). Guía de Orientación Saber 11°. Bogotá: ICFES.

**1.1.1.1 Lexical knowledge.** This part evaluates the lexical knowledge of students. For this, students have to understand a series of descriptions to relate them to a list of seven words.

There are extra words than descriptions (See Figure 2 ).

**Figure 2**

*Lexical knowledge assessment***Transportation****Ejemplo:**

0. You often learn to ride it when you are a child.

Respuesta: 0.  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H

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

5. People pay to take this public transport by road.

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

A. ambulance

B. bike

C. boat

D. bus

E. motorbike

F. plane

G. truck

H. train

*Note:* Taken from Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2021). Guía de Orientación Saber 11°. Bogotá: ICFES.

**1.1.1.2 Pragmatic knowledge.** Students should demonstrate their pragmatic knowledge by recognizing the communicative purpose of signs and places where they can be found (See Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

*Pragmatic knowledge assessment***Ejemplo:**

0.  **A.** in a school  
**B.** in a clothes shop  
**C.** in a toy store

Respuesta: 0.  A  B  C

1.  **A.** on a rug  
**B.** on a test  
**C.** on a bookcase


*Note:* Taken from Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2021). Guía de Orientación Saber 11°. Bogotá: ICFES.

**1.1.1.3 Communicative knowledge.** For this part, the student has to choose the most appropriate intervention between two interlocutors in a logical order. It measures the relevance of the language used in common situations in short conversations (See Figure 4).

**Figure 4**

*Communicative knowledge assessment*

**Ejemplo:**



Respuesta: 0.  A  B  C

7. Grandma, shall I hold those bags for you? **A.** I'm not afraid!  
**B.** What's the matter?  
**C.** That's fine.
8. How much is that umbrella? **A.** Anything else?  
**B.** 50 dollars.  
**C.** Cash only!

*Note:* Taken from Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2021). Guía de Orientación Saber 11°. Bogotá: ICFES.

**1.1.1.4 Grammatical knowledge.** This part assesses the grammatical knowledge by presenting the student with a text in which it is necessary to choose the most accurate words to fill the gaps in it. Students must read and choose carefully the words to complete the text (See Figure 5).

**Figure 5**

*Grammatical knowledge assessment*


### COFFEE

Coffee is popular around the world. (0)\_\_\_ the past centuries, few subjects have been as carefully studied as coffee. Its (9)\_\_\_ important component is caffeine and it has lots of benefits.

Coffee has been well-known (10)\_\_\_ the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, (11)\_\_\_ Sufi Yemenis started using coffee to stay alert during special activities. It became a popular medicine (12)\_\_\_ Europeans in the 1600s.

Caffeine was first (13)\_\_\_ in the 1800s by Ferdinand Runge, a doctor that found out some effects that coffee has on people.

Some people say (14)\_\_\_ coffee isn't good, but doctors say you (15)\_\_\_ believe this. Thanks to caffeine you don't get hungry. Coffee can also reduce headaches and blood problems. (16)\_\_\_ many people believe coffee is bad, studies show it is good for your heart.



**Ejemplo:**

0.    A. Over            B. By            C. Across

**Respuesta:** 0.     A     B     C

---

9.    A. much            B. more            C. most

10.    A. during            B. until            C. since

*Note:* Taken from Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2021). Guía de Orientación Saber 11°. Bogotá: ICFES.


**1.1.1.5 Reading comprehension.** A literal understanding of text evaluates students' reading comprehension by selecting the paraphrase that allows correctly answering each question (See Figure 6).

**Figure 6**

*Reading comprehension assessment*

**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

---

15. Where was the painter from?

A. Ireland  
B. Spain  
C. France

*Note:* Taken from Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2021). Guía de Orientación Saber 11°. Bogotá: ICFES.


**1.1.1.6 Inferential reading process.** Based on a text, the students have to carry out an inferential reading process in which different questions aim to know the author's intention and general and particular aspects within the text (See Figure 7).

**Figure 7**

*Inferential reading process assessment*

**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 will tell you why.



In South Colombia there is a city called Pereira; just outside you can find an area 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 three 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 and parrots and birds fly wild.

A wonderful man named Hector who runs the farm is happy to show guests around the coffee processing plant. By day, the only sounds are of the horses coming down the valley side carrying food. By night, the wildlife comes alive, and depending on the time of the year - thunderstorms offer a spectacular light show. For those who wish to escape, Villa Maria is the answer.

This is just one attraction of many in Colombia. I could write pages on the country and not get bored. I graduate next year and I can't wait to return to this beautiful country. Some of those reading may be stimulated to do the same.

20. What is the writer trying to do in this article?
- A. convince people to buy a 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

*Note:* Taken from Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2021). Guía de Orientación Saber 11°. Bogotá: ICFES.

**1.1.1.7 Grammatical knowledge based on a text.** The final part evaluates the grammatical and lexical knowledge through a text in which the student has to choose the correct word to fill the gaps in it (See Figure 8).

**Figure 8**

*Grammatical knowledge based on a text assessment*

### VALENTINE'S DAY

Do you know what **(0)**\_\_\_\_\_ on February 14th every year? Many people exchange gifts, chocolates, cards, and flowers. This is done to celebrate Valentine's Day. It's always a lot of fun to get a card or some chocolates, but **(22)**\_\_\_\_\_ do we do this? There is a lot of mystery about this day.

One of the **(23)** \_\_\_\_\_ says that the original Valentine was a priest. It is said that the king, Claudius II, had forbidden marriage because he thought that only unmarried men made the best soldiers. However, Valentine continued to hold weddings for a lot of young couples in secret. When the King found **(24)**\_\_\_\_\_, he ordered soldiers to kill Valentine!

Valentine's Day is now the second biggest holiday for cards and gifts. Women buy **(25)**\_\_\_\_\_ 90% of the cards, but gentlemen still buy the most chocolates and flowers to give as a Valentine's Day present.

**Ejemplo:**

0.    A. happens    B. appears    C. shows    D. passes

Respuesta: 0.  A  B  C

---

22.    A. where    B. why    C. when    D. what

*Note:* Taken from Instituto Colombiano para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2021). Guía de Orientación Saber 11°. Bogotá: ICFES.

**1.1.2 Online Learning**

Online learning is an alternative way to bring knowledge to students, particularly useful when taking extra-curricular courses, especially for students with certain limitations regarding time availability, mobilization, and usage of electronic tools. Rosenblit (2005) defined *E-Learning* as substituting conventional classrooms to approach different learning purposes through electronic media. As well, Clark & Mayer (2016) said that E-Learning is "Instructions delivered through digital devices with the intent of supporting learning" (p, 8). Additionally, since the global health emergency that has occurred since 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic and the mandatory quarantine, students have been using electronic tools and implementing E-Learning in their academic lives.

Furthermore, online learning allows us to engage "students who only have an opportunity for an online atmosphere" (Dumford & Miller, 2018, p.462). In other words, the virtual implementation of courses is more flexible with the student's time and resources because it breaks geographical obstacles to anyone with internet access. Also, available material such as educational web pages proves to be advantageous in the moment of practicing with students. Munar (2018) affirms that "Nowadays there is a large number of websites for English language teaching purposes where you can find exercises and activities to practice the four language skills" (p, 59).

### ***1.1.3 ICT Tools***

In the learning process it is fundamental to be at the forefront of strategies, approaches, and new technology in order to reach students' attention and retention. In this line, ICT tools use multimedia to compile an integrated multi-sensory interactive application to present the information to an audience (Neo and Neo, 2001). According to Molnar (2007), the results of using multimedia in education point to increase retention rates and productivity because students remember through visual retention 20%, auditive 40%, and a combination of both 75%. The inclusion of technological tools in the learning process because students become active learners instead of receiving educational content passively (Neo and Neo, 2001). Furthermore, according to Majumdar (2015).throughout the last three decades the models, focus, technology, and the learner's role have changed remarkably in the educational field from traditional instruction to virtual learning (See Table 3).

**Table 3**

#### *Changes in Teaching-Learning Environment*

<b>Changes in Teaching-Learning Environment</b>			
<b>Model</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Role of learner</b>	<b>Technology</b>

Traditional	Teachers	Passive	Chalk and talk
Information	Learners	Active	Personal computer
Knowledge	Group	Adaptive	Pc and network

*Note:* Taken from Majumdar, S. (2015). Emerging trends in ICT for education & training. Gen. Asia Pacific Reg. IVETA.

Nevertheless, the implementation of ICT tools and multimedia can generate some challenges for educators such as changes related to educational and technological management, work processes, and the training of both, students and instructors (Carnoy, 2004).

#### ***1.1.4 Reading and test-taking strategies***

Considering that Saber 11 test evaluates the English level in seven parts through reading and lexical exercises, this study focussed on test-taking and reading strategies that could help students to understand and deal with the test.

**1.1.4.1 Test-taking strategies.** As some students are not familiar with standardized tests, it is highly important to know how to address the test to get better performance. In this sense, students should consider planning and reviewing questions before reading the text since it could make easier the reading process and avoid haste related to low scores (Zalha et al., 2020). Moreover, some readings may require additional analysis, therefore, it is recommended to prioritize the easier questions as they can be answered first and save time for the most challenging questions (Zalha et al., 2020).

**1.1.4.2 Reading strategies.** Reading strategies include skimming and scanning for specific information, and background knowledge can improve reading comprehension because it allows students to better relate to the text (Zalha et al., 2020). Furthermore, To get the gist of a text, students should underline the most important passages (Ahmadian et al., 2016). In addition, in relation to lexical knowledge linked to reading comprehension, context to analyze

unfamiliar language can help students to understand the meaning of the vocabulary when there is related to their context but sometimes the use of L1 (Zalha et al., 2020). Likewise, re-reading a relevant portion of a text can improve understanding of a text as well as confirm a chosen answer (Heffernan, 2006). Finally, note-taking can provide to be a useful tool as test-takers can get the main idea of a text without having to read the text once again (Ahmadian et al., 2016).

## **1.2 Legal Reference**

This intervention follows an action plan based on Guia de Orientación Saber 11° - 2021-2. This document encompasses the test features, competencies assessed from each core area, and the assessment for students with particular necessities (ICFES, 2021). Moreover, lessons were thought to support and follow the guidelines established by the MEN in Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés which determines that students have to reach and demonstrate the B1 level of English domain (MEN, 2006).

## **1.3 Ethical Aspects**

This intervention involved 11 graders from Institución Técnico Educativa Dámaso Zapata in Bucaramanga who attended classes voluntarily not coerced. In this intervention, 76 11th-grade students were invited from two different groups, 32 agreed to participate and 25 finished the whole intervention among men and women. The information provided in research instruments will remain private only for researchers and this study. Names and other personal information will not appear in any record or be exposed in any possible way.

Additionally, it explained the intervention, its purpose, and participants' data privacy management. Finally, two inter-institutional agreement documents signed by the two parties mediated aspects of the intervention, such as time, space, design, culmination, evaluation, and supervision.

Finally, by participating in this intervention, we expected to increase students' chances to accomplish higher grades when taking Saber 11. Therefore, increase their chances to enroll in the program of their choice. Additionally, we aim to introduce students to new digital tools that can aid their learning and make studying more interactive and engaging.

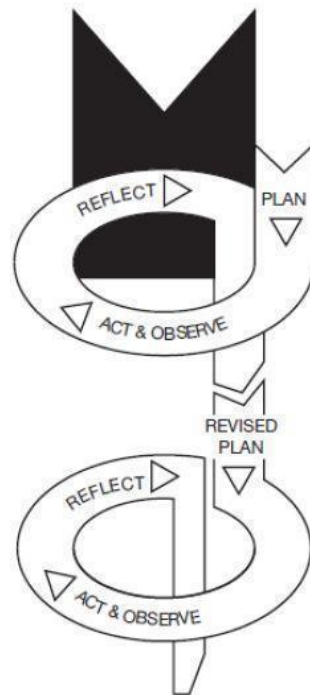
## **2. Methodological Design**

### **2.1 Type of Study**

This social practice is framed under an action research design since it seeks students' improvement by acting through an intervention aligned with learners' motivations and needs. In this sense, Williamson (2002) asserts that “the search for practical benefits to the clients is frequently an important reason why action research is chosen as a method” (p,160). Moreover, action research also "involves the development of knowledge and understanding of a unique kind" (Avison, et al.,1999, p.7). Therefore, the pre-service teachers' role is beyond mere observers and aims to include teaching, reflecting, and providing real incentives to obtain better results from the participants. Similarly, educational action research seeks to understand, evaluate, change and improve an educational practice (Bassey, 1998 as cited in Costello, 2003).

This intervention adopted a four-stage spiral cycle proposed by Kemmis, McTaggart & Nixon (2014) to conduct research under an action research design. This model can be also known as the ‘self-reflective spiral’ because it's a repetitive process that looks for constant improvement. Each of the four stages feeds back to the previous one, first planning a change; second, acting and observing the process and consequences of the change; third, reflecting on these processes and consequences; and fourth, replanning the process for improvement. This study addresses the first three stages but encourages future researchers to continue the process in the fourth stage.

### **Figure 9**

*Action research spiral*

*Note:* Adapted from Kemmis, S., McTaggart, R., & Nixon, R. (2014). *The action research planner: Doing critical participatory action research.*

## **2.1.1 Stages of methodology**

### **2.1.1.1 Stage 1: Planning**

The planning stage aims to identify a problem and develop a plan that could end in an improvement in a specific area (Burns, 2009). In this stage, researchers identified a gap in students' preparation for the Saber 11 test. For this, the results of a socioeconomic questionnaire got insights into the real landscape of students regarding economic and technological limitations that could hinder their performance on the test (Burns, 2009).

Pre-service teachers reviewed the socioeconomic, political, and educational context of 11-graders. Moreover, it was highly important to check the historical results of the Saber 11 test from previous years to determine the current English level and students' difficulties understanding the exam.

### **2.1.1.2 Stage 2: Acting and observing**

This stage is composed of acting and observing. First, intervention in an educational situation must be planned for a period of time, be critically informed, and propose a new alternative way of approaching the situation. Second, as this model focuses on constant improvement, is highly important to observe systematically the process, its effects, consequences, opinions, and context. Data must be taken with an open-minded vision and document the process (Burns, 2009).

In this stage, teachers designed the intervention considering the learning abilities evaluated by the Saber 11 test. Furthermore, as the intervention is not an English course, some reading, and test-taking strategies were included to understand the test and analyze questions. The interventions took eight lessons of three hours every Saturday for a total of 24 hours.

### **2.1.1.3 Stage 3: Reflecting**

This stage aims to reflect, evaluate, and describe the process, its effects, and how the situation resulted after acting. Moreover, the action research spiral fosters researchers to share the results to generate more cycles in the spiral to create alternatives for the process and pave the way for future improvements (Burns, 2009).

During the intervention pre-service teachers recorded their experiences in a teachers' diary and students' perceptions through self-assessment formats. These instruments allowed researchers to gather information about each intervention, its strengths, and weaknesses as well as additional observations and opinions from students that were considered to enhance the following interventions.

## **2.2 Resources and Instruments**

### **2.2.1 Data Collection instruments**

**2.2.1.1 Questionnaire.** During the planning stage, a socioeconomic questionnaire was implemented to understand the social environment and economic conditions for technological availability. This instrument was applied considering that “questionnaires are a way of gathering opinions, attitudes, knowledge or suggestions about the topics under study” (Canales, Alvarado, & Pineda, as cited in Pozzo et al. t., 2019, p. 4).

**2.2.1.2 Pre and Post-tests.** In education, these tests are thought to determine the improvement of learners regarding a skill area or content in which their performance can be measured between two points in time (Brophy, 2022). These tests allowed pre-service teachers to identify an initial English level before the intervention for the lesson design and after to check students’ improvement.

**2.2.1.3 Teachers’ diary.** A diary is a research tool to record ideas and observations to reflect on later, in this way author’s memory can inspire new ideas for future lessons (Richards and Lockhart, 1996 as cited in Klug et al., 2018). For this reason and considering that action research looks for constant improvement, researchers made annotations about strengths, weaknesses, students’ comments, and any additional information that could enhance the intervention.

**2.2.1.4 Self-assessment format.** This type of assessment involves students identifying standards to implement in their learning process making judgments in order to reach the standard (Boud, 1986, p. 5, as cited in McDonald & Boud, 2003). The instrument provided information about students’ perception of the lessons that enhanced them weekly.

**2.2.1.5 Course evaluation.** At the end of the intervention, the course evaluation should accomplish indicators related to relevance, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness in order to assess the intervention and its impact (Botero & Zapata, 2013).

## 2.3 Stages and Operational Phases

### 2.3.1 Action Plan

**Table 4**

#### *Interventional Steps*

<b>Step</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Space</b>
Pre-Intervention	Intervention course presentation to teachers and the principal	April 15th	Institution
	Get participants contact information	April 18th	Institution
	Consent forms implementation	April 18th - 22nd	Online
	Students' first contact and socioeconomic questionnaire implementation	April 23rd - 24th	Online
Intervention	Pre-test implementation	August 13th	Online
	Pedagogical intervention	August 13th - October 1st	Online
Post-Intervention	Post-test implementation	October 1st	Online
	Course evaluation application	October 1st	Online

## 3. Intervention Proposal

### 3.1 Diagnosis of the Problematic Situation

This pedagogical intervention aimed to assist 11th-grade students to improve their performance in the Saber 11 test in the English area through online learning from Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata in Bucaramanga. For this, researchers reviewed literature that could provide real insights and quantifiable information about students' socioeconomic status, Saber 11 national and institutional performance in the English area, and possible technological limitations. Throughout the intervention, the pre-service teachers implemented

different research instruments to record, analyze and measure data such as a consent form, a socioeconomic questionnaire, pre and post-tests, self-assessment formats, teachers' diaries, and course evaluation. The implementation of these research instruments will be carried out in-depth throughout this chapter.

### ***3.1.1 Consent form***

From the action research methodology, the first stage of the spiral proposed by Burns (2009) inquiries to identify a problem that could be addressed and developed for constant improvement. In this sense, the documentation and contextualization examined in the previous literature review were not enough to get clear and current knowledge of the target audience for this intervention: 11th-grade students.

Since the participants were underage students in 11th grade it was necessary to create a consent form that along with guidelines and agreements provided by their teachers and the principal in “Convenio de Apoyo interinstitucional para la realización de Prácticas Sociales como Modalidad de Trabajo de Grado celebrado entre la Universidad Industrial de Santander y la Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata” (See Annex A). This document was signed by the pre-service teachers and the headmaster of the School of Languages at Universidad Industrial de Santander as a professional commitment between the two parties in which the two educational institutions and future teaching professionals could cooperate and help 11th-grade students prepare for the English section of the Saber 11 test. Moreover, the document introduced the pre-service teachers to parents and students, explained the purpose of the intervention highlighted the importance and benefits of reaching high scores on the test. Likewise, in relation to the methodology, the paper stated that the intervention would be in an online environment using technological tools and virtual resources such as Google Meets, Google Classroom, and Google Forms. Additionally, the consent form was as straightforward as possible mentioning that the participation was voluntary, without any cost,

and with no grades or repercussions in students' records. However, pre-service teachers required students to help them answer research instruments such as a socioeconomic questionnaire, a pre and post-test, a course evaluation, and self-assessment formats that could enhance the development of the intervention and the quality of the material and resources provided during the lessons. Finally, it was stated the days and schedule for the lessons, as well as the parents' permission for students to attend the preparation course for the English section of the Saber 11 test.

From this consent form, researchers reached 32 students of 11th grade distributed between 11-03 and 11-09 groups to participate in the pedagogical intervention (See Annex B).

### ***3.1.2 Socioeconomic questionnaire***

Once the principal, teachers, parents, students, and pre-service teachers were clear about how the intervention will be developed and the commitments of each party involved, it was necessary to implement a socioeconomic questionnaire. This instrument aims to know about the current socioeconomic situation, technological limitations, and knowledge about the test and the virtual environment. Additionally, this questionnaire was the first quantitative step to measure the real limitations and perceptions of 11-graders from Institución Técnico Educativa Dámaso Zapata in relation to the Saber 11 test, its contents, and previous training for the exam (See Annex C).

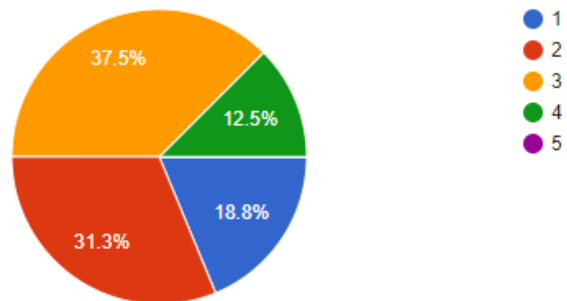
**3.1.2.1 Socioeconomic situation.** The results of the socioeconomic questionnaire demonstrated that 87.6% of students live in strata not superior to 3, in which 12.5% live in rural environments and 65.6% pay rent. In addition, 75% of students' family nucleus ranges between 3 to 5 people with whom they share some of their belongings (See Figures 10, 11, 12, and 13).

#### **Figure 10**

*Students' housing stratum*

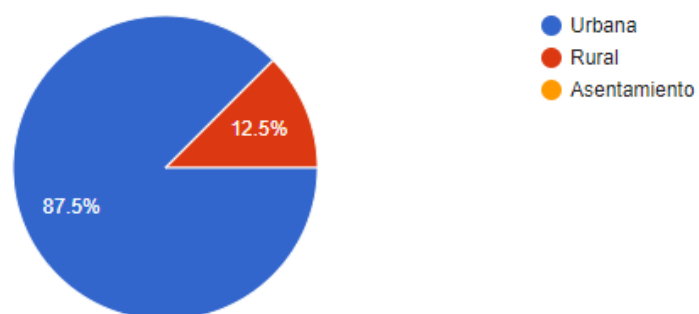
Estrato de la vivienda

32 responses

**Figure 11***Students' residence area*

Zona de residencia

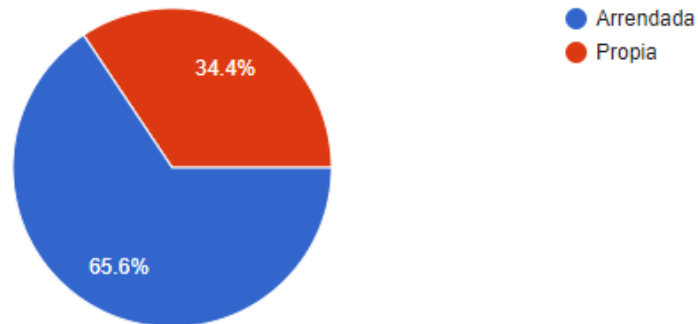
32 responses

**Figure 12**

*Students' housing type*

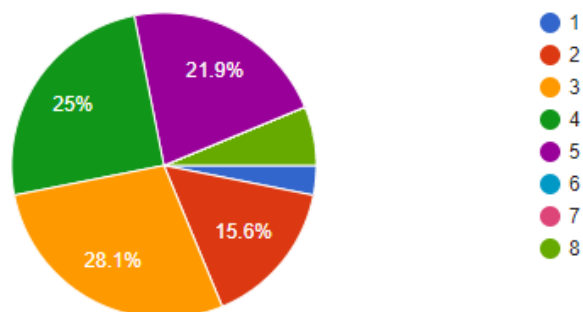
## Tipo de vivienda

32 responses

**Figure 13***Number of family members with whom the students live*

## Número de familiares con los que convive

32 responses

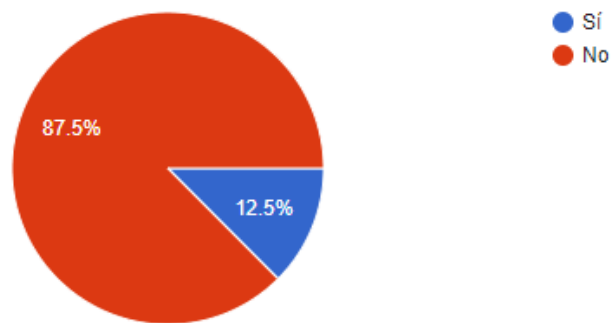


**3.1.2.2 Test preparation.** Regarding the test, 87.5% of students did not know its content, 71.9% never took a simulation and 78.1% will not enroll in a course to be prepared for the exam (See Figures 14 and 15).

**Figure 14***Students' knowledge of Saber 11 test contents*

¿Conoce usted los contenidos que evalúa la prueba Saber 11?

32 responses

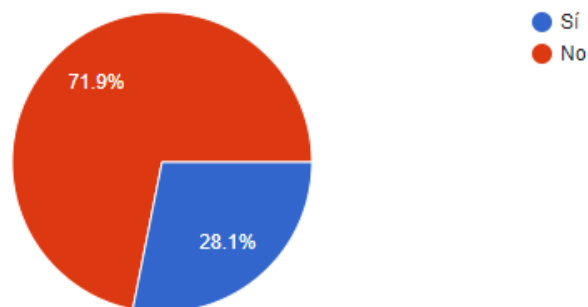


**Figure 15**

*Students who previously took a simulation of the Saber 11 test*

¿Ha realizado algún simulacro de la prueba Saber 11?

32 responses



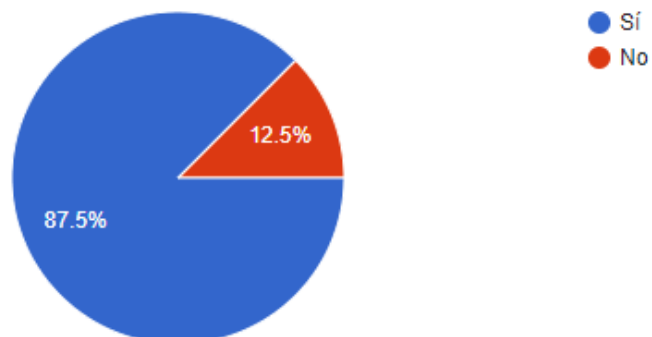
Furthermore, even though 87.5% of students consider it important to be trained for the test, 100% mentioned that the institution did not provide any additional instruction or material related to Saber 11 test contents, and 87.5% of them think that the institution should provide training spaces for this exam (See Figures 16, 17, and 18).

**Figure 16**

*Students' perception regarding preparing for the Saber 11 test*

¿Considera que es importante prepararse para la prueba Saber 11?

32 responses

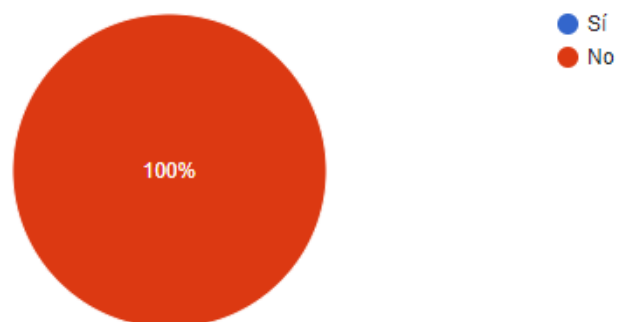


**Figure 17**

*Training for the Saber 11 test by the institution*

¿La institución educativa le ha proporcionado material y simulacros para la prueba Saber 11, incluyendo el área de inglés?

32 responses

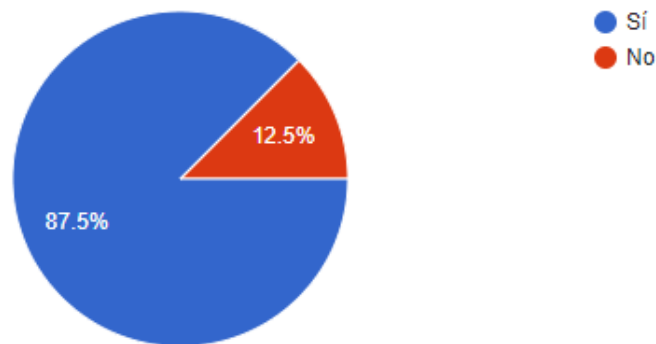


**Figure 18**

*Students' perception of the institution's duty to prepare them for the Saber 11 test*

¿Cree que la institución debería crear espacios para preparar a los estudiantes para la prueba Saber 11 orientados a sus contenidos específicos?

32 responses

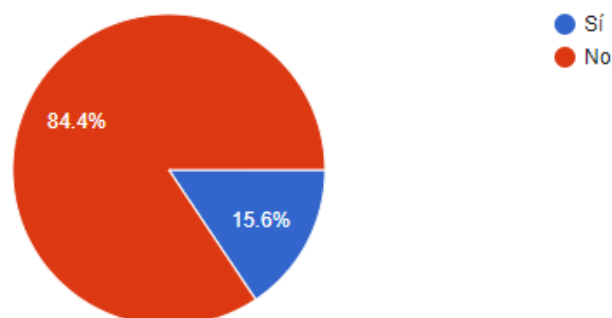


In relation to the English area, 84.4% of learners had not taken any extracurricular English courses, classes, or tutorials (See Figure 19).

**Figure 19***Students who have taken extracurricular instruction in the area of English*

¿Ha tomado clases de inglés privadas como tutorías o clases en un instituto de lenguas?

32 responses



Regarding preparation courses for the Saber 11 test, the questionnaire inquired about the possible reason why students could not enroll in a Pre-Icfes course to be prepared before

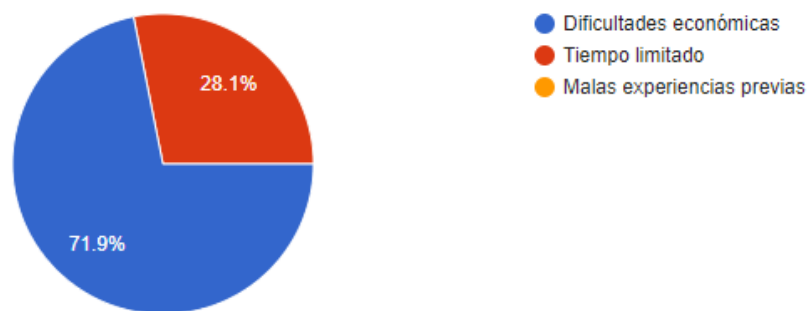
the exam, and 71% pointed to economic difficulties as the main reason while 29% considered lack of time (See Figure 20).

**Figure 20**

*Main reasons for not enrolling in a Pre-Icfes course*

¿Cuál considera usted la principal razón por la que no se inscribiría a un curso de preparación para la prueba Saber 11?

32 responses



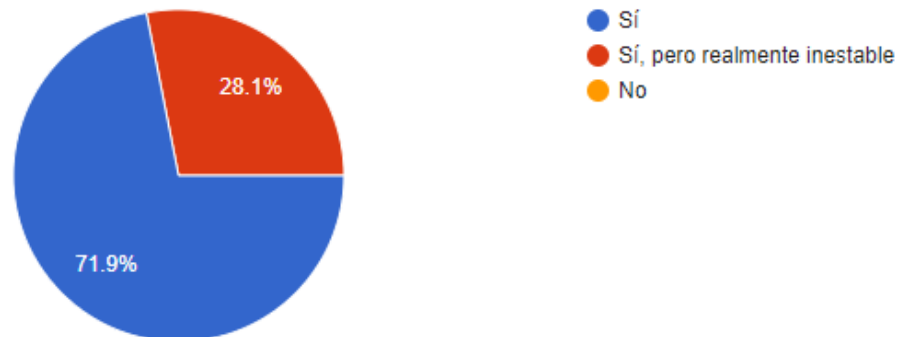
**3.1.2.3 Technological limitations.** Finally, the last questions were formulated to examine possible technological limitations and internet connection at students' homes. As this pedagogical intervention was set in a virtual environment, an internet connection was a requirement to take the lessons. For this, 100% of students had an internet connection but 28.1% of them mentioned unstable connection as an issue (See Figure 21).

**Figure 21**

*Internet access at students' homes*

¿Dispone de acceso a internet en su vivienda?

32 responses



Similarly, this instrument inquired about technological devices since they were essential not only for taking the lessons but also for getting access to materials, slides, and activities. In this sense, all students had access to a computer but 53.1% shared it with other family members (See Figure 22).

**Figure 22**

*Availability of personal computers for academic use*

¿Dispone de un computador personal para su formación educativa?

32 responses



For tablets, only 9.4% had one to be used for everyone at home, 6.3% had their own tablet, and 84.4% didn't have one (See Figure 23).

**Figure 23**

*Availability of personal tablets for academic use*

¿Dispone de tablet personal para su formación educativa?



32 responses



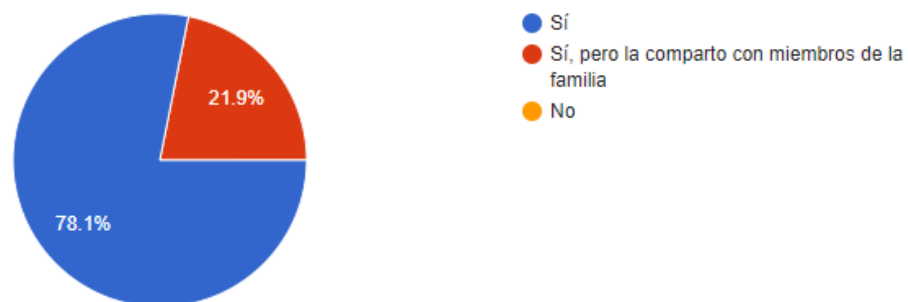
Another technological device asked for was the personal phone, in this question, 78.1% of the students had their own personal phone while 21.9% had to share it with other family members (See Figure 24).

**Figure 24***Availability of personal phones for academic use*

¿Dispone de celular personal para su formación educativa?



32 responses



One final question sought to know how familiar the students were with the virtual environment and their domain in ICT tools for learning. The results showed that half of the students were familiar with online lessons or skilled in using virtual tools (See Figure 25).

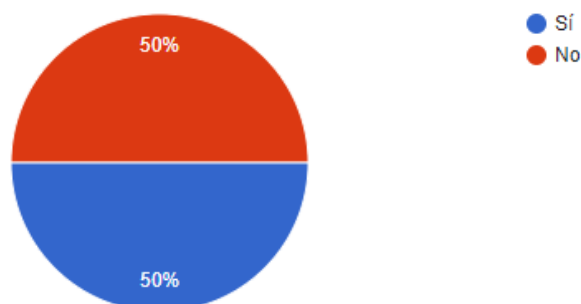
**Figure 25**

*Familiarization with the virtual environment and technological tools*

¿Está familiarizado con el entorno virtual y domina las herramientas tecnológicas para la enseñanza en línea?



32 responses



All previous information provided researchers with a clear landscape of students' perceptions and limitations for their test preparation, and it was highly comforting that students recognized the importance of preparing for the test and the implications of good results on it.

### 3.2 Implemented Activities

At the beginning of the intervention, it was necessary to establish the English level of the participants and the criteria for evaluating the English section of the Saber 11 test in its seven parts. For this, in the first lesson, students were tested with a placement test which would be a pre-test in this research that along with a post-test will measure the students' improvement.

#### 3.2.1 Pre-test

The placement test was designed through Google Forms taking into consideration Saber 11 and the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) tests to get students familiar with the format and evaluate their performance. The Preliminary English Test (PET) is an English exam that probes that learners can communicate in English in practical, everyday situations and sets a B1 English level in the CEFR (British Council, 2022). PET is

appropriate as a pre-test since according to MEN 11 graders should acquire a B1 level at the of high school.

As there is no standardized test similar to Saber 11, the placement test took Saber 11 and PET simulacrum's contents to create a placement test. Additionally, as the English section of the Saber 11 is mostly oriented to reading strategies, this intervention must take the same course. For this, the pre-test consisted of 42 questions divided into seven sections that evaluated different aspects of English necessary to address the Saber 11 test (See Annex D). The final sections included topics or strategies such as connectors, synonyms, verbs, and prepositions (See Table 5).

**Table 5**

*Pre-test sections*

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Knowledge evaluated</b>
5	Pragmatic knowledge
5	Reading comprehension
5	Grammatical knowledge
5	Lexical knowledge
10	Connectors
9	Prepositions
8	Verbs

The pre-test was designed to evaluate the aforementioned abilities and lexical knowledge of students and to place them in a CEFR English level. For this, it was considered the scores from the reading section of the Cambridge PET to establish the accurate percentages and scores of students in the test and identify their English level. The reading section of the PET consists of six parts with 32 questions (See Table 6).

**Table 6**

*Cambridge PET score table*

Practice test score	Cambridge English Scale Score	CEFR level
29	160	B2
23	140	B1
13	120	A2
5	102	

*Note:* Taken from Cambridge. (2020). The Cambridge English Scale explained. Cambridge Assessment English.

<https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/210434-converting-practice-test-scores-to-cambridge-english-scale-scores.pdf>

Considering that the pre-test consisted of 50 points it was necessary to equal the percentages from the reading section of the Cambridge PET which evaluates 32 points. For this, a direct rule of three was implemented to determine the percentage and score for each English level for the pre and post-test (See Table 7).

**Table 7**

*Score equivalency of Pre-test and post-test compared with Cambridge PET*

English level	Cambridge PET		Pre-test & Post-test
	Percentage (%)	Marks	Marks
B2	90.63%	29/32	45/50
B1	71.88%	23/32	36/50
A2	40.63%	13/32	20/50
A1	Less than 40.63%	Less than 13/32	Less than 20/50

The same placement test was implemented for pre and post-test, the pre-test at the beginning of the pedagogical intervention and the post-test at the end. Students were evaluated with the exact same test with an 8-week difference. Pre-service teachers sought to

measure the improvement of taking the same test, first without any preparation and, second with the proper instruction for the English section of the Saber 11 test.

### ***3.2.2 Google Classroom and Google Meet***

During the design and development of this intervention, Google apps were useful for different purposes since students are familiar with this workspace. A Google Classroom was created to provide students with a space to keep in touch with the interventions and pre-service teachers. In this workspace, pre-service teachers posted the Google Meet link for meeting students and teaching the lessons. Moreover, Google Classroom provided the opportunity to create modules for each intervention in which the slides, activities, materials, and links used in each lesson were included. Additionally, the platform allows students to write private comments to pre-service teachers.

### ***3.2.3 Materials and activities***

Materials and activities during the 8-week intervention varied trying to match the topic and strategy of the week with the best that could enhance students' understanding and retention. For this, resources from the internet allowed pre-service teachers to make the lessons more interactive using YouTube videos, online games, online worksheets, Kahoot!, etc. YouTube videos exemplified the topic and generated audiovisual input; online games allowed pre-service teachers to interact with students; online worksheets tested students' practical knowledge and taking advantage of the online format, students could practice at home to rehearse the topics of the lessons, and Kahoot set the field to be a little competitive and test the contents of the lesson.

Regarding games, web search, memory, guess the CityPlace, and description games were implemented to put the knowledge of language abilities into practice. Additionally, activities such as filling the gaps, multiple choice, correct or incorrect, cloze, highlight,

re-reading, unveiling the truth, matching, getting the gist, collaborative story-making, and connectors chain were strategies oriented to generate retention while practicing.

### **3.2.4 Lessons**

The interventions were set for each Saturday from 9 am to 12 pm from August 13th to October 1st. Each session was focussed on a specific language ability of the test with theoretical and practical exercises implementing ICT tools and reading strategies. Moreover, each of them followed the same structure, greeting, review of the previous topic, explanation of the new topic, theory, practice, and conclusion.

The pedagogical interventions were designed in an action plan that stipulated the language ability, objective of the lesson, grammar, vocabulary, language skills, materials, ICT tools implemented, activities, and types of assessment. Following the importance of the curriculum design, each intervention will be described in detail throughout the eight weeks, explaining the components of the action plan and how each was implemented in each lesson.

Regarding online activities and resources, online games were indicated because they create an interactive and motivating environment that easily and subconsciously helps to share information while the students play (Ashraf, 2014). Similarly, Kahoot! games are usually perceived as fun, engaging, motivating, and useful for learning by students (Cárdenas, 2020). However, online activities were not only used for reinforcement but to assess students as Quizzis that encourage students' confidence and their reading ability (Zuhriyah, 2020). Additionally, videos are effective tools for students to cope with learning difficulties in comprehending literary texts (Kaur et. al, 2014).

**3.2.4.1 Week 1: Introduction.** During this lesson, pre-service teachers explained the Saber 11 test structure, English sections, and evaluation criteria. For this, it was highly important that students understood each of the seven language abilities tested (Lexical knowledge,

Pragmatic knowledge, Communicative knowledge, Grammatical knowledge, reading comprehension, Inferential reading, and Grammatical knowledge based on a text). In relation to grammar, the class used present simple focusing on the reading skill.

In relation to the ICT tools, this intervention made use of Google Meet, Google Forms, and Google Classroom. Additionally, this intervention implemented the placement test o pre-test in order to establish not only students' English but a checkpoint for your improvement through the 8 weeks. Furthermore, students were required to complete a self-assessment rubric that sought to know their perceptions about the Saber 11 test, the English section, and general strategies during the exam. This rubric allowed pre-service teachers to know how well students understood the test, its purpose, and evaluation criteria. Finally, students were evaluated with summative assessment through the placement test and formative with feedback and the self-assessment rubric (See Table 8, Annex E).

**Table 8**

*Action plan - Week 1*

<b>Lesson 1</b>	August 13th
<b>Language ability</b>	Intervention introduction
<b>Objective(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students will be able to understand the Saber 11 test structure and sections</li> <li>● Students will be able to identify the components of the English section as well as the evaluation criteria</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar</b>	Present Simple
<b>Vocabulary</b>	English language abilities assessed by the Saber 11 test

<b>Learning skills</b>	Reading
<b>Materials</b>	Slides
<b>ICT tools</b>	Google Meet, Google Forms, Google Classroom
<b>Activities</b>	Placement test, Explanations (Course rules, Saber 11 test components and criteria, intervention's timeline)

### Types of Assessment

Summative	Formative
Placement test (Pre-test)	Feedback Self-Assessment

**3.2.4.2 Week 2: Lexical knowledge.** In this session, students practiced basic vocabulary and learn about the relations between descriptions and words. They used present simple to review lexical items related to animals and clothes focusing on reading, listening, and speaking skills. For this, materials included slides and reading complemented with ICT tools such as YouTube videos, online memory games, online worksheets, and Google apps previously mentioned.

In relation to activities, students put their knowledge into practice by playing a memory game, the adjective chain game, and an online worksheet. Regarding the assessment, it was only formative with constant feedback during the session and the usual self-assessment (See Table 9, Annex F).

**Table 9**

#### *Action plan - Week 2*

<b>Lesson 2</b>	August 20th
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<b>Language ability</b>	Lexical knowledge
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will be able to understand and use basic vocabulary for the Saber 11 test</li> <li>• Students will be able to understand descriptions and make relations with words</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar</b>	Present Simple
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Clothes, Animals
<b>Learning skills</b>	Reading, Listening, Speaking
<b>Materials</b>	Slides, Reading
<b>ICT tools</b>	Youtube video, online game (Memory game), online worksheet, Google Meet, Google Forms, Google Classroom
<b>Activities</b>	Memory game, worksheet, Adjective chain
<b>Types of Assessment</b>	
<b>Summative</b>	<b>Formative</b>
None	Feedback Self-Assessment

**3.2.4.3 Week 3: Pragmatic knowledge.** During the intervention of week 3, students learned and practiced how to recognize and relate signs, their purpose, and the place they can appear making logical relationships between them while assimilating lexical concepts with pragmatic knowledge. The lesson implemented present simple tense to review lexical items about city places, means of

transportation, and common objects focusing on reading, listening, and speaking. Slides and readings were used along with ICT tools such as Youtube videos, online games, and Kahoot through the Google apps.

This lesson also aimed to be more interactive with students and awaken their competitive spirit. For this, activities such as the Guess the Cityplace game, Kahoot! Game and a Description game were implemented to reinforce the previous lexical knowledge with the pragmatic part learned during the intervention. Finally, for the assessment, students were evaluated summatively through Kahoot! Game that measures participants' accuracy in answering the questions and establishes a podium for the best students. Also, students had constant feedback and answer the weekly self-assessment for their formative assessment (See Table 10, Annex G).

**Table 10**

*Action plan - Week 3*

<b>Lesson 3</b>	August 27th
<b>Language ability</b>	Pragmatic knowledge
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to recognize the communicative purpose of signs and the place where they can appear</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar</b>	Present Simple
<b>Vocabulary</b>	City places, Means of transportation, Common objects
<b>Learning skills</b>	Reading, Writing, Speaking
<b>Materials</b>	Slides, Reading
<b>ICT tools</b>	Youtube video, online game, Google Meet, Google Forms, Google Classroom, Kahoot

<b>Activities</b>	Guess the Cityplace game, Kahoot! Game, Description game	
<b>Types of Assessment</b>		
	<b>Summative</b>	<b>Formative</b>
	Kahoot	Feedback Self-Assessment

**3.2.4.3 Week 4: Communicative knowledge.** For the intervention of week 4, students were trained to understand and follow a common conversation preserving language pertinence and identifying its logical order of it. In this sense, students learned about formal vs informal conversations, as well as formal and informal vocabulary related to business, health, music, kitchen, hotel, security, and rules focussing on reading, listening, and speaking skills.

Regarding materials and activities, slides and readings were implemented along with filling the gaps, multiple choice, correct or incorrect, and cloze activities using ICT tools such as Youtube videos, online games (Quizziz), and online worksheets through the Google apps. For this week, only formative assessment was implemented through constant feedback and the weekly self-assessment rubric (See Table 11, Annex H).

**Table 11**

*Action plan - Week 4*

<b>Lesson 4</b>	September 3rd
<b>Language ability</b>	Communicative knowledge
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to understand and follow a conversation preserving language pertinence</li> </ul>

<b>Grammar</b>	Present Simple
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Formal vs Informal, Business, Health, Music, Kitchen, Hotel, Security, Rules
<b>Learning skills</b>	Reading, Listening, Speaking
<b>Materials</b>	Slides, Reading
<b>ICT tools</b>	Youtube video, online game (Quizziz), online worksheet, Google Meet, Google Forms, Google Classroom
<b>Activities</b>	Filling the gaps, Multiple choice, Correct or Incorrect, Cloze

#### **Types of Assessment**

<b>Summative</b>	<b>Formative</b>
None	Feedback Self-Assessment

**3.2.4.5 Week 5: Grammatical knowledge.** During this lesson, it was highly important that students learned about the correct form to fill the gaps in readings with the most appropriate word. For this, the grammar implemented covered present simple, present perfect, expressions for tenses, and types of connectors which are essential for the understanding of a text. This intervention focused on reading and writing skills making use of slides, readings, and ICT tools such as online worksheets, and a web whiteboard through the Google apps. Furthermore, the lesson included vocabulary related to connectors, demonstratives, possessive adjectives, comparatives, superlatives, adverbs, modals, fairy tales, and superheroes.

The activities were focused on making students work together creatively and fostering the initiative of looking for new knowledge. For this, activities such as collaborative story-making, connectors chain, filling the gaps, cloze, highlight, web search, and online worksheet were implemented. Finally, the self-assessment rubric and constant feedback part of the formative assessment of this lesson (See Table 12, Annex I).

**Table 12***Action plan - Week 5*

<b>Lesson 5</b>	September 10th
<b>Language ability</b>	Grammatical knowledge
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to understand a text and fill the gaps with the most appropriate word</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar</b>	Present Simple, Present Perfect, Expressions for tenses, Types of connectors
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Connectors, Demonstratives, Possessive adjectives, Comparatives, Superlatives, Adverbs, Modals, Fairy Tales, Superheroes
<b>Learning skills</b>	Reading, Writing
<b>Materials</b>	Slides, Reading
<b>ICT tools</b>	Online worksheet, Google Meet, Google Forms, Google Classroom, Web Whiteboard
<b>Activities</b>	Collaborative story-making, Connectors chain, Filling the gaps, Cloze, Highlight, Web search, Online worksheet

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### Types of Assessment

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Summative	Formative
None	Feedback Self-Assessment

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**3.2.4.6 Week 6: Reading comprehension.** During this intervention, students were trained to analyze and understand the correct meaning of a literal text. In this sense, it was necessary to review the type of connectors and use the present simple, present perfect, past simple, and past perfect tenses focusing on reading skills. For the lexical knowledge, the session managed topics such as traveling, vacations, and food in activities that involved ICT tools like online worksheets, and online memory games through the Google apps.

Moreover, activities focused on reading such as re-reading activities, memory games, and unveiling de truth were implemented to reinforce knowledge learned. Finally, constant feedback and the self-assessment rubric were used to provide a formative assessment (See Table 13, Annex J).

**Table 13**

*Action plan - Week 6*

<b>Lesson 6</b>	September 17th
<b>Language ability</b>	Reading comprehension
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students will be able to read a text and get a literal understanding of it</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar</b>	Present Simple, Present Perfect, Past Simple, Past Perfect, Expressions for tenses, Review: Types of connectors

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<b>Vocabulary</b>	Travelling, Vacations, Food
<b>Learning skills</b>	Reading
<b>Materials</b>	Slides, Reading
<b>ICT tools</b>	Online worksheet, online game (Memory game), Google Meet, Google Forms, Google Classroom
<b>Activities</b>	Re-reading activity, Memory game, Unveil de truth

#### **Types of Assessment**

<b>Summative</b>	<b>Formative</b>
None	Feedback Self-Assessment

**3.2.4.7 Week 7: Inferential reading process.** For this lesson, students were oriented to understand that during the reading process, inferential questions inquire about the author's intention and general and particular aspects of the text that are noteworthy. For this, it was necessary to review the types of connectors and use the present simple, present perfect, past simple, and past perfect tenses focused on reading skills.

Additionally, the vocabulary implemented during this intervention was environment and nature which was worked along with online worksheets and online memory games through activities such as highlighting, getting the gist, and matching using the Google apps. Finally, the assessment was formative using constant feedback and the weekly self-assessment rubric (See Table 14, Annex K).

**Table 14**

*Action plan - Week 7*

<b>Lesson 7</b>	September 24th
<b>Language ability</b>	Inferential reading process
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to get an inferential reading process about questions related to the author's intention, and general and particular aspects of the text that are noteworthy</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar</b>	Present Simple, Present Perfect, Past Simple, Past Perfect, Expressions for tenses, Review: Types of connectors
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Environment, Nature
<b>Learning skills</b>	Reading
<b>Materials</b>	Slides, Reading
<b>ICT tools</b>	Online worksheet, online game (Memory game), Google Meet, Google Forms, Google Classroom
<b>Activities</b>	Highlight, Getting the gist, Matching
<b>Types of Assessment</b>	
<b>Summative</b>	<b>Formative</b>
None	Feedback Self-Assessment

**3.2.4.8 Week 8: Grammatical knowledge based on a text.** The final intervention sought students' understanding and correct use of grammatical knowledge based on a text. For this, the lesson used the

present simple, present perfect, past simple, and past perfect tenses and their expressions. In relation to vocabulary, students reviewed prepositions of place, means of transport, and traveling focused on reading skills. ICT tools such as online worksheets and memory online games were combined with activities like Kahoot! game, filling the gaps, and cloze.

Finally, since this was the final intervention students were tested once again with a post-test in order to measure their improvement in the English section of the Saber 11 test. For this, pre-service teachers implemented the same placement test that students took at the beginning of the intervention. In this sense, the post-test was the summative assessment while the self-assessment rubric, constant feedback, and course evaluation were the formative assessment. The post-test and course evaluation will be detailed in the next section (See Table 15, Annex L).

**Table 15**

*Action plan - Week 8*

<b>Lesson 8</b>	October 1st
<b>Language ability</b>	Grammatical knowledge based on a text
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will be able to understand a text and fill the gaps with the most appropriate word</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar</b>	Present Simple, Present Perfect, Past Simple, Past Perfect, Expressions for tenses
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Prepositions of place, Means of transport, Travelling
<b>Learning skills</b>	Reading
<b>Materials</b>	Slides, Reading

<b>ICT tools</b>	Online worksheet, online game (Memory game), Google Meet, Google Forms, Google Classroom	
<b>Activities</b>	Kahoot! game, Filling the gaps, Cloze	
<b>Types of Assessment</b>		
	<b>Summative</b>	<b>Formative</b>
	None	Feedback
	Placement test (Post-test)	Self-Assessment
		Course Evaluation

### **3.2.5 Post-test**

The placement test implemented at the beginning of this pedagogical intervention was applied as a post-test. It is important to highlight that during the pre-test student did not have any type of feedback or answers from it in order to have real insights about the current students' knowledge of English, the Saber 11 test English sections, and their evaluation criteria. Therefore, the post-test measured their understanding of the test and English knowledge focused on reading skills. The results of the post-test and the subsequent analysis between the pre and post-test will be developed in the next sections (See Annex M).

### **3.2.6 Course evaluation**

Considering that this project is also a pedagogical intervention in a field with little or non-existent training in the school setting, it was important not only for the pre-service teachers to have feedback about the curriculum design, activities, strategies, and students' perceptions about the course but also for future researchers that could find this intervention

useful for following and similar implementations. The results of this course evaluation will be developed in the next section (See Annex N).

### **3.3 Activities Assessment**

#### ***3.3.1 Types of Assessment***

This pedagogical intervention was designed to improve students' performance not only in their English knowledge but their understanding of the Saber 11 test. Since, according to Boston (2002), "assessment encompasses teacher observation, classroom discussion, and analysis of student work, including homework and tests" (p.2). In this sense, the assessment process should be present during the lessons to provide students with a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, both, summative and formative assessments were implemented.

The summative applied placement tests, on the one hand, the pre-test at the beginning measured students' knowledge with any feedback or preparation and, on the other hand, the post-test measured their improvement at the end of the pedagogical intervention and after the proper preparation for the Saber 11 test. Furthermore, the formative assessment was presented through the weekly self-assessment rubric, constant feedback during the lessons, and the course evaluation.

Additionally, pre-service teachers implemented another research instrument, teachers' diaries to collect information lesson after lesson gathering feedback to enhance the following ones. All the instruments used for assessment will be described and analyzed throughout this section.

**3.3.1.1 Summative assessment.** This type of assessment was addressed as a quantitative research instrument to measure the students' knowledge between two points in time, at the beginning and at the end of the pedagogical intervention. Furthermore, summative assessment involves collecting, interpreting, and reporting evidence of learning in a specific

moment of time while formative measures the impact of the learning process (Dolin et al., 2018). This project implemented summative assessment through the previously mentioned placement tests: pre-test and post-test. The analysis of these tests will be developed later on in this section.

**3.3.1.2 Formative assessment.** Another type of assessment implemented during this pedagogical intervention was the formative assessment. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), this type of assessment considers all the activities that allow students and teachers to acquire knowledge and information to diagnose the teaching and learning process. For this pedagogical intervention, the formative assessment implemented was through self-assessment rubrics and constant feedback. Aligned with this, Boston (2002) states that “assessments become formative when the information is used to adapt teaching and learning to meet student needs” which in this particular case is the improvement of their English level along with better scores in the English section of the Saber 11 test.

### ***3.3.2 Pre-test and post-test analysis***

For the following analysis it was considered the results of both placement tests, the pre, and post-tests implemented at the beginning with no feedback or instruction and at the end with them. Furthermore, it is important to mention that the participants for the pre-test were the initial 32 students while the post-tests were 25 students therefore the percentages will be according to these participants. Moreover, the placement tests consisted of 42 questions of multiple choice with a score assigned for a total amount of 50 points. The analysis will be developed considering each section mentioned during this chapter in the pre-test section.

For pragmatic knowledge, students had to answer five questions. During the pre-test students' scores were between 46.9% and 71.9% while their performance in the post-test was

between 68% and 84%. The minimum increased by 32.2% while the maximum was 16% which shows an evident score increase (See Table 16).

**Tabla 16**

*Pragmatic knowledge section scores in pre and post-test*

Question	Pre-test results	Post-test results
1	68.8%	80%
2	71.9%	84%
3	62.5%	84%
4	56.3%	84%
5	46.9%	68%

Regarding reading comprehension, the outcomes show that in the pre-test the scores were between 40.6% and 81.3% while students' performance in the post-test was between 56% and 100%. The increase for the minimum was 40.7% while for the maximum was 44% (See Table 17).

**Tabla 17**

*Reading comprehension section scores in pre and post-test*

Question	Pre-test results	Post-test results
6	56.3%	96%
7	53.1%	72%
8	40.6%	64%
9	31.3%	56%
10	81.3%	100%

In relation to grammatical knowledge, the students' performance was established with pre-test scores between 59.4% and 90.6% and post-test scores between 72% and 92%. In this case, the minimum increased by 31.2% and the maximum by 20% (See Table 18).

**Tabla 18**

*Grammatical knowledge section scores in pre and post-test*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Pre-test results</b>	<b>Post-test results</b>
11	90.6%	88%
12	75%	92%
13	84.4%	84%
14	59.4%	72%
15	81.3%	76%

In the lexical knowledge section, the outcomes show scores from the pre-test between 25% and 40.6% while from the post-test were between 56% and 96%. For this section, there was an increase in the minimum of 15.6% and in the maximum of 40% (See Table 19).

**Tabla 19**

*Lexical knowledge section scores in pre and post-test*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Pre-test results</b>	<b>Post-test results</b>
16	25%	96%
17	31.3%	88%
18	40.6%	60%
19	28.1%	84%
20	28.1%	56%
21	28.1%	88%

The following section in the placement test is not part of the English section of the Saber 11 test but is the knowledge that pre-service teachers considered necessary to fully understand the readings of the test. According to Safaie (2020), connectors are linguistic devices necessary for cohesion which contributes to the reading comprehension process. Likewise, connectors help to relate the text segments with other ones by creating coherent mental representations of the reading (Kleijn et al., 2019). Moreover, pre-service teachers were aware that students are not usually trained in the reading elements essential to enhance their reading comprehension which would affect the correct or incorrect way of interpreting a text and responding appropriately.

For this section, the students' scores on the pre-test were between 15.6% and 40.6% while in the post-test were between 48% and 80%. These results show an increase in the minimum score of 25% while the maximum was 32% (See Table 20).

**Tabla 20**

*Connectors section scores in pre and post-test*

Question	Pre-test results	Post-test results
22	37.5%	80%
23	40.6%	76%
24	25%	68%
25	31.3%	60%
26	28.1%	48%
27	40.6%	64%
28	34.4%	68%
29	15.6%	68%
30	28.1%	32%
31	34.4%	53%

Another section that is not part of the Saber 11 test and the pre-service teachers added to the placement test was the use of prepositions. This part of the speech could be confusing for foreign language learners due to the different types, rules, and meanings which will mislead students in conveying or understanding a message (Anjayani & Suprpto, 2016). The students' performance in this section in the pre-test was between 46.9% and 71.9% while in the post-test was between 80% and 100%. In the minimum scores, the increase was 25% while for the maximum was 20% (See Table 21).

**Tabla 21**

*Prepositions section scores in pre and post-test*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Pre-test results</b>	<b>Post-test results</b>
32	56.3%	100%
33	65.6%	96%
34	71.9%	96%
35	59.4%	88%
36	53.1%	80%
37	62.5%	84%
38	71.9%	88%
39	53.1%	84%
40	46.9%	84%

The final section of the placement tests sought for students to recall knowledge about verbs and make a relationship with places or objects. During this section, the scores in the pre-test were between 18.8% and 40.6% while in the post-test were between 64% and 92%. This final section had an increase of 21.8% in the minimum score while the maximum was 28% (See Table 22).

**Tabla 22**

*Verbs section scores in pre and post-test*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Pre-test results</b>	<b>Post-test results</b>
35	40.6%	84%
36	40.6%	84%
37	37.5%	92%
38	18.8%	72%
39	18.8%	88%
40	28.1%	72%
41	31.3%	64%
42	37.5%	64%

These research instruments quantitatively measured the improvement of students in different topics or language abilities of students. The comparison of the results obtained by the students during the pre-test and post-test show a significant increase in both tests, both in the minimum and in the maximum results achieved (See Table 23).

**Tabla 23***Comparison of the minimum and maximum results in the pre-test and post-test*

<b>Section</b>	<b>Pre-test</b>		<b>Post-test</b>	
	<b>Minumum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Minumum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
<b>Pragmatic knowledge</b>	46.9%	79.1%	68%	84%
<b>Reading comprehension</b>	40.6%	81.3%	56%	100%
<b>Grammatical knowledge</b>	59.4%	90.6%	72%	92%
<b>Lexical knowledge</b>	25%	40.6%	56%	96%
<b>Connectors</b>	15.6%	40.6%	48%	80%
<b>Prepositions</b>	46.9%	71.9%	80%	100%
<b>Verbs</b>	18,8%	40.6%	64%	92%

Finally, the students' improvement was measured by the real increase of each section which was deduced from the subtraction of the percentages. For this, the lowest and highest value of the minimum and maximum scores were subtracted from each other to identify the difference (See Table 24). The improvement increase could be affected due to the different number of students at the beginning and at the end of the pedagogical interventions who took the placement tests. However, the results show that students improved their performance in each English section evaluated during these tests.

**Tabla 24**

*Increase in the students' improvement in each English section*

<b>Improvement increase</b>		
<b>Section</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
<b>Pragmatic knowledge</b>	32.2%	16%
<b>Reading comprehension</b>	40.7%	44%
<b>Grammatical knowledge</b>	31.2%	20%
<b>Lexical knowledge</b>	15.6%	40%
<b>Connectors</b>	25%	32%
<b>Prepositions</b>	25%	20%
<b>Verbs</b>	21.8%	28%

### **3.3.3 Self-assessment rubrics**

This research instrument was implemented at the end of each intervention in order to understand students' perceptions of the lesson. Each self-assessment provided indicators about the aspects that were well-developed or that need to be reformulated to enhance students' knowledge acquisition.

The self-assessment rubric inquired about a better understanding of the Saber 11 test structure, the purpose of each lesson and how well could students implement the strategies explained during the pedagogical intervention in the development of the Saber 11 test. For this, pre-service teachers designed and delivered a Google Forms composed of three statements that can be qualified through an agreement Likert scale with the options: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly agree. To proceed with the analysis is important to mention that throughout the 8 weeks of the pedagogical interventions, there was a slight decrease in the number of students that attended the lessons (See Table 25, Annex O).

**Table 25**

*Student attendance*

<b>Lesson / Week</b>	<b>Student attendance</b>
1	32
2	32
3	32
4	32
5	29
6	28
7	26
8	25

Regarding the data analysis for the 8-week self-assessment rubrics, the Google Forms statistics provided bar charts to visualize the results. From these charts, it was necessary to get the positive percentage of each aspect assessed in order to measure their effectiveness. For this, the responses corresponding to the Strongly agree and Agree values were added and assigned the percentage within the total values. The following table establishes the aforementioned positive percentages for each aspect and week (See Table 26).

**Table 26***Weekly positive results of the pedagogical intervention*

<b>Lesson</b>	<b>Saber 11 structure</b>	<b>Purpose of the section</b>	<b>Strategies applicable for Saber 11 test</b>
1	81,25%	84,38%	78,13%
2	93,75%	100%	93,75%
3	93,75%	100%	93,75%
4	93,75%	100%	100%
5	93,75%	93,75%	93,75%
6	100%	100%	100%
7	96,15%	96,15%	96,15%
8	96%	96%	96%

From the previous table, it was evident for pre-service teachers that students increasingly understood the test, the section of English studied, and the strategies presented week by week.

### **3.3.4 Teachers' diaries**

The weekly analysis of the data gathered from the self-assessment was not the only indicator of understanding or students' comfort in relation to the lessons. Pre-service teachers implemented teachers' diaries, a journal in which annotations added behaviors, perceptions, suggestions, and specific observations during each lesson (See Annex P).

In the first week, as interventions were something new for students some of them arrived late and had internet issues. Also, it was common that students were reluctant to participate showing a lack of confidence due to unknown classmates.

For the second week, internet issues prevailed, and considering that the previous class students were shy to interact, pre-service teachers implemented icebreakers to help students

communicate between them. Even though most of the students were willing to turn on their cameras, some did not participate at all in the activities. The audiovisual materials were a good choice since students demonstrated that they enjoyed it and made instructions less tedious.

In relation to the third week, considering the persistent internet issues that students had, pre-service teachers decreased the video quality to make it accessible for them. Regarding the content and participation, more lexical activities were included which got students more engaged. However, students mentioned problems attending the classes due to parallel school activities and some of them could not recall the previous class topics.

The lesson in the fourth week was not different from the previous ones in relation to internet issues and the assistance decreased. However, students were more confident which was reflected when students performed better in the activities.

In the fifth week, the internet issues were a constant that pre-service teachers were aware of and remembered students that all the materials and slides were archived in the Google Classroom in order to review them later. During this lesson, students worked cooperatively and some of them really showed improvement in understanding and applying the strategies. At this point, the content started to be challenging for some students therefore pre-service teachers slowed the pace of the lesson for them and gathered opinions and suggestions for diversifying the readings.

For the sixth week, the difficulty of the content increased for some students and required extra instruction. However, many others showed a better understanding and the correlation between the topics, the strategies, and the purpose of the English sections of the Saber 11 test which resulted in clear improvement. Moreover, the internet issues and the attendance decreasing continue to be a constant.

In relation to the seventh and considering the decrease in attendance, the review took on an increasingly important role in each lesson. The inferencing strategies were praised by the students whose understanding was significant and their confidence in one of the most challenging sections of the test increased.

In the eighth week and final lesson, students were recognized for their commitment during the pedagogical interventions. Additionally, pre-service teachers noticed a decrease in attendance but the placement test (post-test) was implemented. They also asked for the collaboration of the students to assess the intervention by completing a course evaluation explained in detail in the next section. Finally, students provided information on how to improve these types of interventions.

### ***3.3.5 Course evaluation***

At the end of the 8-week pedagogical intervention, pre-service teachers designed and implemented a course evaluation in order to measure students' perceptions of the learning process. This evaluation was delivered to students during the last lesson through Google Forms composed of nine statements that can be qualified through an agreement Likert scale with the options: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly agree, and two more about the type of environment (See Annex N).

The analysis of this research instrument for the first nine statements followed the same criteria as the one for the self-assessment rubrics. The outcomes showed that students had good perceptions about the interventions, and methodology, as well as their understanding and confidence about the English section of the Saber 11 test (See Table 27).

**Table 27**

*Perceptions of the pedagogical intervention in the course evaluation*

#	Statement	Positive %
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1	I can identify better the Saber 11 test structure	96%
2	I can understand the purpose of each English section	96%
3	I can apply strategies to cope with each English section	96%
4	I can recognize the improvement by taking the simulacrum at the beginning and at the end of the intervention	92%
5	The intervention was significant and relevant to my academic training and preparation for the Saber 11 exam.	96%
6	Explanations and contents were organized and adequate to our needs	84%
7	The time was adequate for a good understanding of the contents of the intervention	88%
8	I feel more prepared and confident about taking the Saber 11 test	96%
9	The intervention should be part of 11-grade curriculum	92%

The results of these statements showed that after the pedagogical interventions, 96% of students were more familiar with the Saber 11 test structure, its English section, and strategies to cope with the section. Moreover, students' self-perceptions of their improvement during the pre and post-test was 92%, a criterion highly important since the lack of confidence was experienced by students due to lack of preparation for the Saber 11 test. Indeed, in a statement related to confidence, 96% of students demonstrated proved to be more confident and were better prepared to face the exam. Likewise, the interventions seemed to be meaningful for students, 96% of them recognized the instruction as accurate not only for the test but also for their academic life. Even though contents, explanations, and time also showed a good percentage (84% - 88%), these criteria are factors to consider in future implementations. The last statement of this Likert Scale inquired about what the students thought in relation to whether interventions like these should be part of the 11th-grade curriculum and the outcomes showed that 92% of them believe that is something necessary for their academic training and future challenges.

Additionally, two more statements related to the setting were tested. The first one sought to know about how or where these pedagogical interventions should be implemented and 60% of students consider that in-person environments could be more beneficial for their understanding. The second one inquired about the setting as well but considering the language contents, abilities, and skills, in this aspect students equally considered the in-person interventions as the more accurate with 60% of approval.

### **3.4 General Assessment of the intervention**

This project started considering and analyzing the antecedents in relation to the performance of 11th-grade students in the Saber 11 tests during the last years in the English section. Historical records show very poor performance in this area which according to the MEN students should reach level B1 in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). As pre-service teachers, it is important to contribute to students' training but also to prepare them for their academic future. In this sense, the instruction gap in relation to the preparation for the Saber 11 test was the starting point for designing and implementing these pedagogical interventions and helping students to improve their performance in the English section of the test.

During the development of this project, it was created and implemented different research instruments and tools that could not only provide students with the best way to understand the test and strategies to cope with it but also measure their improvement through the eight-week interventions. The socioeconomic questionnaire allowed the pre-service teachers to know the current needs and limitations of the students to design the interventions as suitable as possible. Moreover, in order to establish the purpose and responsibilities of everyone involved in the project, the consent form had a good reception among parents and students who decided to be participants in it.

Additionally, the implementation of the placement tests was a key point to identify not only students' weaknesses and strengths but also enhancing the interventions design and measuring students' performance at two different points in time. These tests proved that with proper instruction students could get better scores and understanding in the English section of the Saber 11 test.

Regarding the online environment, activities, and resources, students enjoy the setting and the learning process but it was clear that considering the topics and the internet issues, the in-person environment could be better. Furthermore, the self-assessment rubrics showed the design of the interventions was appropriate for the students and helpful in their content.

The last two instruments, the teachers' diaries, and the course evaluation were necessary to identify positive aspects and things to improve, useful observations, and measure the course. These instruments proved that the action research spiral was adequate for this type of study in which constant feedback will result in constant improvement.

#### **4. Conclusions and Recommendations**

During eight weeks, these pedagogical interventions allowed pre-service teachers to put into practice their knowledge and creativity for contributing to the community and the academy. This was possible thanks to the agreement between the Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata and the Universidad Industrial de Santander. The biggest motivation for the development of this project was to fulfill a gap in the curriculum of the high school. The gap found during preliminary research was that 11 graders were not accomplishing the expectations of the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) which establishes that 11th-grade students should have a B1 level in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

The teaching and learning process experimented with a crucial change during the pandemic situation of 2020. During this sanitary epidemic, the world adopted new strategies

to continue the work and educational functions which the most used and versatile was the implementation of the online environment. In this setting, the educational field found new resources barely explored in most of the traditional cases. Online activities, worksheets, games, and other materials provided a connection with a digital native community as the students of this decade. However, for teachers who based their instruction on traditional methods, the online environment was a new challenge that requires additional training. Furthermore, educational institutions and students' homes had to acquire technological devices such as computers, tablets, or cell phones as well as obtain internet access or a better connection to be able to take classes properly.

The aforementioned situations could affect students' knowledge acquisition and subsequent performance in their grades. Moreover, the situation for 11th-grade students adds another factor, the Saber 11 test whose results could determine their enrollment in higher education institutions. Given that in Colombia, access to higher education in public institutions the best test scores are the more likely that they could have a place in a university course, it is essential that students have adequate complementary training for the test during the last year of secondary school. This gap was identified by pre-service teachers who found the opportunity to help 11th-grade students of the Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata to get better scores in the English section of the Saber 11 test to become the main objective of this project. Furthermore, getting better scores on the exam is not only beneficial for students, but the institution also gains national renown and status, positioning it in a better place in the best national high school ranking.

These interventions enlightened pre-service teachers about the socioeconomic situation of the students as well as their technological limitations. In this sense, they were aware that even two years later, some students still have internet issues and non-optimal or shared technological equipment to take classes. For this, pre-service teachers established a

Google Classroom to upload the slides, materials, and any online resources so that students with a bad connection could review them again after the intervention and practice what they learned. Moreover, students mentioned the importance of this extra-curricular training for their future and believe that it is necessary to implement similar courses to be prepared not only for the Saber 11 test but also for their future academic life in higher education.

Regarding the results from the pre-test, students are not familiar with topics such as connectors, prepositions, and verbs, as well as learning abilities such as reading comprehension, inferential reading, and lexical knowledge. For connectors, prepositions, verbs, and lexical knowledge activities such as online games and memory games were the most adequate. In addition, reading comprehension and inferential reading strategies such as highlighting, getting the gist, matching, re-reading activities, memory games, and unveiling the truth enhanced students' understanding of it.

After the pedagogical interventions, pre-service teachers became more knowledgeable in relation to designing lessons and action plans for specific purposes as well as more creative and recursive to create classes that take as their basis online environment and resources. However, they understood that being cautious and anticipating the limitations of students in relation to connectivity and technological devices should not continue to be a limitation, so looking for alternatives so that students have equitable access to slides, materials, and online resources is a necessity. For this, workspaces such as Google Classroom, or Google Drive could be an alternative to storage and shared educational material.

Furthermore, by applying the action research spiral pre-service teachers were witnesses to the importance of constant feedback. Research instruments such as the weekly self-assessment rubrics, teachers' diaries, and the course evaluation provided pre-service teachers with the necessary observations, suggestions, and students' perceptions about the pedagogical interventions that could enhance lesson after lesson. In addition, this information

is essential for future researchers and teachers that find this design appropriate to be replicated and implemented for similar purposes. Since the action plan of this project was based mostly on improving reading abilities, it could be also implemented for this purpose in the English class.

Another aspect important for pre-service teachers was their contribution to the institution and the students, as well as the academic community. In relation to the first ones, students became more confident and knowledgeable about language abilities and how to face the Saber 11 test. Also, the institution is expected to reconsider that 11th-grade students need extra-curricular instruction and design and implement courses like these not only for the English section but also in other areas. In this way, students could be more prepared to face the exam and their further studies, and the institution could provide high-quality education for future professionals.

Regarding recommendations, the development of these interventions, and the implementation of different research instruments not only provided insights and suggestions for future researchers but also key points to ensure the correct measurement of student improvement. For instance, in order to have consistent results in the measurements of the placement tests, it is necessary to have the same amount of students at the beginning and at the end. Additionally, in relation to the environment, even though the online setting provided many resources for the instruction, practice, and assessment of the pedagogical intervention, some students mentioned the lack of face-to-face interaction as something necessary for the social factor but also to cover technological limitations and internet issues. Furthermore, the creation of new material based on more recent and attractive topics is fundamental for engaging students in the reading process. The choice of topics should be based on the tastes of the young population to which it is addressed as well as their social and cultural context.

Finally, as pre-service teachers and spreaders of knowledge, encourage students of the program of Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en Inglés and any other similar teaching programs to continue the exploration of new alternatives to fulfill students' needs that appear according to the new challenges with which the world can challenge teaching and learning. Moreover, this pedagogical intervention sought to motivate teachers to analyze the changing educational landscape, its gaps and to be creative to find a proper solution so that the generation and transmission of knowledge are increasingly within the reach of all. It is important that teachers understand that teaching and researching are both tools that help to improve learning processes and that their profession requires them to think out of the box and beyond the walls of a classroom while impacting many lives in different ways. For educational institutions, pre-service teachers suggest address their instruction on formative assessment and constant feedback following a spiral shape to get the snowball effect of improvement and foster students' confidence not only in the English subject but as future professionals. Furthermore, this project is a call for the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) to reconsider that 11th-grade students require extra-curricular training not only to get better results in the Saber 11 test and to be students' performance aligned with its expectations but also that they could require additional guidance for their future in higher education.

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## Annexes

### Annex A. Inter-institutional support agreement for the realization of social internships as a degree work modality

#### CONVENIO DE APOYO INTERINSTITUCIONAL PARA LA REALIZACIÓN DE PRÁCTICAS SOCIALES COMO MODALIDAD DE TRABAJO DE GRADO CELEBRADO ENTRE LA UNIVERSIDAD INDUSTRIAL DE SANTANDER Y XXXX (ENTIDAD)

Entre los suscritos a saber, por una parte, **Institución Educativa Técnico Damaso Zapata** con NIT XXXXXXXXXXXX, la cual fue constituida mediante escritura pública XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX representada en este acto por su Rector XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX (Nombre de quien representa legalmente a la ENTIDAD), mayor de edad, identificado con la cédula de ciudadanía número XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX expedida en XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX, todo lo cual consta en el certificado de existencia y representación expedido por la Cámara de Comercio de XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX, copia de la cual se adjunta, ENTIDAD que en adelante y para todos los efectos del presente documento se denominará XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX (Sigla si aplica), y por la otra, la Universidad Industrial de Santander, ente universitario autónomo del orden departamental, creada mediante Ordenanzas 41 de 1940 y 83 de 1944 de la Asamblea Departamental de Santander, reglamentada por el Decreto 1300 de Junio 30 de 1982 de la Gobernación de Santander, Institución de Educación Superior reconocida por el Ministerio de Educación Nacional mediante Decreto 583 de 25 de Febrero de 1947, con NIT. 890.201.213-4 y domicilio principal en la ciudad de Bucaramanga, representada en el presente acto por XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX en su calidad de\_\_\_\_(Denominación del cargo) identificado(a) con cédula de ciudadanía No. xxxxxx expedida en xxxxxxxx, todo lo cual consta en la Resolución de nombramiento No. xxxx del (día) de (mes) de (año) y en el acta de posesión xxxxx del (día) de (mes) de (año), facultado para suscribir el presente convenio en virtud de las Resoluciones Nos. xxxx de xxxx y xxxx de xxxx, entidad que en adelante y para todos los efectos del presente documento se denominará LA UNIVERSIDAD, hemos convenido en celebrar el presente CONVENIO DE APOYO INTERINSTITUCIONAL PARA EL DESARROLLO DE PRÁCTICAS SOCIALES COMO MODALIDAD DE TRABAJO DE GRADO, que se registrá por las siguientes cláusulas:

*Link:* [Minuta de Convenio.docx](#)

### Annex B. Consent form

## Consentimiento Informado

### Consentimiento Informado

#### Intervención: Preparación Prueba Saber 11 en el área de Inglés

Por medio de este documento se informa de las intervenciones extracurriculares sabáticas que serán provistas por los profesores **Jam Centeno Ayala, Mauricio Alberto Ortiz Maldonado y Cristian Camilo Valbuena Salina**, como parte de su trabajo de grado orientado a la práctica social. Los profesores son estudiantes del programa de Licenciatura en lenguas extranjeras con énfasis en inglés de la **Universidad Industrial de Santander** quienes a través del convenio con la **Institución Técnico Educativa Dámaso Zapata**, impartirán clases guiadas a los contenidos de la prueba Saber 11.

*Link:* <https://forms.gle/4k7rLnRqUsekwYAw5>

**Annex C. Socioeconomic questionnaire**

## Cuestionario socioeconómico - Pre-ICFES Inglés

Este cuestionario es un instrumento de investigación que busca recolectar datos sobre los estudiantes de 11 grado de la Institución Técnico Educativa Dámaso Zapata de Bucaramanga. Con esto, el personal educativo a cargo del curso de Pre-ICFES para el área de inglés podrá entender las posibilidades y limitaciones del alumnado.

Los datos proporcionado serán anónimos y de carácter investigativo, no serán compartidos.

Agradecemos enormemente su sinceridad y colaboración.

**Link:** <https://forms.gle/yMMw2h81mjPjOXi5A>

**Annex D. Pre-test**

## Pre-Test

This exam is a positioning test to assess the knowledge and command of the English language at the B1 level required for 11th grade students in Colombia.

**Link:** <https://forms.gle/H7BxVpaKVzVRUasy9>

**Annex E. Lesson plan Week 1**

Lesson Plan - Week 1					
<b>Date:</b>	August 13th	<b>Teachers</b>	Jam Centeno Camilo Valbuena Mauricio Ortiz	<b>Institution</b>	Institución Técnico Educativa Damaso Zapata
<b>Language ability</b>		<b>Subject</b>	Saber 11 - English Intervention	<b>Grade</b>	11th grade
None		<b>English level</b>	A1 - B1	<b>Length</b>	3 hours
<b>Brief description of learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students of this intervention are around 16 years old and are currently in grade 11 at the Dámaso Zapata Technical Educational Institution.</li> <li>In accordance with the statutes established by the Ministry of National Education, 11th-grade students must be positioned at the B1 level of English language proficiency.</li> <li>The motivations of the students are the understanding of the Saber 11 test and improvement in the English section of it, as well as the acquisition of new strategies that can help them not only in the development of the test but also in their academic training.</li> </ul>				

**Link:** [Lesson Plan - Week 1.docx](#)

### Annex F. Lesson plan Week 2

Lesson Plan - Week 2					
<b>Date:</b>	August 20th	<b>Teachers</b>	Jam Centeno Camilo Valbuena Mauricio Ortiz	<b>Institution</b>	Institución Técnico Educativa Damaso Zapata
<b>Language ability</b>		<b>Subject</b>	Saber 11 - English Intervention	<b>Grade</b>	11th grade
Lexical knowledge		<b>English level</b>	A1 - B1	<b>Length</b>	3 hours
<b>Brief description of learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students of this intervention are around 16 years old and are currently in grade 11 at the Dámaso Zapata Technical Educational Institution.</li> <li>In accordance with the statutes established by the Ministry of National Education, 11th-grade students must be positioned at the B1 level of English language proficiency.</li> <li>The motivations of the students are the understanding of the Saber 11 test and improvement in the English section of it, as well as the acquisition of new strategies that can help them not only in the development of the test but also in their academic training.</li> </ul>				

**Link:** [Lesson Plan - Week 2.docx](#)

### Annex G. Lesson plan Week 3

Lesson Plan - Week 3					
<b>Date:</b>	August 27th	<b>Teachers</b>	Jam Centeno Camilo Valbuena Mauricio Ortiz	<b>Institution</b>	Institución Técnico Educativa Damaso Zapata
<b>Language ability</b>		<b>Subject</b>	Saber 11 - English Intervention	<b>Grade</b>	11th grade
Lexical knowledge		<b>English level</b>	A1 - B1	<b>Length</b>	3 hours
<b>Brief description of learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students of this intervention are around 16 years old and are currently in grade 11 at the Dámaso Zapata Technical Educational Institution.</li> <li>In accordance with the statutes established by the Ministry of National Education, 11th grade students must be positioned at the B1 level of English language proficiency.</li> <li>The motivations of the students are the understanding of the Saber 11 test and improvement in the English section of it, as well as the acquisition of new strategies that can help them not only in the development of the test but also in their academic training.</li> </ul>				

**Link:** [Lesson Plan - Week 3.docx](#)

**Annex H. Lesson plan Week 4**

Lesson Plan - Week 4					
<b>Date:</b>	September 3rd	<b>Teachers</b>	Jam Centeno Camilo Valbuena Mauricio Ortíz	<b>Institution</b>	Institución Técnico Educativa Damaso Zapata
<b>Language ability</b>		<b>Subject</b>	Saber 11 - English Intervention	<b>Grade</b>	11th grade
Communicative knowledge		<b>English level</b>	A1 - B1	<b>Length</b>	3 hours
<b>Brief description of learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The students of this intervention are around 16 years old and are currently in grade 11 at the Dámaso Zapata Technical Educational Institution.</li> <li>• In accordance with the statutes established by the Ministry of National Education, 11th-grade students must be positioned at the B1 level of English language proficiency.</li> <li>• The motivations of the students are the understanding of the Saber 11 test and improvement in the English section of it, as well as the acquisition of new strategies that can help them not only in the development of the test but also in their academic training.</li> </ul>				

*Link:* [Lesson Plan - Week 4.docx](#)

**Annex I. Lesson plan Week 5**

Lesson Plan - Week 5					
<b>Date:</b>	September 10th	<b>Teachers</b>	Jam Centeno Camilo Valbuena Mauricio Ortíz	<b>Institution</b>	Institución Técnico Educativa Damaso Zapata
<b>Language ability</b>		<b>Subject</b>	Saber 11 - English Intervention	<b>Grade</b>	11th grade
Grammatical knowledge		<b>English level</b>	A1 - B1	<b>Length</b>	3 hours
<b>Brief description of learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The students of this intervention are around 16 years old and are currently in grade 11 at the Dámaso Zapata Technical Educational Institution.</li> <li>• In accordance with the statutes established by the Ministry of National Education, 11th-grade students must be positioned at the B1 level of English language proficiency.</li> <li>• The motivations of the students are the understanding of the Saber 11 test and improvement in the English section of it, as well as the acquisition of new strategies that can help them not only in the development of the test but also in their academic training.</li> </ul>				

*Link:* [Lesson Plan - Week 5.docx](#)

**Annex J. Lesson plan Week 6**

Lesson Plan - Week 6					
<b>Date:</b>	September 17th	<b>Teachers</b>	Jam Centeno Camilo Valbuena Mauricio Ortíz	<b>Institution</b>	Institución Técnico Educativa Damaso Zapata
<b>Language ability</b>		<b>Subject</b>	Saber 11 - English Intervention	<b>Grade</b>	11th grade
Reading comprehension		<b>English level</b>	A1 - B1	<b>Length</b>	3 hours
<b>Brief description of learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students of this intervention are around 16 years old and are currently in grade 11 at the Dámaso Zapata Technical Educational Institution.</li> <li>In accordance with the statutes established by the Ministry of National Education, 11th-grade students must be positioned at the B1 level of English language proficiency.</li> <li>The motivations of the students are the understanding of the Saber 11 test and improvement in the English section of it, as well as the acquisition of new strategies that can help them not only in the development of the test but also in their academic training.</li> </ul>				

**Link:** [Lesson Plan - Week 6.docx](#)

**Annex K. Lesson plan Week 7**

Lesson Plan - Week 7					
<b>Date:</b>	September 24th	<b>Teachers</b>	Jam Centeno Camilo Valbuena Mauricio Ortíz	<b>Institution</b>	Institución Técnico Educativa Damaso Zapata
<b>Language ability</b>		<b>Subject</b>	Saber 11 - English intervention	<b>Grade</b>	11th grade
Inferential reading process		<b>English level</b>	A1 - B1	<b>Length</b>	3 hours
<b>Brief description of learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students of this intervention are around 16 years old and are currently in grade 11 at the Dámaso Zapata Technical Educational Institution.</li> <li>In accordance with the statutes established by the Ministry of National Education, 11th-grade students must be positioned at the B1 level of English language proficiency.</li> <li>The motivation of the students are the understanding of the Saber 11 test and improvement in the English section of it, as well as the acquisition of new strategies that can help them not only in the development of the test but also in their academic training.</li> </ul>				

**Link:** [Lesson Plan - Week 7.docx](#)

**Annex L. Lesson plan Week 8**

Lesson Plan - Week 8					
<b>Date:</b>	October 1st	<b>Teachers</b>	Jam Centeno Camilo Valbuena Mauricio Ortíz	<b>Institution</b>	Institución Técnico Educativa Damaso Zapata
<b>Language ability</b>		<b>Subject</b>	Saber 11 - English Intervention	<b>Grade</b>	11th grade
Grammatical knowledge based on a text		<b>English level</b>	A1 - B1	<b>Length</b>	3 hours
<b>Brief description of learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The students of this intervention are around 16 years old and are currently in grade 11 at the Dámaso Zapata Technical Educational Institution.</li> <li>• In accordance with the statutes established by the Ministry of National Education, 11th-grade students must be positioned at the B1 level of English language proficiency.</li> <li>• The motivations of the students are the understanding of the Saber 11 test and improvement in the English section of it, as well as the acquisition of new strategies that can help them not only in the development of the test but also in their academic training.</li> </ul>				

**Link:** [Lesson Plan - Week 8.docx](#)

**Annex M. Post-test**

## Post-Test



This exam is a positioning test to assess the knowledge and command of the English language at the B1 level required for 11th grade students in Colombia.

**Link:** <https://forms.gle/sajvGPz8Ydx8jb2e9>

**Annex N. Course evaluation**

## Course Evaluation

- This course evaluation format aims to follow students' perceptions about the interventions.
- This format would not affect your learning process or any grades at Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata.
- The format protects students' identity so, they can express themselves freely.
- Finally, this assessment could help to improve the future interventions and research.

**Link:** <https://forms.gle/KPpqj7vANvABLKXd9>

## Annex O. Self-assessment rubric

### Self-Assessment - Week 1

- This self-assessment format aims to follow students' perceptions about their learning process during this weekly intervention.
- This format would not affect your learning process or any grades at Institución Educativa Técnico Dámaso Zapata.
- The format protects students' identity so, they can express themselves freely.
- Finally, this assessment could help to improve the interventions.

**Link:** <https://forms.gle/UFVzwbZGUVewK6KL6>

## Annex P. Teachers' diaries

Teachers' diary			
<b>Week</b>	1	<b>Date</b>	13/08//2022
<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Weaknesses</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivation</li> <li>• Quantity of students</li> <li>• They stayed until the end</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low English level</li> <li>• Lack of participation</li> <li>• Cameras off</li> </ul>	
Additional observations			
<p>Today's virtual class was a bit of a struggle. The students arrived a little late, which caused us to start the class later than planned. When we finally got started, most of the students were quiet and didn't seem to want to participate. I tried to encourage them to speak up and ask questions, but it was difficult to get them to engage.</p> <p>Unfortunately, we also had some internet issues that made it difficult for everyone to connect and stay connected. This added an extra layer of difficulty to an already challenging class.</p> <p>I noticed that a lot of the students seemed to lack confidence since there were students from different classrooms. This may have been why they were hesitant to speak up and participate. I encouraged the students to speak up and participate, reminding them that this was a safe space for learning and that making mistakes. It's something that I will need to address in the future and find ways to build their confidence.</p>			

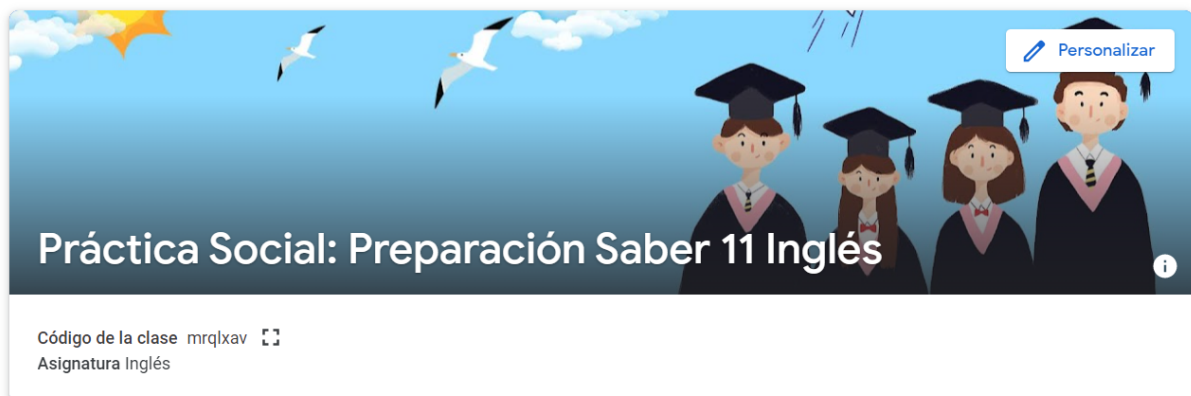
*Link:* [Teacher's Diary](#)

### Annex Q. Slides & Materials



*Link:* [Materials](#)

### Annex R. Classroom



*Link:* <https://classroom.google.com/c/NDcyMTc1MjE4NTIz>