PERTINENCE OF THE MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES USED BY THE PROGRAM OF BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN MODERN LANGUAGES ENGLISH-FRENCH PROFESSORS, IN THE STRENGTHENING OF THE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN THE STUDENTS OF FIFTH AND SIXTH SEMESTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAUCA, SANTANDER.



Presented by:

ASTRID PRISILLA BOLAÑOS RAMOS LEONARDO FABIO MUÑOZ MUÑOZ YENIFER NATALIA ROSERO ZEMANATE

UNIVERSIDAD DEL CAUCA FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y SOCIALES PROGRAMA DE LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS, INGLÉS Y FRANCÉS

SANTANDER DE QUILICHAO 2019

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PERTINENCIA DE LOS MATERIALES Y ACTIVIDADES UTILIZADOS POR LOS DOCENTES DEL PROGRAMA DE LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS, INGLÉS-FRANCÉS EN EL FORTALECIMIENTO DE LA COMPETENCIA COMUNICATIVA DE LOS ESTUDIANTES DE QUINTO Y SEXTO SEMESTRE, DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DEL CAUCA, SEDE NORTE.

Presented by:

ASTRID PRISILLA BOLAÑOS RAMOS

LEONARDO FABIO MUÑOZ MUÑOZ

YENIFER NATALIA ROSERO ZEMANATE

Chairperson:

Mg. CLAUDIA CRISTINA CERON RUIZ
UNIVERSIDAD DEL CAUCA

FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS HUMANAS Y SOCIALES

PROGRAMA DE LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS MODERNAS, INGLÉS Y

FRANCÉS

SANTANDER DE QUILICHAO, COLOMBIA. 2019

The undersigned committee of Human and Social Sciences School approves the project developed by Astrid Prisilla Bolaños Ramos, Leonardo Fabio Muñoz Muñoz and Yenifer Natalia Rosero Zemanate entitled:

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M. Cristian Salazar
M. Adriana Idrobo Hurtado
M. Claudia Cristina Ceron Rui

Acknowledgments

"The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of Thanksgiving".

Psalm 28:7 NLT

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Everlasting God for being my strength, my rock, my fortress, and being the one in whom I took refuge when I needed it the most. I also owe my deepest gratitude to my Dad, Jairo Bolaños and my Mom, Blanca Nubia Ramos who have been my support, and my inspiration during my whole life. They have taught me to not be afraid, be courageous and to stand firm to continue with my projects; no matter the hurdles on the road. I would like to thank my beloved nephew Luis Angel Yonda for joining me on this journey. Special thanks to my chairperson Claudia Cristina Cerón for giving us constructive comments and warm encouragement. I'm particularly grateful for the assistance given by Cristian Salazar and Adriana Idrobo, and last but not least, I want to thank Leonardo and Natalia because without them this project would not have materialized.

ASTRID PRISILLA BOLAÑOS RAMOS

First of all, I want to thank God for all the blessings in my life. I truly thank and appreciate all the support my family gave me especial my mother Senaida Omar Muñoz and my nephew Juan David Muñoz who have been my inspiration to be successful in this research project. Secondly, I'm very grateful to my partners for being my friends and being with me through the smooth and the rough times. Last but not least, I am very thankful to Claudia Cristina Ceron for being our guide through all of this important process.

LEONARDO FABIO MUÑOZ MUÑOZ

"None is more impoverished that the one who has no gratitude. Gratitude is a currency that we can mint for ourselves, and spend without fear of bankruptcy" - Fred De Witt Van

Amburgh

Everything started with a dream and after five years it has finally come true. First and foremost, thanks to God for the blessings received and for my lovely family. I want to express my gratitude to my mother Francia Rocio Zemanate Diaz for all the love and the support that she has given me every day of my life, and for being my role model. To my grandparents who are always cheering me on and protecting me with their love. To my siblings that are my motivation to be a better person for them and for the world. Lastly, to Claudia Cristina Ceron for guiding us and encouraging us through this process.

YENIFER NATALIA ROSERO ZEMANATE

Abstract

This research project was aimed at determining the pertinence of materials and activities used by the Modern Language English and French Program professors in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao. This research had a quantitative approach and a descriptive design with the purpose of determining the pertinence of the materials and activities. On the other hand, in the methodology a semi-structured interview and an assessment matrix were used; in order to recognize the different materials and activities used by professors of English and French and to verify its pertinence in the strengthening of the communicative competence. Lastly, the results of this investigation revealed that materials and activities used by professors of English and French strengthen the communicative competence.

Key words: Activity, Material, Communicative competence

Resumen

El presente estudio investigativo tuvo como propósito determinar la pertinencia de las actividades y los materiales utilizados por los profesores del programa de lenguas modernas, inglés y francés, en el fortalecimiento de la competencia comunicativa en los estudiantes de quinto y sexto semestre de la Universidad del Cauca, sede Norte. Para efectos de determinar la pertinencia de los materiales y actividades, se acudió a la utilización de un diseño descriptivo y un enfoque comunicativo. Por otro lado, en la metodología fueron utilizadas una entrevista semi estructurada y una matriz de valoración, con el fin de reconocer los materiales y las actividades empleados por los profesores de Inglés y Francés, y verificar la pertinencia de los mismos en el fortalecimiento de la competencia comunicativa. Finalmente, los resultados arrojaron que los materiales y las actividades utilizados por los docentes de Inglés y Francés fortalecen el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa.

Palabras claves: Actividad, Material, Competencia comunicativa.

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1. Introduction

The University of Cauca in the Modern Language Program educates students to be professionals of the foreign languages, with a communicative and linguistic competence that allows them to acquire a competent performance, both in the teaching field and in the context in which the learner works (Educational Project of the Program, 2015, P.19). To reach this purpose the Educational Project of the Program (PEP) stipulates that it is necessary to "Enhance the student's communicative skills through the study of structures and the practices of the languages in different socio-cultural contexts" (p.19). Therefore, undergraduate programs have to achieve the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs with the purpose of receiving high-quality accreditation. Thus, aspect thirteenth of these guidelines stipulated the evaluation of the production, relevance, use, and impact of teaching materials.

Consequently, this research project has been carried out in order to determine the pertinence of the materials and activities used by two professors of English and two professors of French in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the Modern Language Program of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao.

Likewise, the pertinence of the materials and activities used by professors of English and French has been determined in this research study with a quantitative approach. The methodology used consisted of a semi-structured interview for appreciating the knowledge of the professors of English and French regarding the communicative competence, as well as the concept of activity and material. Additionally, it aimed at recognizing their familiarity with the main objective of the PEP, and the aspect thirteenth of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs. Moreover, an assessment matrix whose purpose was to evaluate the

effectiveness of materials and activities used by professors of English and French in the strengthening of the communicative competence was used in the non-participant observation classes. Lastly, the results of this investigation showed that materials and activities used by the Modern Language Program Professors are pertinent in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao. However, Modern Language Program professors have to work on the enhancement of the socio-cultural context.

2. Justification

"Materials or didactic resources refer to series of facilities or tools that encourage the teaching and learning process" (Madrid, 2001, p.214). It is important to say that even when materials and activities encourage the teaching process, those are not indispensable at the moment of setting up pedagogical practices inside the classroom. However, materials and activities are helpful in class development and even more when professors want to strengthen the communicative competence in an appropriate way in the current technological era.

This research project may be advisable, since it allows for the identification of the kind of materials and activities used by professors of English and French focused on the enhancement of students' communicative competence. Similarity, this study might allow to generate a reflective attitude in the professors about the use of materials and activities by evaluating the viability of them in accordance with the compliance of the objective posed by "Educational Project of the Program (PEP)" which states, "To enhance the student's communicative skills through the study of structures and the practices of the languages in different socio-cultural contexts" (p.19).

On the other hand, this project could be relevant for the English and French Modern Languages Program and accreditation process. Since, it could allow the University of Cauca and the Modern Languages Program to have a register about the materials and activities used. It might also verify the compliance of the thirteenth aspect (13) of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs, where the evaluation of production, relevance, use and impact of teaching materials is stipulated.

Moreover, this investigation would provide a general review of the different materials and activities used by the Modern Languages Program Professors, for those who want to inquire into the enhancement of communicative competence, teaching strategies, appropriateness of

materials and activities adopted by educators in the Foreign Languages classrooms (English and French).

It is important to mention that, this is the first investigation of this concern in the Modern Languages Program of the University of Cauca.

This investigation could be helpful in the students' community and it would possibly raise awareness in the professors, at the moment they select the materials and activities that they consider relevant in the development of the class. As a result, the communicative competence could be directly affected in a direct way through the materials and activities used by the different Professors of English and French.

In addition, the project is highly viable because the population of this study works in the Modern Languages Program.

3. Problem Statement

In today's globalized context, Cook (2008) states:

knowing another language may mean: getting a job; a chance to get educated; the ability to take a fuller part in the life of one's own country or the opportunity to emigrate to another; an expansion of one's literary and cultural horizons; the expressions of one's political opinions or religious beliefs; the change to talk to people on a foreign holiday. (p.1)

Therefore, in the light of this statement, it seems undeniable that learning a foreign language has become one of the most important factors to getting more opportunities in today's globalized world. With regard to the term foreign language, The Colombian Ministry of National Education defines it in the Basic Competence Standards for the Teaching of a Foreign Language, as:

One that is not spoken in the immediate and local environment, given that the social conditions do not require a permanent use of language for communication. A foreign language can be firstly learned in the classroom and the student is generally exposed to the language for time-controlled periods. (p.5)

According to Madrid, D. (2001) "in classroom contexts, media and didactic resources used by professors and students for teaching and learning are tools of vital importance considering that they condition the effectiveness of the didactic program and the learning that the student experiences" (p.214). That is why, to identify the materials and activities used and their impact in learning a foreign language is relevant. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to mention that the materials and activities do not specifically constitute a guiding text and these do not determine the learning or teaching success.

Even though materials and activities do not lead to the overall effectiveness of a class. It can be said that without them in the class, it would be laborious to strengthen the communicative approach and it would not reach the objective raised by Nérici (1973), that refers to the didactic material, which "aims to bring the student to work, to investigate, to discover and build" (p.214).

Regarding the use of activities and materials in the classroom, The National Accreditation Council stipulates that the Undergraduate Programs that aim to get high-quality certifications, must fulfill the guidelines outlined in it. One of these guidelines is established in the thirteenth aspect (13), which looks into the production, relevance, use and impact of teaching materials. However, there are no studies in the Modern Languages Program in Santander de Quilichao related to this aspect.

Additionally, it was required to reinforce the purpose of the program, whose guideline is based on the curricular policies established by the Educational Project of the Modern Languages, English and French Program, (2010). One of the specific objectives of the program is "To enhance the student's communicative skills through the study of structures and the practices of the languages in different socio-cultural contexts" (p.19).

However, there is a lack of research regarding the above-described guidelines in the program. That is why, it became necessary to carry out studies related to this concern.

It should be added that in the program, the materials and activities used by professors both in English and French Languages were unknown; this statement was based on the absence of investigations focused on the appropriate use of them in favor of strengthening students' communicative competence.

Furthermore, the lack of registers that do not evince the compliance with the thirteenth aspect (13) of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs, could affect the

recognition of high-quality process in the program. Thus, the purpose of this research was looking into the pertinence of materials and activities used by the Modern Language program professors in the strengthening of the communicative competence. Therefore, it led to pose the research question: Are the materials and activities used by the Modern Language Program professors pertinent in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao?

4. Objectives

4.1.General objective

To determine the pertinence of materials and activities used by the Modern Language Program Professors, in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao.

4.2.Specific Objectives

- To analyze the institutional documents regarding activities and materials used in the strengthening of the communicative competence.
- To recognize the materials and activities used by the Modern Languages Program
 Professors of the University of Cauca (Santander de Quilichao) in the strengthening of the communicative competence.
- To verify the pertinence of materials and activities used by professors of English and French in the classroom in the strengthening of the communicative competence.

5. Hypothesis

5.1. Investigation Hypothesis

The materials and activities used by the Modern Language Program Professors are pertinent in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao.

5.2. Null Hypothesis

Materials and activities used by the Modern Language Program Professors are not pertinent in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao.

6. Methodological Framework

This chapter includes those methodological components that were taken into account for the development of the current investigation. Thus, in this section the methodology applied in this study will be established, as well as the descriptive design used according to Sampieri, Collado & Baptista (2006). Additionally, the reasons why this research work has taken on a quantitative approach will be discussed. As well, each one of the instruments used for data collection will be explained and detailed. Finally, the different moments of the research will be described.

6.1. Population

The research project was developed in the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao and a population of four (4) professors who teach in fifth & sixth semesters of the Modern Language Program was taken. Two of them are professors of English and two are professors of French. For the selection of the sampling population, it was taken into account that the fifth and sixth-semester students are in an advanced level with regard to the use of the communicative competence.

6.2. Research Design

The current research applied a descriptive design, which according to Sampieri, Collado & Baptista (2006):

Measures, assess or collects data about diverse concepts (variables), aspects, dimensions or components of a phenomenon to investigate. In a descriptive study, a number of questions are selected and their information is measured or gathered, in order to describe what needs to be investigated. (p.102)

Considering the above, the research had as its central core the collection and data analysis of materials and activities used by professors of English and French. Moreover, a non-

experimental design was conducted. In the non-experimental studies: "variables are not intentionally modified to see their effect on other variables. What is done in non-experimental research is to observe phenomena such as they occur in a natural context, and then they are analyzed". (Sampieri, Collado & Baptista, 2006, p.205)

For the purpose of this research, the effects of the independent variable will be observed (the use of materials and activities) on the strengthening or not of the communicative competence in English and French students of fifth and sixth semester (dependent variable).

Researchers did not intend to modify the variables, but rather to observe the use of materials in a real context in order to analyze its pertinence.

6.3. Approach

The development of this research project adopted a quantitative approach in which: "data collection is used to test hypothesis based on the numerical measurement and statistical analysis to establish patterns of behavior and test theories" (Sampieri, Collado & Baptista, 2010, p.4).

In the light of the above, the current research conducts a quantitative analysis. Since it allows to establish the pertinence of the materials and activities used by professors in the strengthening of the communicative competence, whose statistical analysis was carried out through data collection and an assessment matrix.

Furthermore, the purpose of this research study was based on the observation and the objective identification of variables which were already established.

7. Methodological Stages

7.1. First Stage

In the first stage, a documentary analysis was carried out in an institutional level with the purpose of collecting information related to the object of study. Such as, detailed information about appropriated definitions regarding the concepts of activities, communicative competence and materials.

The corresponding documentation allowed to examine the use that the Modern Languages Professors gave to the materials and activities in relation to the strengthening of the communicative competence.

At this point, the relation of the concepts previously mentioned was inquired. Secondly, the documentary analysis process conceded to establish a relation between the use that professors gave to the materials and activities, in the strengthening of communicative competence facing the policies of the University. For this, a documentary analysis was conducted. First the Educational Project of the Program was taken into account given that one of the objectives of the Modern Language Program is to foster the communicative competence. Also, the guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs, where the thirteenth (13) aspect which looks into the production, relevance, use and impact of teaching material was considered.

7.2. Second Stage

Regarding the second stage, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the two professors of English and two professors of French with the purpose of identifying the materials and activities used by them in order to strengthen the communicative competence. Those interviews were carried out at the Casona and Carvajal campuses from August 29th, 2018 to September 7th, 2018.

The semi-structured interview has a higher level of flexibility than the structured ones, due to the fact that it is based on planned questions that are able to be adjusted to the interviewee. The advantage of this interview is the option of adapting to the individuals with large possibilities to motivate the speaker, to clarify terms, to identify ambiguity and to reduce formalities. (Díaz, Torruco, Martínez, Varela, 2013, p.163)

The interview used for this study has been designed with open questions focused on the materials and activities used by the language professors, and the resources they use to select them. Finally, the way professors evaluate the pertinence of materials and activities used in the classroom was identified.

It should be noted, that the current investigation adapted most of the questions in the study of Daniels (2016) "Revisión y análisis de los recursos y actividades para potenciar la Competencia Comunicativa Intercultural en los cursos de los niveles B1 y B2 de español como lengua extranjera del Centro Latinoamericano" since the instrument turned out to be relevant for this study.

7.2.1. 1st Instrument

Teacher interview format taken and adapted from Daniels (2016) "Revisión y análisis de los recursos y actividades para potenciar la Competencia Comunicativa Intercultural en los cursos de los niveles B1 y B2 de español como lengua extranjera del Centro Latinoamericano"

Semi-structured interview format for The Modern Language Program Professors of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao.

Aim of the Analysis:

 To recognize the different materials and activities that foster the development of the communicative competence used by The Modern Language Program Professors.

- To identify if the Modern Language Program Professors are familiar with the institutional documents concerning the pertinence of materials and activities in the strengthening of the communicative competence.
 - 1) How do you define the communicative competence concept?
 - 2) How do you define material and activities concept in the pedagogical field?
 - 3) Do you think the previous concepts are related? Why?
 - 4) What kind of factors do you take into account when it comes to activities that promote the communicative competence?
 - 5) Name the materials and activities you use in your class to strengthen the communicative competence.
 - 6) How do you verify that your activities and materials strengthen the development of the communicative competence?
 - 7) Do you know the purpose of the Educational Project of the Program concerning the communicative competence? Yes or No. Describe it.
 - 8) Do you know thirteenth (13) aspect of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs? Yes or No. Describe it.
 - 9) Do you consider that the materials and activities you use in classroom achieve the purpose of the Educational Project of the Program?
 - 10) Do you consider that the materials and activities you use in the classroom achieve the thirteenth (13) aspect from the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs?

In accordance with the semi-structured interview there are three aspects. The first one corresponds to questions 1, 3 and 5 that ask about the relation between materials, activities and

the communicative competence. On the other hand, statements 2, 4 and 6 evaluate the pertinence of materials and activities in the strengthening of communicative competence. Finally, statements 7, 8, 9 and 10 examine the materials and activities used by the professors of English and French in accordance with the Educational Project of the Program purpose and the thirteenth (13) aspect of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs.

7.3. Third Stage

In this stage a classroom observation was conducted to determine if the answers given by the professors are coherent with the activities and materials they take to class. An assessment matrix to determine the pertinence of materials was used (See Appendix 2). Twelve observations were effectuated to the English and French advanced level classes during the period from September 7th, 2018 to March 1st, 2019. The observations had a length of time between two and four hours.

Regarding the quantitative observation, Sampieri, Collado and Baptista (2006) define this as a "Method to collect data, similar to content analysis. In fact, is a way of content observation about verbal and non-verbal communication" (p.374).

In this study the observation is not qualitative, since, it is not expected to identify emergent categories, variables were already established and they were verified at the moment of a non-participant observation. In this process some variables were taken into account, such as: verification of activities related to the communicative competence, students' response relating to these variables, the kinds of materials used and how these are implemented.

The Evaluation Matrix or rubric is defined as:

A table of double entries that present in the vertical axis the guidelines to be evaluated and the horizontal axis has the description of the quality to apply to each item, the guidelines represent what it is expected that the student population had dominated. (Segura, 2009, p.20)

An assessment matrix was used for the design of this investigation, whose purpose was to evaluate the effectiveness of materials and activities used by professors of English and French in the strengthening of the communicative competence. Regarding the matrix, it was adapted from the project of Camacho, Insuasty, Villegas, Castillo & Durán (2009). Since, the assessment matrix includes aspects that inquire about the use of materials and at the same time it analyses how communicative competence inside the classroom is integrated. The matrix components to be taken into consideration are: interaction, materials' use, type of materials, communicative competence, abilities, use of the foreign language, mother tongue use and organization.

7.3.1. 2nd Instrument

Assessment Matrix format taken and adapted from Camacho, Insuasty, Villegas, Castillo and Duran (2009) "Análisis de las prácticas pedagógicas de los docentes de inglés del programa interlingua de la Universidad Surcolombiana".

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Research project: Pertinence of the materials and activities used by the program of Bachelor's Degree in modern languages English and French professors, in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao.

Table 1

Assessment Matrix

LESSON (Minutes): _____

DATE: ____

SEMESTER: OBSERVER:

T	P	IC/	'UN	II	:																						
Tl	M	E: _																									
		Activity	(manage			Interaction				Materials			Commission	Commingance	Competence			24.17	Apillines	LATE	T7 Ose		Mother tongue use	-		Organization	
-		_			_				u	-	T	P		_		-						-	>				
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	-

In order to fill the assessment matrix items, a Likert scale that count with the following frequencies was used: (1) never, (2) rarely, (3) occasionally, (4) frequently and (5) very frequently. The following items and descriptions correspond to the previous matrix. Below, the aspects of the matrix and the numbers indicated are described.

Activity

This item is divided into four stages that correspond to:

- 1. Functional Activities: asking questions, playing games and exchanging information.
- 2. Social Activities: descriptions, oral reports, role games and simulations in the case of social activities.
- 3. Quasi-communicative activities: they take into account communicative as well as structural facts about language.
- 4. Structural activities: such as performing mechanical drills or learning verb paradigms.

Interaction

The four aspects: Teacher-Class, Teacher-Student, Student-Teacher, Student-Student correspond to the interaction patterns frequently found in the classroom.

- 1. Teacher-Class
- 2. Teacher-Student
- 3. Student-Teacher
- 4. Student-Student

Material use (u)

The three elements mentioned below refer to the use that professor gives to the materials. It means how these are used in the classroom.

- 1. Highly controlled
- 2. Semi controlled
- 3. Minimally controlled

Type (Tp)

This component determines if materials used by professors of English and French are authentic or not. It means, those materials that are created by professors for learning a language.

- 1. Authentic
- 2. Non-authentic

Communicative Competence

This item asks about how the communication process takes place in the classroom. For this purpose, the type of component was determined. Whether, linguistic it means the relation with the grammar part. The pragmatic that corresponds to the functional use of linguistics resources. Finally, the sociolinguistic that is associated to the knowledge about the social and cultural conditions immersed in the language use.

- 1. Linguistic
- 2. Pragmatic

3. Sociolinguistic

Abilities

In this section, the abilities developed in the classroom were identified.

- 1. Listening
- 2. Speaking
- 3. Reading
- 4. Writing

L2 use

This item analyzed those aspects inside the classroom, which determine if the use of the L2 had a communicative scope or a mechanic scope, it means a more structural scope.

- 1. Communicative
- 2. Mechanic

Mother tongue use

This aspect analyzed the frequency of the use of the mother tongue inside the classroom.

- 1. Frequent
- 2. Rare
- 3. Never

Organization

In this component, the way how professors developed their activities was identified, whether with the whole class, in teamwork or individually.

- 1. Whole class
- 2. Teamwork
- 3. Individual

7.4. Fourth Stage

In this chapter of the research project, the analysis of the information gathered through the semi-structured interview and the assessment matrix were divided in four sections. The first section consisted on the design of the graphics that corresponded to each item of the assessment matrix. For this part, the software Excel a statistical analysis program and a rule of three were used. This software helped to design pie charts taking into account the Likert scale used for measuring the frequency of each item in the assessment matrix. Moreover, in the second section the graphics interpretation was carried out considering the conceptual framework of this research project. In the third section, the semi-structured interview was interpreted with the aim of comparing answers given by the professors and what was perceived in the non-participant observation in order to verify the veracity of the feedback obtained in the semi-structured interview. Lastly, the micro-curriculum used by the professors of English and French in each semester was examined with the objective of recognizing what it is stipulated about the materials used in classes.

Finally, through the comparison of the results obtained from the assessment matrix and the institutional documentation such as the Educational Project of the Program, the Guidelines for the Accreditation for Undergraduate programs and the micro-curriculum of each semester for the areas of English and French. The pertinence of materials and activities used by the Modern Language Program Professors in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao was determined.

8. Contextual Framework



According to the Health Situation Analysis with the Social Determinants Model (2017)

The town of Santander de Quilichao is located in the North of the Department of Cauca,

97 km north of Popayán and 45 km south of Santiago de Cali- Valle Del Cauca.

Santander de Quilichao is bordered by the municipalities of Villarica and Jamundí to the north, the town of Buenos Aires to the West, and the municipalities of Caloto to the East and the municipality of Caldono to the South. (p.15)

On the other hand, based on the projection DANE, 2005 census of 2017 "Santander de Quilichao has 96.518 inhabitants, 16236 more inhabitants than those registered in 2005" (p.25).

In addition, "Three ethnic groups predominate in the town of Santander de Quilichao in the neighborhoods and paths distributed in the following dimensions: Afro-Colombian account for 36%, indigenous for 21% and mixed-raced for 43%" (p.27).

Pertenencia étnica	Total por pertenencia étnica	Porcentaje de la población pertenencia étnica
Indígena	19956	21%
ROM (gitana)	0	0%
Raizal del archipiélago de San Andrés y Providencia	0	0%
Negro(a), mulato(a), afrocolombiano(a) o Afrodescendientes	34216	35,5%
Ninguno de las anteriores	42346	44%

Extracted from the document of Health Situation Analysis with the Social Determinants Model (Asis, 2017)

In the town of Santander de Quilichao, several universities have been established to address the students' educational needs. The University of Cauca arrived at Santander de Quilichao by creating the center of the University of Cauca Regionalization (Superior agreement 005 of 2013).

The University of Cauca in the town of Santander de Quilichao offers a variety of undergraduate programs among them the Modern Language Program that was offered by the first time in 2013; which is taught on a regular day and on-site classes. At the present time, The Modern Language Program has a student population of approximately two hundred forty (240) young people in Santander de Quilichao. It also has two physical facilities for the development of the classes, among them there is La Casona which has five (5) classrooms, three (3) of them equipped with video projectors and a laboratory supplied with thirteenth (13) computers, and also, Carvajal campus, which has sixteen (16) classrooms equipped with technological tools, three (3) laboratories, two of them supplied with thirty-two (32) laptops and one (1) equipped with forty-two (42) computer equipment.

It should be noted that the Modern languages Program at the Popayan headquarters has the renewal of high-quality accreditation given on November 4, 2017 by resolution N° 27245.

Regarding the number of professors in the program in Santander de Quilichao, there is a total of thirty-one (31) professors. Among them, eleven (11) full-time professors, sixteen (16) adjunct professors, one (1) part-time professor and three (3) fixed-term professors.

9. Literature Review

This research project was carried out through an exploratory process that involved a number of studies relating to the pertinence of the educational practices implemented by professors in the higher education institutions towards the strengthening the communicative approach. Within the framework of this research, national and international studies were considered, which provided methodological and theoretical tools to this research. It is important to highlight that in the research no studies were found at the local level.

9.1. International Studies

Two studies at an international level linked to the pertinence of the activities and resources used by professors inside of the classroom were consulted. In order to present a detailed observation that specifies the teaching methodologies, widely used by the professors in the learning process. The first study was:

Impacto de las metodologías de enseñanza utilizadas por el docente sobre la efectividad del aprendizaje del idioma inglés.

Author: Marleny Duarte de Kendler

Year: 2007

This research estimated a sample of fifteen professors specialized in the teaching of the English language in different institutions placed in the same locality. Thus, the objective of this research pointed to the description of the different methodologies carried out to practical term by the professors facing the way how they handle the communicative competence in the English language. This process was implemented through annotation guides, journals, and interviews where it was concluded a lack of consciousness regarding the teaching methodology and the lesson planning in the communicative competence. Furthermore, the pedagogical practices used by professors did not help the development of communicative competence, which provided a

reference point and a support for the pertinence of teaching strategies used by professors of English.

The usefulness of the above-mentioned article lies in the fact of considering objectivity of the analysis in the research, which was conducted to the professors regarding the use of the communicative competence in the teaching process. It should be mentioned that for the purpose of this method three phases were carried out, in which the observation to the class was presented.

The second document read was a doctoral thesis:

El desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa e intercultural a través de recursos creativos: análisis de la poesía, el teatro y el cómic como materiales didácticos en la enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera.

Author: DÑA. Ma Victoria Guadamillas Gómez

Year: 2014

The objectives of this investigation were to analyze the materials and resources used by the professors of English such as; the theater, poetry and comedy, as well as, to know how those materials and resources were used by professors. Hence in order to get the sample, several testimonies and analyzes were used by professors from the University of Castilla-la Mancha. In this research a qualitative approach was adopted, where the methodology used was emphasized. This research was divided into four phases; first, a hypothesis that pointed at the verification of the pertinence of the materials was proposed. Second, the theoretical framework in which the different approaches and methodologies that were constructive in the work of the implementation of materials were emphasized. Third, a critical reflection regarding the theory designed was considered, mainly based on textbooks and material review used by the professors. At last, the recommendations to the professors based on the results were expressed.

This research was relevant within this type of study because it was specifically designed for research projects regarding the communicative competence and the design of resources to foster it. Even this research has delimited resources to: theater, poetry and comedy, this investigation involved both the materials and resources pertinence within the classroom.

9.2. National Studies

Concerning the national studies read, two studies pertaining to the topic of discussion are put in context.

Análisis de las prácticas pedagógicas de los docentes de inglés del Programa Interlingua de la Universidad Surcolombiana.

Authors: Gilma Zúñiga Camacho, Edgar Alirio Insuasty, Diego Fernando Macías Villegas, Lilian Cecilia Zambrano Castillo, Nidia Guzmán Durán Year: 2009

In this investigation a particular pertinence was identified in which the professors' practices based on William Littlewood (1998) lineaments (communicative and precommunicative) were described. Intervention practices were implemented with the intention of improving the teaching-learning strategies utilized by Modern Language professors since certain limitations regarding the activities in the strengthening of the communicative competence used by professors were found.

The following degree project was also considered:

Revisión y análisis de los recursos y actividades para potenciar la Competencia Comunicativa Intercultural en los cursos de los niveles B1 y B2 de español como lengua extranjera del Centro Latinoamericano.

Author: Andrea Carolina Daniels Year: 2016

This degree project refers to a qualitative study developed at Javeriana University, where a meticulous description of each one of the methodological resources used by professors of

Spanish in the development of intercultural communicative competence was found. The objective was to identify the different resources and activities that promote the development of intercultural communicative competence. In this way, there is a clear idea of the relevant activities that promote intercultural communicative competence. As a result, the inquiry findings gave priority to the activities focused on the cultural descriptive and comparative levels.

Regarding the importance of the two national studies mentioned before, it is important to emphasize that each one provides methodological elements for the development of this research project; such as: the methodological design and the instruments applied.

10. Conceptual Framework

This chapter addresses the definitions of different concepts that were taken into account for the development of this research. Those concepts are: didactics, competence, communicative competence and its three sub-competences; linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the considerations of the Centro Virtual Cervantes. Finally, the communicative approach was defined, as well as the materials in order to give way to the concept of foreign language.

10.1. Didactics

All the materials and activities professors use in the Foreign Language Classroom are part of didactics. Given that didactics is regarded as an important branch within the language teaching in the strengthening of the communicative competence, it was necessary to specify this concept. As stated by Zambrano (2005)

The didactics creates experimental situations, organizes observational instruments, reflects on learning and some contractual practices of teaching, explains to the other sciences its advances and facilitates a higher understanding of scholar life, in its knowing part and knowing how to do. (p.57)

In other words, didactics coexists with other sciences to facilitate instruction and acquisition of a set of topics of a particular subject. Likewise, the author mentioned above added as a fundamental concept the Task of Didactics, whose purpose was to emphasize the importance of didactics, which "consists on understanding how subjects learn, the intellectual strategies used and the sort of media and information systems people are exposed to" (p.51).

Finally, Nérici (1985) defines didactics as "the set of techniques used to guide teaching through principles and procedures applicable to all disciplines, in order to carry out the learning process more efficiently" (p.56).

10.2. Activity

Activity is one of the most fundamental concepts for this research project, because of this, to determine its pertinence in the strengthening of the communicative competence was considered as a subject of study. According to Nunan (2001) "an activity also has a restrictive focus on one or two language items, but also has a communicative outcome. In that sense, activities have something in common with tasks and something in common with exercises" (p.1).

The author of Foreign and Second Language Learning, William Littlewood (1984) establishes two types of activities:

First, Pre-communicative activities, those which are a form of part-skill training. They help learners to master separate aspects of the language, such as sounds or patterns, through either cognitive techniques (e.g. explanations, grammar exercises) or habit-forming techniques (e.g. repetition, drills). Learners often focus their conscious attention on the actual item to be learnt. Second, Communicative activities, as whole-task practice, these help learners to integrate their separate sub-skills into an effective system for communicating meanings. From a creative construction perspective, they also activate the learners' capacity for acquiring language through natural processes. The learners' attention is focused on meanings to be communicated rather than on language items to be learnt. (p.92)

Additionally, according to Littlewood (1981) the two kind of activities mentioned above have sub-categories. The pre-communicative activities are divided in quasi-communicative activities where "they take account of communicative as well as structural facts about language" (p.86) and structural activities "such as performing mechanical drills or learning verb paradigms" (p.86). In contrast, the communicative activities are sub-divided into

'functional communication activities' the learner is placed in a situation where he must perform a task by communicating as best he can, with whatever resources he has available. The criterion for success is practical: how effectively the task is performed. In 'social interaction activities', on the other hand, the learner is also encouraged to take account of the social context in which communication takes place. (p.86)

10.3. Competence

Currently, for this research project it was necessary to clear up the concept of competence within the educational framework and the Colombian academic context. The Colombian Ministry of National Education refers to the concept of competence as: "a matter of how people solve integral problems of context, with ethics, suitability, knowledge appropriation and putting into action the needed skills" (Tobón, Pimienta & García, 2010, p.7).

Concerning the Basic Standards of Competence for the Teaching of a Foreign Language: The Colombian Ministry of National Education defines the concept of competence as "a set of knowledge, understanding, skills, and individual characteristics that allow a person to carry out actions in a specific context" (p.11).

10.4. Communicative competence and Sub-Competences

To address the concept of communicative competence the Common European

Framework was taken into account, considering that this document brings up the assessmentteaching guidelines of language worldwide. In addition, the detailed description of
communicative competence by The Colombian Ministry of National Education that is in charge
of forming the national education system and encouraging the education quality was also taken
into account. Moreover, the Cervantes institute which is a non-profit international institution
created in 1991 by the government of Spain which is responsible for the teaching and promotion
of languages. Likewise, the sub-competences of the communicative competence were

mentioned, such as: linguistics competence, sociolinguistic competence and pragmatics competence defined by The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment "the communicative competence comprises a number of components: linguistics, sociolinguistics and pragmatics. It is assumed that each one of these components comprises, in particular, knowing, skills and abilities" (p.13).

On the other hand, the Colombian Ministry of National Education pointed out the concept of communicative competence in the document: Basic Competence Standards for the teaching of a foreign language: English as: "the ability to use knowledge about language in different situations, both inside and outside of school life" (p.12).

The Cervantes Institute, defines the concept of communicative competence as:

The person's ability to behave in an efficient and appropriate manner within a given speaking community; this implies respecting a set of rules that includes both, grammar and the other linguistic description levels (lexical, phonetics and semantics) and the usage rules of language, related to the socio-historical and cultural context in which Communication takes place. (p.1)

In addition, Brown, (2007) affirms that the concept of communicative competence is a: construct that has been a topic of interest for at least four decades, recent trends have put less emphasis on structural and cognitive characteristics of communication, and more on the myriad social, cultural and pragmatics implications of what it means to communicate in a second language. (p.218)

In other words, communicative competence implied respecting grammatical and sociocultural rules within a social group in which the communicative events were carried out. Nevertheless, the communicative competence was not only submitted to the monitoring of syntactic components in a social group but also the ability to relate the well-known structured communication system in different environments. Hymes (as cited in Brown, 2007) affirms "Referred to communicative competence as the aspect of our competence that enable us to convey and interpret messages and negotiate meanings interpersonally within a specific context" (p.219).

Likewise, Canale, M. & Swain, M. (1980) claim that "The term 'Communicative competence' refers to the relationship and interaction between grammatical competence, or knowledge of the rules of grammar, and sociolinguistic competence, or knowledge of the rules of language use" (p.6).

Additionally, it was important to take a pedagogical approach within the concept referred given by Richards (2006) who in his book "Communicative Language Teaching Today" defines the communicative competence as:

Communicative language teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of professors and learners in the classroom. (p.2)

Hence, the communicative competence is understood as a goal to be achieved through the use of activities posed by professors. According to the sub-competences of the communicative competence Noam Chomsky as well as The Colombian Ministry of National Education define them as:

10.4.1. Linguistic Competence

According to The Colombian Ministry of National Education in the document of Basic Standards of Competences in Foreign Languages: English, the linguistic competence refers to the knowledge of formal resources in the language; such as

The system and the capacity to use it in clear and meaningful messages. It includes knowledge, lexical, phonological, syntactic and grammatical skills, among others. Such competence implies, not only the theoretical management of grammatical concepts, orthographies or semantics, but the application in various situations. (p.11)

From another standpoint, for the North American grammarian, Chomsky (as cited in the Colombian Ministry of National Education, 2006) the concept of linguistic competence requires a clear and objective definition "it involves aptitude, communicative capacity. This author was the first one who spoke about linguistic competences, understood as the implied knowledge that an ideal speaker/listener has about the rules to generate grammatical sentences of a language" (p.2).

10.4.2. Sociolinguistic competence

In respect to the sociolinguistic competence, The Common European Framework of References for Languages defines it as "the knowledge and necessary skills to deal with social dimension in the use of the language" (p.116). Further, the Colombian Ministry of National Education mentions that the sociolinguistic competence "Refers to the knowledge of the social and cultural conditions that are implicit in the use of the language" (p.12).

10.4.3. Pragmatic competence

The Colombian Ministry of National Education affirms that:

pragmatic competence relates to the functional use of linguistics resources and, in the first place, a discursive competence that concerns to the capacity of ordering the

sentences in sequences to develop textual pieces. In second place, it implies a functional competence to know, the linguistic forms and its functions, such as the way these are chained each other in real communicative situations. (p.12)

In view of the foregoing, it is significant to highlight the importance of activities focused on the linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. With regards to the linguistic competence, it is clear that the activities strengthen syntactic, phonetic and lexical skills in the student. One example of this is the intonation, pronunciation, the order and the adequate interpretation of the different structures of the language. On the other hand, activities focused on the sociolinguistic competence fulfil its functional aspect when students are able to understand the use of the language depending on the socio-cultural context where they are. In relation to the value of the activities focused on the pragmatic competence it is necessary not only to be aware of the speaker intention and its purpose, but also to do what is necessary to operationalize the speech acts. Such as, the cultural and social one against the communicative acts inside the classroom.

10.5. Communicative Approach

The communicative approach is normally confused with the communicative competence; although, they are similar terms, they differ from one another. The Cervantes Institute and Richards and Rodgers (1986), expresses that there must be a real communication instead of focusing on the grammatical characteristics.

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986)

This theory emphasizes the semantic and communicative dimension rather than merely the grammatical characteristics of language and leads to a specification and organization of language teaching content by categories of meaning and function rather than by elements of structure and grammar. (p.17)

In the same way, according to The Cervantes Institute,

The Communicative Approach is known also as Communicative Language Teaching, as Notional-Functional Approach or Functional Approach. This didactic model is intended to train the learner for a real communication not only in the oral aspect, but also in the written one - with the FL speakers. For this purpose, in the instructional process texts, recordings and authentic materials are used frequently. Also, activities that try to faithfully imitate the reality outside the classroom are carried out.

It is important to emphasize that the approach adopted in the language teaching requires an instructional system, in which the learner develops the four skills from a functional perspective, to promote the use of the language in real environments.

In this way, Richards and Rodgers (1986) state:

Common to all versions of Communicative Language Teaching, however, is a theory of language teaching that starts from a communicative model of language and language use, and that seeks to translate this into a design for an instructional system, for materials, for teacher and learner roles and behaviors, and for classroom activities and techniques. Let us now consider how this is manifested at the levels of approach, design, and procedure. (p.69)

10.6. Materials

The materials are characterized as one of the fundamental axes of this investigation, given that they are constantly used in the classroom and contribute to the students learning. Thus, Guerrero (2009) states that materials are:

The elements that professors use to facilitate and lead the learning of their students (books, posters, maps, photos, sheets, videos, software...). Besides, didactic materials are those materials and equipment that help professors to submit and develop the content, and

they also help students to work with them for the construction of significant learning. (p.1)

Other authors, such as Tomlinson (as cited in Rodriguez and Torres, 2014) in their work "Una secuencia didáctica para fomentar el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa intercultural en los estudiantes del curso español 4 del Centro Latinoamericano de la Pontificia Universidad Javeriana" defines materials as:

Any object that can be used to facilitate the learning of a language. These can be linguistic, visual, auditory or kinesthetic, likewise they can be given in different presentations, printed, through real or acted situations, on cassette, CD-ROM, DVD, or on the internet. (p.17)

Tornberg (as cited in Modéer, 2011) state that the "didactic materials direct the foreign language teaching to a great extent" (p.5).

It is important to emphasize that "a good didactic material is a very useful tool for a teacher. As they have such a crucial role, it is very important that they offer communicative activities that are based on the didactic science" (Modéer, 2011, p.5).

As it has been shown, the materials constitute a teaching aid to be considered in the learning process. Nevertheless, they are not indispensable elements in the classroom. In other words, the materials are elements that greatly facilitate the language professors' work, since, the component that facilitates the development of communicative competence in the mentioned areas is considered. Regarding what is intended to be demonstrated in terms of teaching materials, it was determined whether the pedagogical material employed by professors of English and French was really one of the teaching central axes in the strengthening of the communicative competence.

10.7. Foreign Language

The concept of foreign language is relevant for this study given the context where this research takes place. This concept is usually confused with the term Second Language, which also has a relation with the learning and teaching process of a language.

For the definition of foreign language, the description given by the document The Basic Standard of Competence in Foreign Language: English by the Colombian Ministry of National Education had been chosen, which expresses:

The foreign language is one that is not spoken in the immediate and local environment, since conditions do not require its permanent use for communication. A foreign language can be learned mainly in the classroom, and in general, the student is exposed to the language during controlled periods. (p.5)

11. Findings and Analysis

This chapter introduces the results obtained from this research study regarding the pertinence of the materials and activities used by the French and English modern language professors in the strengthening of the communicative competence. The data was gathered through the use of instruments such as the semi-structured interview conducted to the population of this research project to recognize the different materials, and activities that foster the development of the communicative competence used by The Modern Language Program Professors. Besides, this project tried to identify if the Modern Language Program Professors were familiar with the institutional documents concerning the pertinence of materials and activities in the strengthening of the communicative competence. In the semi-structured interview the questions were divided in three kind of questions; the first kind of questions asked for the relation between materials, activities and the communicative competence, the second type of questions evaluated the pertinence of materials and activities in the strengthening of communicative competence, and finally the third kind of questions examined the materials and activities used by the professors of English and French in accordance with the Educational Project of the Program purpose, as well as thirteenth (13) aspect of the guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs.

Furthermore, the assessment matrix taken and adapted from Camacho et al., 2009 was used. The objective of this matrix was to evaluate the effectiveness of materials and activities used by professors of English and French in the strengthening of the communicative competence. This assessment matrix was divided in: activity, which is related to the kind of activities used by professors of English and French to determine the pertinence of the activities in the strengthening of the communicative competence. It is necessary to mention that the concept of activity is

divided in functional activities, social activities, structural activities and quasi-communicative activities, these categories are named by Littlewood who defined them as quasi-communicative activities where "they take account of communicative as well as structural facts about language" (p.86) and structural activities "such as performing mechanical drills or learning verb paradigms" (p.86). In contrast,

the communicative activities are subdivided in 'functional communication activities' the learner is placed in a situation where he must perform a task by communicating as best he can, with whatever resources he has available. The criterion for success is practical: how effectively the task is performed. In 'social interaction activities', on the other hand, the learner is also encouraged to take account of the social context in which communication takes place. (Littlewood, 1981, p.86)

On the other hand, interaction corresponds to the frequent patterns of correlation in the classroom such as Teacher-Class, Teacher-Student, Student-Teacher and Student-Student.

Likewise, materials refer to the use that professors give to the resources in classes minimally controlled, semi controlled or highly controlled, and type of materials determines if materials used by professors of English and French are authentic or not. According to Camacho et al., 2009 materials which are not designed for the learning of a language are authentic materials, whereas non-authentic materials are those designed for the learning of a second language.

Additionally, the communicative competence item asks about how the communication process takes place in the classroom. For this purpose, the type of component was determined. Linguistics, means the relation with the grammar part, the pragmatics corresponds to the functional use of linguistics resources and finally, the sociolinguistic is associated to the knowledge about the social and cultural conditions immersed in the language use. As for the item

related to abilities, it refers to the skills developed in the classroom and it is divided in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Another evaluated item is L2 use, it analyzed those aspects inside the classroom, which determine if the use of the L2 had a communicative scope or a mechanic one; it means a more structural scope. Moreover, the mother tongue use item analyzed the frequency of the use of the mother language inside the classroom and is divided in frequent, rare and never. The last item is organization, in this component the way how professors developed their activities was identified, whether with the whole class, in teamwork or individually.

Finally, the data gathered by these instruments provided necessary information to determine the pertinence of the materials and activities in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semesters of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao.

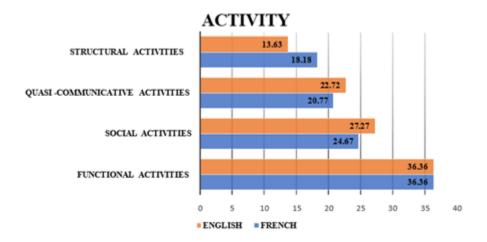


Figure 1

Activities

According to Nunan (2001), activities include one or two language's components and integrate a communicative result. Regarding the activities used by the professors of English and French in the strengthening of the communicative competence, it was observed that functional

activities prevailed with a rate of 36.36% for both English and French classes. It is worth mentioning that Camacho et al., (2009) distinguish "the functional activities as making questions, information exchange, games, descriptions and oral reports" (p.15).

Firstly, it was attested a high use of oral reports activities where most of the time the student talked about topics related to culture, science, and social issues in the English classes.

The use of information exchange activities was also observed where the professors organized the classroom in groups in order to share information for accomplishing a task. Littlewood (1981) adds:

The last type of functional communication activity dispenses completely with the need to share information. Learners now have access to all the relevant facts. The stimulus for communication comes from the need to discuss and evaluate these facts, in pairs or groups, in order to solve a problem or reach a decision. (p.36)

Besides, it was observed a high use of functional activities in the French classes related to questions towards solving doubts concerning grammatical rules, verifying the knowledge about the topics when students performed oral reports, and situational conversations designed to foster the communication between learners. Moreover, it was demonstrated in French classes the use of oral reports performed through the presentations with topics related to the environment, where the professor encouraged the functional use of the activities through asking and answering questions about the topic, further through spaces designed for listening student's different opinions.

Furthermore, it was observed a rate of 27.27% for English and 24.67% for French classes with regard to social activities. According to Littlewood (1981) in 'social interaction activities', on the other hand, the learner is also encouraged to take account of the social context in which

communication takes place. (p.86) Concerning the kind of activities observed in this point, these ones included: situations such as family circumstances, and presentations about holidays; these activities involved the learners in the task of taking into account the cultural context in order to reach the objective of the professor's activity.

The functional activities found in the non-participant observation showed a communicative intention by professors of English and French. Despite this, the activities management by the learners were occasionally pre communicative because they did not focus on a communicative nature. In fact, the learners were concentrated in the use of correct grammar and the cognitive memorization technique; it means that students put their attention in memorizing what they have to say. In accordance to Littlewood (1984) these ones incur in a precommunicative intention.

Moreover, it was noticed a rate of 13.63% for English and 18.18% for French classes with regard to structural activities perceived in class. According to Littlewood (1981) the precommunicative activities are subdivided in sub-categories and one of these focused on the structural activities "such as performing mechanical drills or learning verb paradigms" (p.86). Among these activities drills and grammatical exercises were found in French and English classes. These kinds of exercises focused only in a grammatical topics for example the use of subjunctive or the imperfect tense where the student had to fill blank spaces taking into account the merely use of grammatical and mechanical aspects of the language, without integrating other skills or meaningful situations.

In addition, it was recognized a rate of 22.72% for English and 20.77% for French in connection with the quasi-communicative activities. In terms of Littlewood (1981) the pre-

communicative activities are also divided in quasi-communicative activities where "they take account of communicative as well as structural facts about language" (p.86).

In the semi-structured interview, it was revealed that professors of English and French did not have a clear definition of the concept of activity. Some of the interviewers defined activities as everything that we can demand from the students, others said that, activities refer to the mix of topics and ludic exercises. The responses given by professors of English and French about the activity concept definition differs from the definition given by the Eurostat that states that learning activities are defined as "activities of an individual organised with the intention to improve his/her knowledge, skills and competences" (Eurostat, 2016, p.10). They also add that learning activities have two important criteria, first:

the learning activity must be intentional (as opposed to random learning), so the act has a predetermined purpose; second, the learning activity is organized in some way, including by the learner him-/herself; it typically involves the transfer of information in a broader sense (messages, ideas, knowledge, strategies). (p.10)

Professors of English and French added that the most important factors when they have to choose activities for their classes are: the number of students in the classroom, interaction between apprentices, time for carrying up the activities, learners' personality, what they need in terms of language, the oral and writing production, the multiple intelligences, the four skills (listening, writing, reading, and speaking) and critical thinking. Regarding the PEP, professors of English and French affirmed that their activities achieve the main objective of the Educational Project of the Program, it means that their activities strengthen the students' communicative competence. The compliance of this objective is verified by professors through the student's

production and the topic' evaluation. In this perspective, it could be said that the information listed above was coherent with the findings of the investigation.

As a matter of fact, in accordance with the Educational Project of the Program (PEP) which aims "To enhance the student's communicative skills through the study of structures and the practices of the languages in different socio-cultural contexts" (p.19). The functional activities prevailed are pertinent since those ones are part of the communicative activities, and they also meet the main objective of the PEP. However, the PEP also highlights the importance of practicing the language in different socio-cultural context. Nevertheless, this aspect cannot be achieved through the functional activities because the communicative activities that highly foster the PEP objective are the social interaction activities, which are the activities based on the social context where it is important to focus on communication (Littlewood, 1981). As it can be appreciated in figure 1 these kinds of activities had a rate of 27.27% for English and 24.67% for French. Therefore, it could be necessary to put more attention to this subcategory of the communicative activities since it allows the achievement of the PEP objective.

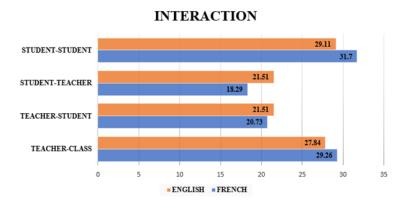


Figure 2

Interaction patterns

In this segment, the student-student interaction prevailed with a rate of 29.11% for English and 31.7% for French. In contrast, a less student-teacher interaction pattern was shown with a percentage of 21.51% for English and 18.29% for French inside the classroom, as it is observed in figure 2. The information above about the student-student interaction allows noticing that activities and materials such as oral reports and situations were developed most part of the time to be worked in groups. Regarding the student-student interaction pattern a higher rate was shown in French activities developed in classes that required a significant amount of teamwork presentations and performances. Besides, this form of interaction might occur due to the methodological strategies used by professors that could have been focused on encouraging communication between learners. Additionally, this kind of interaction was the most evident in the sixth semester for both English and French classes.

Furthermore, this interaction pretended that students had a constant communication with each other. In this way, according to Johnson & Johnson, 1989, 1999 (as cited in the Cooperative Learning Institute, 2018), a cooperative learning atmosphere was created in the non-participant observation; a concept that aims "to promote cooperative, competitive, or individualistic efforts.

In every classroom, instructional activities are aimed at accomplishing goals and are conducted under a goal structure". In addition, this cooperative learning is divided into formal and informal types; during the non-participant observation classes both of them were perceived. Hence, Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008 (as cited in the Cooperative Learning Institute, 2018) informal cooperative learning which consists "of having students work together to achieve a joint learning goal in temporary, ad-hoc groups that last from a few minutes to one class period" was proved in the performances. Conversely, Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008 (as cited in the Cooperative Learning Institute, 2018), formal cooperative learning which consists "of students working together, for one class period to several weeks, to achieve shared learning goals and complete jointly specific tasks and assignments" was manifested in French presentations.

On the contrary, the student-teachers interaction was limited, which could indicate that in English and French advanced levels the student should have a higher academic output.

According to the Educational Project of the Program, the learner must have an academic prominence that would allow him/her to achieve an equal relationship in order to foster the communicative competence. On the other hand, student-teachers interaction might indicate low participation and interest from students. It may have also occurred due to the lack of confidence that the student had in the target language level on addressing the professor or the activities proposed that foster the student's interest.

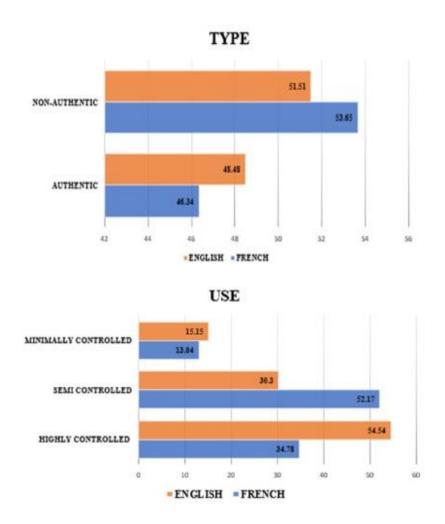


Figure 3

Materials

In this section, two types of materials were measured, the non-authentic and the authentic ones. Both refer to the kind of materials used in classes. Authentic materials were used with a rate of 48.48% for English and of 46.34% for French. It would be relevant to underline that these kinds of materials are "Materials that are not designed for the language teaching" (Camacho et al., 2009, p.15). The authentic materials observed in English and French classes were divided into audible resources like songs, podcasts; audio-visual media as, videos, T.V, computers;

digital media as internet, e-mail, attached files; TICs information and communication technology as Edmodo, articles searching engine; and visual resources as handouts.

Regarding non-authentic materials, a rate of 51.51% for English and 53.65% for French was observed. These kinds of materials are "those who are designed for the language teaching" (Camacho et al., 2009, p.15). Concerning the English materials used by the Modern languages program professors in the strengthening of the communicative competence, non-authentic materials such as: visual media as, slides, work guidelines, worksheet, and projected images; audiovisual media as Modern language laboratory; digital media, the online test were used. In connection with non-authentic French materials used by the modern language program professors in the strengthening of the communicative competence, materials such as visual media as PowerPoint and worksheets; visual resources as work guides and projected images were identified.

The type of Non-authentic material prevailed in both English and French classes; this was probably because English and French materials used by professors were bound for accomplishing the thirteenth (13) aspect which talks about the production, relevance, use, and impact of teaching materials. It also has a relation with one of the specific objectives of the Educational Project of the Program that state that professors have "to design and compile supporting materials for methodological and didactic work with the foreign languages" (p.18). In other words, the production of materials has to be designed specifically for language teaching.

Another aspect to be considered is the curriculum, in the French curriculum it was noticed that professors express the use of original materials but during the observation, and according to Figure 3 the non-authentic materials prevailed. This might happened because professors of French have different concepts of authentic material and non-authentic material. In

addition, the English curriculum does not talk about the type of material that professors of English should use in the classrooms. However, given the results shown in figure 3, it is possible to say that the use of non-authentic materials predominates in the English classes.

In terms of the compliance of the thirteenth aspect (13) of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of the Undergraduate Programs, where the production, relevance, use, and impact of teaching materials. Regarding the evaluation of the design of classroom materials, it was evinced that the professors designed their own teaching materials since the professors took their own resources. Such as their own questions about readings and writings, one point at which they asked questions about it and furthermore adapted their own educational elements according to the required level. Referring to the use of materials, it was observed that 54.54% of English materials were highly controlled where the professors established guidelines that the students must follow in order to accomplish the goal of the material. Regarding thirteenth aspect (13) and the materials use, it is possible to claim that materials have a pre-communicative nature due to the control level rates found in class observations. This means that the relevance of the materials is not completely fulfilled with one of the specific objectives posed by the PEP which talks about "To enhance the student's communicative skills through the study of structures and the practices of the languages in different socio-cultural contexts" (p.19).

During the English class observation, a highly controlled use of the materials such as attached files, hand-outs, worksheets, slides, work guidelines, projected images, laboratories, and online tests was observed. On the contrary, it was recognized with a rate of 52.17% that French materials had a semi-controlled use, here the proposed activities had established minimum guidelines where the students were exposed to semi-control activities, for example worksheets, writings, and readings.

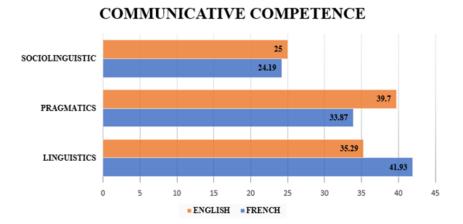
Taking into account the thirteenth aspect (13) that discusses materials production, relevance, use, and impact of teaching materials, it can be stated that the materials used by professors of French had a communicative approach due to the students' autonomy regarding materials. Here, the undergraduates were able to asked questions and gave their opinions in the chosen topics. It should be added that the learners had to follow several standards stated in the materials as it was mentioned above. In this opportunity, semi-controlled materials such as worksheets, handouts, board exercises, and songs were observed. In fact, similar materials were used in the classroom by the professors of English and French, however the standards and objectives established for the resources were different. For example, the worksheets; in English, the students had to answer closed questions, it means, questions that had an only way to answer, while in French they could develop their opinions and their own ideas in the answer through the same material. Even when professors of English and French utilized the same kind of material in their classes, the use of them presented a big difference because of the methodology used.

Concerning the semi-structured interview, the professors of English and French agree on the definition of material as the instrument, the tool, and the resource used in classes for improving students' learning process which in fact coincide with the definition given by Guerrero (2009) which states that materials are:

The elements that professors use to facilitate and lead the learning of their students (books, posters, maps, photos, sheets, videos, software...). Besides, didactic materials are those materials and equipment that help professors to submit and develop the content, and they also help students to work with them for the construction of significant learning. (p.1)

Among the materials mentioned by the professors of English and French, there were handouts, websites, videos, clips, lectures, academic articles, literature, worksheets, images, and the use of laboratory. The use of those kinds of materials was evinced during the nonparticipative observation. Focusing on the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs, the professors of English and French claimed that their materials reached the thirteenth aspect (13). This means that materials were designed by the professors of English and French, and their materials accomplished the PEP objective. Considering that the materials used in English and French classes had a communicative use and it reflected an impact on learners. Since the achievement of the thirteenth aspect (13) is verified in the material designed by professors of English and French by means of students' production and the evaluation of the topics. In a broader perspective, the responses given by professors of English and French were not totally congruent with the investigation results, given that they mentioned the use of authentic materials for the class development. Nevertheless, the results of the type of materials showed that professors employed non-authentic materials. Likewise, the use of English teaching materials was not consistent with the observed results, since professors affirmed that the use of their material were minimally controlled, however, the results showed that materials used in English classes were highly controlled.

Finally, as regards to the PEP objective that establishes "To enhance the student's communicative skills through the study of structures and the practices of the languages in different socio-cultural contexts" (p.19). It was proved that concerning the use of materials by professors of English, these ones do not achieve the mentioned PEP objective due to their precommunicative nature. Whereas, the materials used by professor of French achieved the objective previously stated as a result of a communicative tendency.



Communicative competence

Figure 4

In this segment, the prevalence of linguistic competence in French classes with a rate of 41.93% was identified. Here, it is necessary to mention that "the linguistic competence refers to the knowledge of formal resources in the language; such as the system and the capacity to use it in clear and meaningful messages" (p.11).

From another standpoint, the North American grammarian, Chomsky (as cited in the Colombian Education Ministry, 2006) mentions that the concept of linguistic competence requires a clear and objective definition "It is understood as the implied knowledge that an ideal speaker-listener has about the rules to generate grammatical sentences of a language" (p.2). In the light of the above, it is observed that the activities and materials used by professors of French enhanced linguistic competence. It may occur since professors focus the most part of the activities in the correct use of the language structures such as the phonological, lexical, syntactic and morphological part. Furthermore, it may happen since bachelors are educated to practice their profession as professors, thus they should have solid bases about grammatical structures.

During the semi structured interview, it was noticed that professors of French seemed to differ about the definition of communicative competence concept, one professor had an ambiguous definition about communicative competence, it was referred as the ability to interact in a foreign language. The other answer was accurate, it alluded to functional characteristics of this competence where it prevails a meaningful interaction that goes beyond the lexical, the phonological or linguistic competence. This last definition of communicative competence is close to the definition given by Brown, (2007) which affirms that the concept of communicative competence is:

a construct that has been a topic of interest for at least four decades, recent trends have put less emphasis on structural and cognitive characteristics of communication, and more on the myriad social, cultural and pragmatic implications of what it means to communicate in a second language. (p.218)

Moreover, in accordance with one of the questions presented in the semi-structured interview that asked about the purpose of the PEP concerning communicative competence, one of the answers given by professors of French stated that the main approach of the PEP is the communicative approach and since then the communicative competence should be the center of the program. Here, it could be established that from one point it is well known the purpose of the Educational project of the Program respecting communicative competence. From another standpoint, the other interviewer showed a lack of knowledge about the purpose of the PEP regarding communicative competence. Lastly, regarding the question mentioned above it was witnessed unfamiliarity about the PEP objective. However, it points that the objective regarding the communicative part is lead the learner to communicate and express through the foreign

language compliance a minimum requirement in terms of oral and writing skills in each semester.

Thus, a lack of accuracy regarding the communicative competence concept and the main objective of the PEP was identified. Professors of French described the communicative concept and the PEP objective as something pragmatic which means, that for those professors the pragmatic use of the language needs to prevail in their classes. But as it is observed in figure 4 the linguistic competence predominated in the French classes. This can happen by the lack of well-aimed understanding of the main PEP objective, communicative competence, and subcompetencies definition.

On the other hand, the predominance of the pragmatic competence in English classes with a rate of 39.7% was observed which corresponds "to the functional use of linguistics resources" (p.12).

This competence is defined by The Colombian Ministry of National Education as the competence which,

relates to the functional use of linguistics resources and, in the first place, a discursive competence that concerns to the capacity of ordering the sentences in sequences to develop textual pieces. In the second place, it implies a functional competence to know, the linguistic forms and its functions, such as the way these are chained each other in real communicative situations. (p.12)

In the light of the above, it is recognized that the activities and materials used by professors of English improved pragmatic competence, it could happen because the professors of English focused their activities in the creation of a communicative environment where the students are able to develop their own ideas and interact between them. Thus, this might happen

because undergraduate students in their work life need a great pragmatic use of the language, since they should encourage and enhance the communicative competence among the learners taking into account that the professors are supposed to be the closer connection regarding the target language.

During the semi structured interview different points of views about the concept of communicative competence were found. One of them stated that communicative competence is the transmission of a message without misinterpretation. Therefore, it could be evident a confusion with the oral ability. This answer differs from the second one since it expressed that communicative competence is all the learners are able to do with language such as negotiate, communicative and be able to interact with the foreign language in a specific context. This last concept is closer to the one cited by Hymes (as cited in Brown, 2007) that defines the communicative competence "as the aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and negotiate meanings interpersonally within a specific context" (p.219).

During the semi-structured interviews to professors of English, it was noticed that one answer stated the lack of knowledge about the purpose of the PEP regarding communicative competence. However, based on the previous knowledge of the professors it was mentioned that the students had to be able to talk and communicate; also, the communicative competence must change its standards depending on the semester. Thus, it may be said that the professor has a misunderstanding between the concepts of oral expression and communicative competence. On the other hand, the other answer given by one professor of English pointed out that the purpose of the PEP was related to the students' competence which implies that the learner has to be able to handle, to negotiate and teach in a foreign language. This answer was similar to the definition given before by the same person for the communicative competence concept. To sum up, both

professors of English digress about explaining the purpose of the PEP concerning the communicative competence.

Regarding the Sociolinguistic competence that "Refers to the knowledge of the social and cultural conditions that are implicit in the use of the language" (p.12). It showed a rate of 24.19% of use in French classes and 25% for English classes as it is appreciated in figure 4. It was noticed that this is the less worked sub-competence by professors of English and French in classes. It might happen given that the English and French curriculums do not focus on this sub competence. Additionally, it is known that the Educational Project of the Program talks about "To enhance the student's communicative skills through the study of structures and the practices of the languages in different socio-cultural contexts" (p.19). Considering the sociolinguistic sub-competence definition and the PEP objective a close relationship between them can be found.

Despite the above a low use of materials and activities directed towards the use and straightening of this kind of sub competence was evidenced. That means that professors of English and French should increase their focus on the activities and materials that strengthen the practices of the languages in diverse socio-cultural backgrounds to achieve the PEP objective. Since, the non-practice of the language in different socio-cultural contexts could cause learners to focus on the grammatical characteristics of the target language instead of the meaning that they want to convey in a real socio-cultural context.

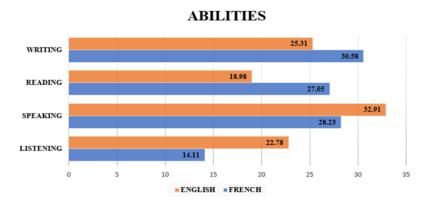


Figure 5

Abilities

The results of the classes' observation showed a rate of 32.9% of speaking ability prevalence in English classes. As it is noticed in figure 5 professors put more emphasis on the development of the speaking skill. It agrees with the communicative competence results (figure 4) where the pragmatic sub competence prevailed in English classes. It may happen because professors employ more activities where this ability was one of the needs in order to carry out exercises where the pragmatic field was the focus of communication. It should be noted that pragmatic competence can also be enhanced by other skills as the writing one. However, most of the time it is strengthened through speaking. Examples of this are seen in the presentations or simulations where the learners had to make good use of this oral skill in order to communicate, exchange information and convey information in an appropriate way with their partner or their professors. Furthermore, compared to a rate of 30.58 % of writing skills predominance for French classes, it could be said that this is related to the communicative competence results where the linguistic sub competence predominated in French classes. In this respect, the professors of French were mainly focused on strengthening linguistic competence through

activities and materials used to promote the writing skill. One example of this are the activities that professors use to carry out with students like essays, workshops or writings.

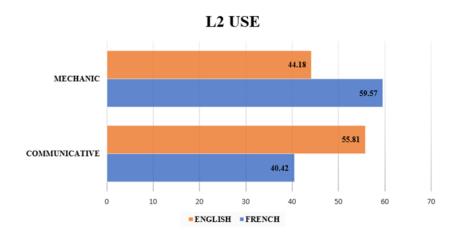


Figure 6

L2 use

Regarding the use of the L2, it was evinced an equivalent communicative scope of 55.81% for English Classes. Littlewood (1981) defined the communicative use of the language as a:

whole-task practice, these help learners to integrate their separate sub-skills into an effective system for communicating meanings. From a creative construction perspective, they also activate the learners' capacity for acquiring language through natural processes. The learners' attention is focused on meanings to be communicated rather than on language items to be learned. (p.92)

It would reflect a functional and social use where the student has to give a correct use of the language items but taking into account the socio-cultural context of the country where the foreign language is spoken. Considering that the foreign language is going to be probably used in a native environment. In this way, the ability to convey meanings predominate over the

grammatical characteristics. The predominance of the communicative use of the foreign language in English classes through the use of materials and activities could mean that students assimilate the different characteristics of the language in a natural way without feeling the pressure of learning a foreign language. This could happen for the reason that Colombian students have to learn English during their whole studying life.

Unlike a 59.57% of mechanic use of the language was observed in French classes, that means a pre-communicative use of the foreign language. Littlewood (1981) said that pre-communicative refers to a part skill training where the students learn the foreign language through categories and they just focused on learning the separate items of the language.

Through the French class observations, it was possible to notice several materials where the use of grammatical rules prevailed. An example of this was found in some of the worksheets used in French classes whose objective was to enhance the writing skill as a separate ability. Also, these materials were designed to answer questions with one correct answer. In other words, the mechanic repetition of these answers in order to achieve the goal of those worksheets result in the promotion of pre-communicative aspects. This mechanic use of the foreign language could mean that students are not aware of the language characteristics, and they just focused on the repetition of the structure of the target item disregarding meaning.

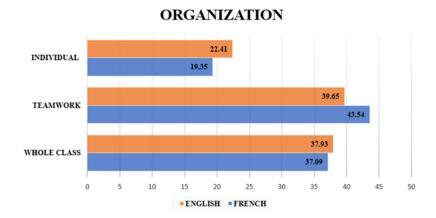


Figure 7

Organization

In this section, the type of organization seen the most inside the classrooms to identify the way professors arranged their activities was determined. Further, the relationship with other items such as the communicative competence, interaction patterns, activities and materials were analyzed. Regarding the patterns of organization, it was found that teamwork organization prevailed for both English classes with a rate of 39.65% and French classes with a percentage of 43.54%. Most of the time activities and materials observed in classes were developed in groups classes where the students had to communicate with their classmates to improve the communicative competence. However, this kind of organization does not assure that the pragmatic or sociolinguistic aspects of the language can be enhanced in the classroom, since it depends on whether the activities and the materials have a communicative or a precommunicative nature.

Moreover, to give an example, in some cases materials and activities were not suitable for a group organization but for an individual pattern, even though learners were in groups. Because, each individual did not communicate with others in order to solve the exercise but most important for the sake of creating an environment where the communicative competence is enhanced through a communicative activity.

Additionally, a percentage of 37.93% for English and 37.09% for French in the whole class organization was noticed. This type of organization could indicate that the professors foster these organization patterns with the objective of promoting the communicative competence, whole class organization and cooperative work, and learning from others. On the contrary, it could be said that they avoid individual organization as it can be evinced in the figure above, since it could be difficult to enhance the communicative competence in this regard.

12. Conclusion

The use of research instruments and the documentary analysis allowed to determine the pertinence of materials and activities used by the Modern Language Program Professors, in the strengthening of the communicative competence of fifth and sixth semester students of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao. In order to reach this purpose, instruments as the assessment matrix and semi-structured interview were analyzed to determine the pertinence of the materials and activities.

During the assessment matrix analysis, it was notorious the use of activities that allowed the learners to exchange information and develop their opinions among them through activities such as oral reports and questions in order to achieve the objective of the activity set by the professor. That means that communicative activities as functional activities that strengthen the communicative competence were evidenced inside the classroom. Additionally, the functional activities widely promoted the sub-competences of the communicative competence as the linguistic for French and pragmatic for English. One example of this was the use of activities such as writings, where the main focus was to reinforce the linguistic part and the presentations that promoted the functional use of the language.

Furthermore, the results obtained in the assessment matrix revealed that professors tended to encourage the teamwork organization inside the classrooms; it was observed since the predominant activities were those that require the participation of a group. Activities such as; presentations, situations, workshops, and laboratories were presented. In addition, to reinforce the previous statement it was found that the predominated interaction patterns for English and French were student-student. This probably means that professors also promote the

communicative competence through the cooperative learning in their groupal activities in both English and French classes.

Regarding materials, it was identified the prevalence of non-authentic materials which mean that professors designed or adapted their materials in order to achieve the purpose set in the micro-curriculum and in accordance with the students' needs. It is worth clarifying that the English and French micro-curriculums are based on the Educational Project of the Program which state that professors have "to design and compile supporting materials for methodological and didactic work with the foreign languages" (p.18). Thus, in order to reach the thirteenth aspect (13) of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs the materials used by professors of English and French have to achieve the PEP objective named above regarding the design of the materials. Since the thirteenth aspect (13) stipulates that materials have to be in accordance with the methodology of the program.

Thus, these non-authentic materials had a highly controlled use for English classes and semi-controlled use for French classes inside the classrooms. It means that materials developed in English classes do not guarantee students to develop their own ideas and opinions while materials used in French classes allow the student interaction. As a consequence, the highly controlled materials used in English do not promote communicative competence completely and the semi-controlled materials developed foster in a semi-controlled way the communicative competence. Thereby, it is necessary to highlight that pre-communicative as well as communicative intentions were found.

As a final point, the data analysis allowed to determine that the Educational Project of the Program objective that states "to enhance the communicative capacity of the student through the study of structures and practices of the languages in different socio-cultural contexts" (p.19) was

accomplished because. However, it is important to mention that the use of the socio-cultural contexts in classes was observed in a low rate. Concerning the thirteenth aspect (13) of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs, where the evaluation of production, relevance, use and impact of teaching materials was completely achieved. Therefore, it was verified that materials and activities used by the Modern Language Program Professors are pertinent in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao.

13. Suggestions

Regarding the pertinence of the materials and activities used by the Modern Languages, English and French professors in the strengthening of the communicative competence in the students of fifth and sixth semester of the University of Cauca, Santander de Quilichao some suggestions will be settled.

More emphasis on the use of social activities is recommended since these ones are an essential part of the communicative activities. According to Littlewood (1981) "in 'social interaction activities', on the other hand, the learner is also encouraged to take into account the social context in which communication takes place" (p.86). With this in mind it is considered that these kinds of activities encourage the communicative nature, and allow the achievement of the objective posed by the Educational Project of the Program (PEP) which aims "To enhance the student's communicative skills through the study of structures and the practices of the languages in different socio-cultural contexts" (p.19).

The prevalence of the student-student interaction pattern for both English and French classes was perceived. Nevertheless, it is suggested that the student-teacher interaction be fostered with the aim of creating a comfortable atmosphere where the learner feels free to suggest and clear up doubts. As well as, it would be also appropriate to have a semi or minimal control of materials. Here, it is worth to clarify that a highly controlled use of the materials does not promote the communicative use of the language, since highly controlled materials do not allow students to be free to respond, to interact or create.

Besides, it is further suggested that professors have a clear conception of concepts such as; communicative competence, authentic and non-authentic materials since those ones are part of the professional development of an educator within an education facility. On the other hand, it

is also recommended that professors comprehend the differences between communicative competence and oral expression in the design of materials and activities to strengthen the communicative competence. Moreover, it is necessary to clarify the concepts of authentic and non-authentic materials because of the misunderstanding of this concepts could affect the compliance of the thirteenth aspect (13) of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of the Undergraduate Programs. Another important information that professors must identify is the main objective of the PEP and the thirteenth aspect (13) of the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs.

Furthermore, it was evidenced that professors promoted the teamwork organization; however, it was observed that there were activities and materials designed for another type of organization for example. Therefore, it is suggested that professors take into account the kind of organization that they are going to use for the development of the activities and materials in order to enhance effectively the communicative competence inside the classroom.

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15. Appendix

15.1. Semi-structured interview

- 1) ¿Cómo define usted el concepto de competencia comunicativa?
- 2) ¿Cómo define usted el concepto de materiales y actividades dentro del campo pedagógico?
- 3) ¿Encuentra usted relación entre los conceptos antes mencionados? ¿Por qué?
- 4) ¿Qué factores tiene en cuenta a la hora de realizar actividades que promuevan la competencia comunicativa?
- 5) ¿Mencione que tipo de materiales y actividades utiliza usted para el desarrollo de sus clases en el fortalecimiento de la competencia comunicativa?
- 6) ¿Cómo verifica usted que sus actividades y materiales fortalecen el desarrollo de la competencia comunicativa?
- 7) ¿Conoce usted la finalidad de Proyecto Educativo del Programa (PEP) con respecto a la competencia comunicativa? Si o no, Nombrela.
- 8) ¿Conoce usted el aspecto número 13 de los Lineamientos para la Acreditación de Programas de Pregrado? Si o no, Nombrelo.
- 9) ¿Considera usted que los materiales y actividades que usted utiliza en su aula de clase cumplen con la finalidad del PEP?
- 10) ¿Considera usted que los materiales y actividades que utiliza en el salón de clase cumplen con el aspecto número 13 de los Lineamientos para la Acreditación de Programas de Pregrado?

15.2. Assessment matrix

Professors of English

	Interaction 2 3 4 1 2 5	Materials	Comunicative Competence	Politics	Mother tongue use a series of the series of
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Professors of French

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