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Multimodal teaching practices for the development of literacy competencies in basic education

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Abstract

The development of skills that enable students to produce written work based on reading is fundamental to academic performance and comprehensive education, especially in early childhood and elementary education. The objective of this study is to describe the multimodal strategies for developing literacy skills applied by elementary school teachers. Using a qualitative approach and phenomenological design, open-ended interviews were conducted with intentionally selected elementary school teachers in Zone 5 of Ecuador. The guide was organized into socio-emotional-affective and cognitive-instrumental dimensions. The results showed that multimodal teaching practices enhance literacy skills by integrating playful activities, gamification, positive feedback, and socio-emotional support, identifying that emotion management, based on respect, empathy, and communication, promotes school engagement and self-regulation. In reading, the pre-reading, reading, and post-reading phases strengthen comprehension and critical thinking. Likewise, the habit of reading is sustained through regular routines, the selection of texts of interest, and the use of visual resources. It is concluded that the integration of methodologies that combine reading motivation with the development of cognitive and metacognitive skills is essential for strengthening reading and writing competencies.

Keywords: Reading; writing; linguistic competence; reading comprehension; reading instruction.

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Prácticas docentes multimodales para el desarrollo de competencias lectoescritoras en Educación Básica

Resumen

El desarrollo de competencias que permitan construir producciones escritas a partir de la lectura constituye un eje fundamental para el rendimiento académico y la formación integral de los estudiantes, especialmente en los niveles iniciales y de educación básica. El objetivo del trabajo es describir las estrategias multimodales para el desarrollo de competencias lectoescritoras aplicadas por docentes de Educación Básica. Con enfoque cualitativo y diseño fenomenológico, se aplicaron entrevistas abiertas a docentes de educación básica de la zonal 5 de Ecuador seleccionados intencionalmente. La guía se organizó en dimensiones socioemocional-afectiva y cognitiva-instrumental. Los resultados evidenciaron que las prácticas docentes multimodales potencian las habilidades de lectoescritura al integrar actividades lúdicas, gamificación, retroalimentación positiva y apoyo socioemocional, identificando que la gestión de emociones, basada en respeto, empatía y comunicación, favorece el compromiso escolar y la autorregulación. En lectura, las fases de prelectura, lectura y poslectura fortalecen la comprensión y el pensamiento crítico. Asimismo, el hábito lector se sostiene mediante rutinas periódicas, selección de textos de interés y uso de recursos visuales. Se concluye que la integración de metodologías que combinen la motivación lectora con el desarrollo de habilidades cognitivas y metacognitivas es esencial para fortalecer las competencias lectoescritoras.

Palabras clave: Lectura; escritura; competencia lingüística; comprensión lectora; enseñanza de la lectura.

Introduction

Historically, language and thought have been conceived as essential dialectical foundations for human, cultural, and scientific development (Arellano et al., 2021; Coello, 2021). In this regard, robust research such as that of Harlaar et al. (2005) demonstrated that genetic factors significantly influence individual differences related to word recognition ability, revealing a heritable basis in the acquisition of reading competencies. These competencies not only facilitate access to and transformation of information but also enhance the development of critical and creative thinking dimensions widely documented in recent studies (Noble et al., 2019; Torppa et al., 2022; Van Bergen et al., 2023).

Empirical evidence from longitudinal studies has shown that home literacy experiences and active family involvement

in reading are key predictive factors for the development of literacy skills, with sustained effects on academic performance and social adaptation (Estrada et al., 2025; Macias-Silva et al., 2025). The Home Literacy Environment model proposed by Sénéchal & LeFevre (2014) differentiates between informal literacy practices, such as shared reading, which enhance oral language development, and formal practices, such as explicit instruction in letter and sound recognition, which strengthen decoding and word recognition skills.

Complementary research has confirmed these findings, emphasizing that early literacy practices affect not only the initial development of reading skills but also their consolidation during primary education, particularly in contexts with consistent orthographies (Silinskas et al., 2020). These results highlight that family environment interventions are essential to ensure positive trajectories in

literacy acquisition and to prevent learning delays that may persist in later school stages.

In the case of Ecuador, although the national literacy rate for individuals over 15 years old reached approximately 94% by 2022, marked territorial inequalities persist, requiring targeted attention. Recent studies have documented these disparities at the provincial level. For instance, Guijarro-Garvi et al. (2024) reported that while El Oro and Guayas showed high literacy rates of 97.6% and 95.5%, respectively, provinces such as Chimborazo and Bolívar recorded much lower figures 79.4% and 82.1%, respectively. These results clearly reveal contrasts in educational access between more privileged urban areas and rural and mountainous zones facing greater barriers.

A review of specialized literature revealed significant research gaps in literacy studies, particularly the scarcity of longitudinal investigations assessing the sustained impact of literacy interventions and the limited integration of innovative approaches incorporating information technologies into teaching practices. Moreover, insufficient attention has been given to culturally and linguistically diverse contexts with limited school resources, restricting the applicability of findings to heterogeneous realities. In this regard, Norman (2023) warns that technology-based methods for teaching reading in low-resource environments have been scarcely investigated and documented.

Similarly, a recent bibliometric analysis on digital literacy identified structural barriers such as lack of teacher training, shortage of educational resources, and the absence of robust state policies for technological training (Ma & Ismail, 2025). These limitations confirm the persistence of gaps in vulnerable contexts and underscore the need to study literacy competencies as a core axis to reduce educational inequalities, improve meaningful learning, and foster social and professional integration.

Given the challenges identified regarding the uneven development of communicative skills, the following research question arises:

How do teachers describe the multimodal strategies applied to foster motivation and textual production among Basic Education students in Zone 5 of Ecuador? In response to this question, the study aims to describe the multimodal strategies applied by teachers to promote motivation and textual production among Basic Education students in Zone 5 of Ecuador, identifying levels of mastery, didactic and contextual factors, and priority areas for strengthening.

1. Methodology

The study was conducted under a qualitative approach, which enabled an in-depth understanding of teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the development of literacy competencies within the school context. The research design corresponded to a phenomenological type, aimed at capturing the meaning of the lived experiences expressed by participants through open-ended interviews. In terms of research level, an interpretative scope was adopted, as the study analyzed teachers' discourses to identify categories and construct theoretical understandings of the phenomenon under study rather than to measure or quantify variables.

The population consisted of Elementary Basic Education teachers from Planning Zone 5 of Ecuador, which includes the provinces of Guayas, Los Ríos, Santa Elena, Bolívar, and Galápagos. The sample comprised 52 teachers selected through purposive sampling, based on criteria such as years of professional experience, educational level taught, and willingness to participate in the study.

Regarding data collection, the open-ended interview technique was employed, allowing the collection of in-depth information and granting participants freedom to express their perceptions and experiences broadly in relation to the development of literacy skills. The instrument used was a thematic guide structured around theoretical categories related to the object of study, organized into two main dimensions: the socioemotional-affective

sphere and the cognitive-instrumental sphere.

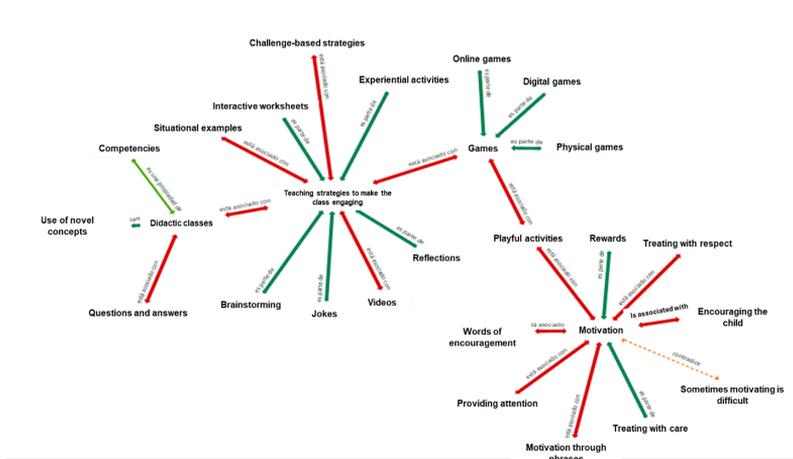
For data analysis, all interviews were fully transcribed and processed using [Atlas.ti](#) software, which facilitated open, axial, and selective coding of the data. This procedure enabled the identification of categories and subcategories, as well as the establishment of relationships among them, ensuring a systematic and rigorous treatment of the information.

2. Results and discussion

This section presents the findings obtained from the qualitative analysis of the

interviews conducted with teachers, organized according to the dimensions and indicators previously defined in the data collection instrument. The results are structured to identify emerging patterns, relationships, and categories, supported by representations of semantic networks that facilitate the understanding of conceptual interactions and the richness of participants' responses.

Figure I displays the semantic map corresponding to the first interview question, associated with the "Motivation" indicator within the socioemotional and affective dimension. The key concepts and connections established by teachers are highlighted, allowing the identification of the resources and practices that guide their pedagogical work.



Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

Figure I: Teaching Strategies to Motivate Students in Class

The analysis of the semantic map reveals that multimodal teaching practices aimed at student motivation are organized around three main axes: playful activities and gamification, positive feedback, and socioemotional support. Gamification, together with the use of physical and digital games and experiential activities, shows a favorable impact on academic engagement, intrinsic motivation, and school

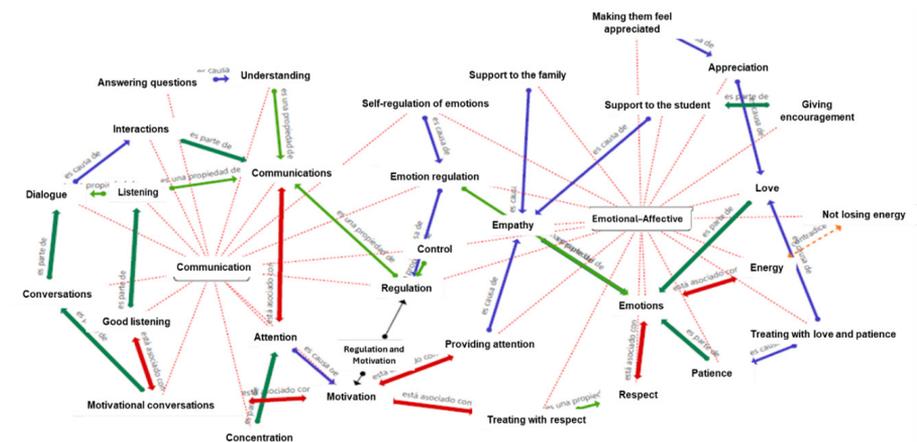
performance an effect corroborated by recent meta-analyses emphasizing its effectiveness when combined with narrative elements and collaborative dynamics (Sailer & Homner, 2020; Duche et al., 2022; Calderon et al., 2022). Likewise, the integration of audiovisual and interactive resources within multimodal practices is associated with improvements in comprehension and information retention,

while also diversifying learning experiences and fostering autonomous text production (Díaz & Estoque-Loñez, 2024).

Similarly, positive feedback and verbal recognition expressed through words of encouragement and motivational phrases are linked to improvements in performance and self-regulation, particularly when provided within a respectful and trusting environment (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Added to this is socioemotional support, reflected in empathy, respectful treatment, and personalized attention practices that, according to empirical evidence, strengthen school engagement, self-

regulation, and resilience, while fostering a favorable environment for meaningful learning and the consolidation of literacy competencies (Murano et al., 2020).

Figure II below presents the conceptual structure derived from teachers' responses, highlighting the main nodes and connections among key concepts identified in their discourse. This visualization allows for a better understanding of the strategies, resources, and approaches used to address and regulate the socioemotional dimension within the educational context.



Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

Figure II: Teaching Strategies for Managing Students' Emotions

The analysis of the semantic map reveals that teaching practices for managing students' emotions are organized around three main cores: relational climate and communication, structured socioemotional support, and active didactic strategies. These dimensions are supported by evidence emphasizing the importance of high-quality teacher–student relationships as a key factor that strengthens engagement and academic performance (Roorda et al., 2011).

Likewise, the integration of

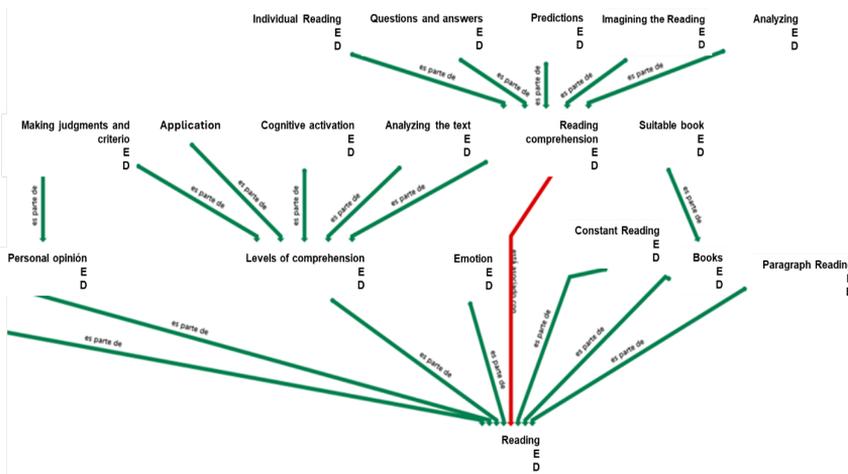
socioemotional learning programs into the curriculum contributes to the development of emotional skills and generates sustained academic benefits, which explains the relevance of practices related to emotion regulation, coexistence norms, and the creation of positive classroom environments (Durlak et al., 2011). In this regard, the prosocial classroom model underscores that teachers' socioemotional competence enhances effective classroom management and promotes a healthy climate, which directly impacts learning (Jennings &

Greenberg, 2009).

Additionally, teachers' emotional regulation mechanisms significantly influence students' learning experiences. Recent evidence indicates that teachers' cognitive reappraisal reduces students' emotional distress, while expressive suppression creates less favorable classroom climates (Braun et al., 2020). Moreover, respectful and specific formative feedback is recognized as a key resource for clarifying goals and strengthening self-regulation, which explains its central role in teachers' responses (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Finally, the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance, confirmed by a meta-analysis

by MacCann et al. (2020), supports the pedagogical need to foster in students the recognition and regulation of their emotions as an essential condition for learning in demanding contexts.

Figure III below corresponds to the third interview question, associated with the "Reading" indicator within the cognitive-instrumental dimension. This semantic map illustrates the methodological strategies reported by teachers for developing the reading process in the classroom, as well as the connections among pedagogical actions, comprehension techniques, and the resources employed.



Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

Figure III: Teachers' Methodological Strategies for the Development of the Reading Process

The analysis of the semantic map reveals that teaching practices for developing reading are structured across three methodological phases: pre-reading, reading, and post-reading. In the first phase, actions such as prediction, activation of prior knowledge, and mental visualization of the reading material are identified, which cognitively prepare students for comprehension. These practices are consistent with the findings of Duke et al.

(2021), who emphasize that explicit instruction in anticipation strategies and activation of prior schemas significantly contributes to the development of reading comprehension.

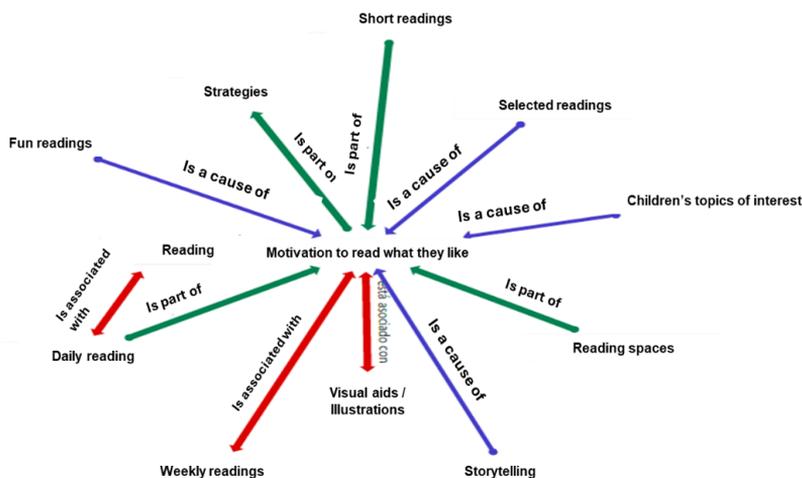
During the reading phase, strategies such as question-and-answer activities, individual reading, text analysis, and engagement with different levels of comprehension are predominant. These findings align with the results of Okkinga et al. (2018), who

demonstrated substantial improvements in comprehension when strategic instruction programs are applied systematically.

In the post-reading stage, teachers promote activities aimed at making judgments, expressing opinions, applying learned knowledge, and drawing conclusions, which facilitate knowledge transfer to new contexts and reinforce students' critical thinking abilities. These results are in line with the conclusions of Stevens et al. (2020), who confirmed that reflective and application-based post-reading tasks consolidate learning outcomes. Likewise, regular reading practice and fluency work emphasizing intonation strengthen the role of rereading and prosody training as effective mechanisms for improving both fluency and comprehension, consistent

with the evidence presented by Kuhn (2020).

The following section presents the findings related to the strategies implemented by teachers to promote reading habits within the classroom, as illustrated in Figure IV. The analysis of the semantic map shows that multimodal teaching practices oriented toward reading focus on intrinsic motivation and reading consistency through short and selective readings, topics of student interest, regular reading routines, and storytelling supported by visual resources. The selection of texts connected to students' personal interests and the autonomy to choose them strengthen sustained reading engagement (Sinha et al., 2021), while the teacher's active involvement in mediating materials promotes long-term reading habits (Burić & Moè, 2020).



Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

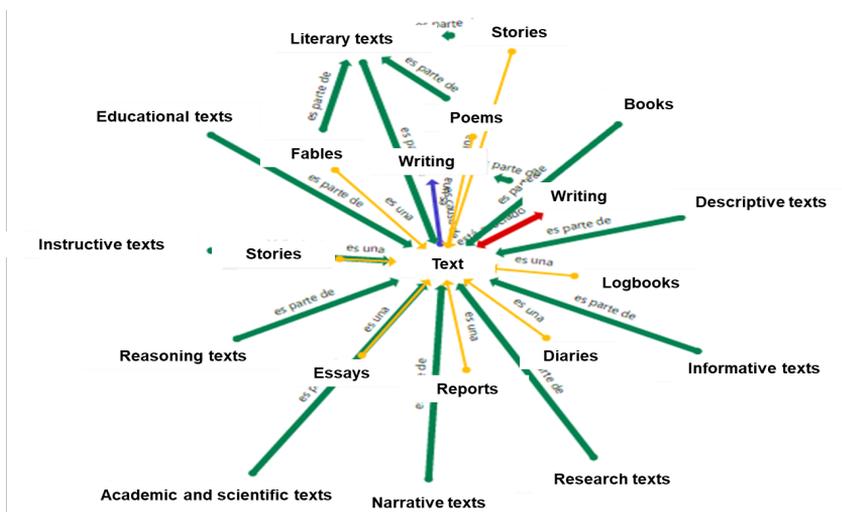
Figure IV: Strategies for Fostering Reading Habits in Students from the Classroom

Likewise, the systematic practice of daily or weekly reading reinforces motivation and the development of reading competencies (Ho & Lau, 2018; Barber & Klauda, 2020), and the use of visual and multimodal resources is associated with significant improvements in

comprehension when they coherently support meaning-making (Shen et al., 2020). Moreover, the integration of cognitive and motivational strategies such as questioning, prediction, and reading guides is linked to substantial gains in reading comprehension and active student

center lies the node “text” as the main category, branching into various literary, educational, descriptive, informative, instructional, narrative, academic, scientific, and reasoning

types, as well as specific subgenres and formats, including short stories, fables, poems, essays, reports, journals, and logbooks.



Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

Figure VI: Types of Texts Worked on in the Classroom and Approaches to Teaching

The results show that a wide variety of text types are addressed in the classroom, including literary, informational, descriptive, instructional, narrative, reasoning, academic, scientific, and research texts, along with subgenres such as short stories, fables, poems, journals, logbooks, and reports. This repertoire is integrated with writing and composition practices that reinforce meaningful learning. Recent evidence supports the explicit teaching of text structures as an effective means of improving comprehension, particularly in expository texts, with positive effects on question formulation, summarizing, and information retention (Bogaerds-Hazenberg et al., 2021). Likewise, the simultaneous presence of narrative and expository genres confirms the advantage of the former in terms of memory and comprehension, highlighting the need for differentiated instruction to

balance performance across genres (Mar et al., 2021).

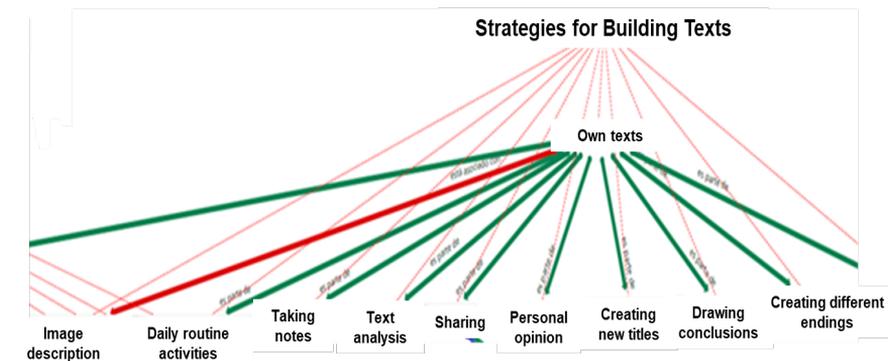
Complementarily, the incorporation of genre-based strategies such as staged scaffolding, modeling of textual features, and guided writing of reports or essays aligns with recent findings demonstrating improvements in writing quality and content task performance, even at early educational levels (Philippakos et al., 2023). This approach also proves relevant in multilingual contexts, where journals and logbooks support written production with specific communicative purposes (Zohbie & Bhowmik, 2024). The network linking texts with writing and composition practices aligns with meta-analyses highlighting the benefits of explicitly teaching planning, drafting, and revising processes from the early grades (Kim et al., 2021).

Finally, the integration of multimodal

resources and formats, such as images and diagrams, strengthens meaning-making in expository texts without overloading students, reinforcing the pedagogical relevance of an approach that combines diverse genres and media (Lim et al., 2022; Si et al., 2022).

Figure VII synthesizes the connections between various pedagogical activities

and students' autonomous text production, showing that the creation of original writings is enhanced through practices such as image description, incorporation of daily experiences, note-taking, text analysis, opinion exchange, title creation, conclusion formulation, and construction of alternative endings.



Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

Figure VII: Strategies for Helping Children Construct Their Own Texts from Reading

The results highlight image description, note-taking, and text analysis as key strategies that enable students to organize initial ideas and prepare for composition. Likewise, socialization and teacher mediation practices such as sharing opinions and creating titles guide students in the progressive construction of their texts. These findings are consistent with evidence emphasizing the benefits of integrating reading and writing through explicit strategies of planning, modeling, and guided practice, which enhance both reading comprehension and compositional quality (Kim & Zagata, 2024).

Specifically, the use of visual resources is associated with greater idea generation and more complete descriptive development

an effect confirmed by experimental studies demonstrating the efficacy of pictorial supports in reading-based writing (Mukramah et al., 2023). Note-taking and text analysis align with meta-analyses that validate these practices as tools for consolidating comprehension and transferring knowledge into written production by promoting processes of semantic selection and organization (Jin & Webb, 2024). Similarly, activities such as sharing, expressing opinions, and creating new titles converge with narrative interventions focused on grammar and vocabulary, which strengthen personal narration and discourse quality thus reaffirming their importance in transforming readings into original written productions (Pico et al., 2021; Spencer et al., 2024).

Conclusions

The results of the study revealed that the diversity of text types addressed in the classroom, as well as the variety of strategies used to help students create their own written productions from reading, play a central role in strengthening literacy competencies. The findings showed that the inclusion of literary, informational, descriptive, academic, and reasoning texts together with techniques such as image description, text analysis, creating new titles, or modifying endings enhances children's ability to develop original ideas, organize information, and express it coherently. Likewise, the integration of activities related to daily life and students' active participation in writing processes significantly contributes to the development of creative autonomy and critical thinking.

However, the study presented certain limitations, mainly related to the size and representativeness of the sample, which restricts the generalization of results to other educational contexts. Additionally, the research focused on a specific time frame, so the long-term sustainability of the observed effects was not evaluated. The reliance on self-reported data may also have introduced biases in participants' perceptions of the strategies used and their impact assessments.

As future directions, it is suggested to expand the scope of the study through longitudinal research that allows for the evaluation of the evolution of literacy skills over several academic cycles. It is also recommended to include larger and more diverse samples in terms of geographic location, socioeconomic level, and teaching styles, as well as to incorporate mixed methods combining direct observation, analysis of written productions, and in-depth interviews. Finally, it would be relevant to explore the impact of digital resources and emerging educational technologies on text construction to identify new opportunities for pedagogical innovation.

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