

Didactics of writing in primary school: application of creative strategies for the development of textual competences

Didáctica de la escritura en primaria: aplicación de estrategias creativas para el desarrollo de competencias textuales.

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Abstract

This article presents the findings of a qualitative research project conducted in a public educational institution in the city of Cúcuta. The study aimed to strengthen textual production (TP) in fifth-grade students through the application of Daniel Cassany's didactic approach. The research was framed within the interpretative paradigm and employed the participatory action-research method, integrating classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of student texts before and after implementation. The results showed significant improvements in coherence, creativity, and textual structure, driven by collaborative activities, visual resources, and strategies such as brainstorming and peer review. It is concluded that Cassany's approach enhances not only writing skills but also student autonomy, critical thinking, and active participation in communicative processes.

Keywords: textual production, didactic approach, creative writing, Daniel Cassany, primary education.

Resumen:

Este artículo presenta los hallazgos de una investigación cualitativa aplicada en una institución educativa pública de la ciudad de Cúcuta, cuyo propósito fue fortalecer la producción textual (PT) en estudiantes de quinto grado mediante la aplicación del enfoque didáctico de Daniel Cassany. El estudio se sustentó en el paradigma interpretativo y se

abordó mediante el método de intervención acción-participativa, integrando observaciones, entrevistas semiestructuradas y análisis de textos producidos antes y después de la implementación. Los resultados revelaron mejoras significativas en la coherencia, creatividad y estructura textual de los estudiantes, motivadas por actividades colaborativas, recursos visuales y estrategias como la lluvia de ideas y la lectura entre pares. Se concluye que el enfoque de Cassany potencia no solo las habilidades de escritura, sino también la autonomía, el pensamiento crítico y la participación activa del discente en el proceso comunicativo.

Palabras clave: producción textual, enfoque didáctico, escritura creativa, Daniel Cassany, educación primaria.

1. Introduction

Textual production (TP) is a key competence in school education, especially in elementary school, where the foundations of critical thinking, written expression and knowledge construction are laid.

However, in specific educational contexts, such as the upper grades of primary school in public institutions in Cúcuta, there is evidence of deficiencies in the coherence, creativity and structure of texts. These difficulties respond, to a great extent, to the absence of active methodologies and the scarce link between the curricular contents and the student's significant experiences.

In this context, there is a need to integrate pedagogical approaches that place the student as the protagonist of his or her learning and integrate self-learning.

Therefore, Cassany (2015), who proposes writing as a social, communicative and collaborative process, which requires

planning, textualization and constant revision.

For the above mentioned, the research experience focused on the application of Cassany's approach to strengthen PT in fifth grade students. The triggering question is: How to strengthen textual production through the application of Daniel Cassany's didactic approach in fifth grade students?

2. Theoretical framework

In a close definition of textual production in the classroom, it is conceived as a meaningful process that allows students to express their thoughts and turn them into propositions, sentences and paragraphs of an objective and subjective nature through original narratives built from imagination, creativity and their own experiences (Vásquez and Caicedo 2023).

Likewise, it is understood as a practice that articulates the student's imagination, personal experiences and subjectivity,

becoming a way to express significant experiences in school contexts and, in turn, to promote communicative competences through creative processes (Caicedo et al, 2023).

The main theorist of this study was based on the sociocultural approach to writing proposed by Cassany (2015, 2021), who conceives the writing process as a situated, interactive and dialogic practice. Likewise, principles of Vygotsky's (1939) and Piaget's (1959) constructivism were integrated, highlighting the importance of pedagogical mediation, the zone of proximal development and meaningful activity.

3. Method

This study was framed within the qualitative approach, using the action-participatory intervention method of Hernández et (2014) focused on understanding the educational phenomenon in its natural context and transforming teaching practice through concrete actions

3.1. The research was structured in five methodological phases:

- I. Initial diagnosis: it was carried out through direct observation of the classroom and analysis of previous written productions.
- II. Application of Cassany's approach (2006, 2015, 2021) implementation of planning, writing and textual revision workshops, following strategies

suggested by the author to improve writing competence from a functional and reflective approach.

III. Participant observation within the development of the pedagogical immersion, this was carried out an active monitoring of the participation and interaction among students during the development of the activities.

IV. Semi-structured interviews: these were applied to students in order to explore their perceptions, difficulties and progress in the writing process.

V. Comparative evaluation: a qualitative analysis of the written productions before and after the pedagogical intervention was carried out.

3.2. Research scenario

This research was carried out in an official educational institution located in the city of Cúcuta, Norte de Santander. The participating population consisted of fifth grade students between the ages of 10 and 13, belonging to urban contexts. Many of them presented discontinuous school trajectories or migratory conditions, for such floating situations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2016) recognized that, due to the high influx of migration, it demands an inclusive pedagogical approach focused on active participation, critical thinking and collaborative construction of knowledge.

4. Resultados

The implementation of Daniel Cassany's didactic approach allowed us to evidence significant advances in the students' textual production processes: initially through the analysis of the texts and subsequently through the perceptions expressed in the semi-structured interview.

The main findings are focused on: qualitative evolution of textual production, writing processes, valuation of literary content and creativity and desire to write

5. Qualitative evolution of textual production

Texts produced by students before and after the intervention were analyzed. By means of rubrics with criteria of coherence, creativity, clarity and organization, a general improvement was evidenced in all the aspects evaluated (See Table 1).

Tabla 1.
Qualitative evolution of textual production

Criterio	INITIAL LEVEL (%)	POST LEVEL (%)
Coherence	40%	80%
Clarity	45%	75%
Creativity	50%	85%
Organize	38%	78%
Use of connectors	30%	70%

Source: Prepared by the authors.

By way of interpretation, the results show significant progress in the development of students' writing skills after the implementation of the pedagogical strategy. In the coherence criterion, the percentage increased from 40% to 80%, which indicates a substantial improvement in the students' ability to structure texts with a logical and fluid sense. As for clarity, there was an increase from 45% to 75%, reflecting greater precision in the expression of ideas and more comprehensible writing.

Another criterion, creativity, showed an outstanding improvement, rising from 50% to 85%, suggesting that the didactic proposal succeeded in stimulating imagination and original production in the texts. The organization of ideas also showed a notable improvement, going from 38% to 78%, which denotes a better management of the internal structure of the writings. Finally, the use of connectors increased from 30% to 70%, showing that students learned to link their ideas adequately, favoring textual cohesion. Overall, these results confirm the effectiveness of the pedagogical intervention.

5.1. Writing processes

Students began to conceive of writing as a guided process. A001 said:

“They help me a lot when they give us questions to answer before writing,

because they make me think” (Personal communication, 2024).

These types of activities promoted more conscious planning, which was evidenced in the organization of more structured ideas in their final texts.

A007 complements: “brainstorming helps me to better structure my thoughts before starting” (Personal communication, 2024), which indicates that this technique was key to stimulate creativity and give shape to scattered ideas.

Regarding revision, A009 states, “The most difficult thing for me is to give feeling to the text, to structure it so that people can feel the same thing I want to express” (personal communication, 2024). This evidences a concern for meaningful writing, beyond mere formal correctness.

Interaction and collaboration: The applied approach fostered collaborative work as a means to strengthen written production. A008 expressed: “I like that we have a round table where everyone gives their opinion about what they read or wrote” (Personal communication, 2024), which

confirms the effectiveness of oral interaction to enrich written comprehension.

Likewise, A009 highlighted, “I like to listen to what others feel when reading what we write, because then one understands better how to write something that touches others” (Personal communication, 2024). This accounts for an incipient development in textual empathy.

However, nuances are recognized: A002 stated that he preferred to work alone because “in a group there are some who do not work and leave the burden to others” (Personal communication, 2024), which indicates that, although collaborative work was encouraged, the management of group roles needs to be refined.

5.2. Evaluation of literary content

Texts such as *La vorágine*, *Pedro Páramo* and *Historias de cronopios y de famas* were mentioned with enthusiasm by the students. A004 highlighted, “*La vorágine* I liked it because it explains the overexploitation of that time” (Personal communication, 2024), while A008 noted that *Pedro Páramo* appealed to her

because of its way of “fostering a ghost town by directing people's sorrows” (Personal communication, 2024). These responses demonstrate an emotional and critical connection to the literature addressed.

5.3. Creativity and desire to write

Writing became a pleasurable activity. A003 stated, “I like to write what we are most interested in and understand” (Personal communication, 2024). A010 added: “I liked that they are entertaining and let us express our thoughts freely” (Personal communication, 2024). These perceptions are indications of the development of a personal voice and ownership of the writing process.

In addition, students proposed ideas such as making alternative endings, writing books together, or incorporating theater and free writing. A002 suggested: “Making a book among the whole class” (Personal communication, 2024), and A010 wanted “free writing, not what we get, but what we want” (Personal communication, 2024). This suggests that an active and autonomous writing culture is being formed.

6. Conclusions

The application of Daniel Cassany's didactic approach proved to be an effective strategy for strengthening textual production in elementary school students. Throughout the research process, a representative change was

evidenced both in technical writing skills and in motivation and attitude towards text production.

Likewise, students improved significantly in key aspects such as coherence, organization of ideas, use of linguistic resources and critical revision capacity. Also, a collaborative learning environment was fostered, in which students assumed an active and reflective role.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that, even in school contexts with socioeconomic limitations, it is possible to enhance fundamental skills such as writing through student-centered methodologies, peer work and the use of a variety of resources.

Finally, it is recommended to continue exploring pedagogical proposals based on the didactics of critical writing, including technological tools, creative writing and mediations that address diversity in the classroom.

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